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Legal Aspects and Interface-Structures of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) and its Working Groups

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The sophistication and multiplicity of perceived issues, as well as a large number of key stakeholders, are driving considerable attention to unstructured oversight channels and frameworks. Despite the numerous interpretations of unstructured governance, numerous key characteristics layout: the large number and uniqueness of actors involved, as well as the emphasis on informal mechanisms, agreements, and consequences. The Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS), which was established in 2009, will be used as a research study in this manuscript. It evaluates that how CGPCS, and explicitly its sub-unit Working Group 2, has performed in three aspects: understand exactly sharing/information assembling, encouragement of existing international norms, and reassurance of intergovernmental remedies. We analyze closely three precise actions of Working Group 2: the advancement of a legal suite of tools for convicting pirates, participation in the institution of a Trust Fund to finance anti-piracy development projects, and participation in the legislative structure in which pirates are convicted. The outcomes of Working Group 2 enable us to evaluate CGPCS as an innovative mechanism for attempting intergovernmental remedies in an informal way, reliant on knowledge transfer, competence, and discussions between peers.

Keywords: CGPCS, wg2, Somalia, inter-governmental.

INTRODUCTION

One of the first thoughts, comes to the mind in one's mind, while hearing the word "Informal" will probably be jumping back towards the preference of 'Secret, Dark Discussions', which was hinted at a while ago by – President of the European Commission, Jean Claude Juncker.¹ Naturally, 'Jean Claude', declaration stirred controversy and reinvigorated the discourse as to whether the European Union (EU) has a lack of democracy. However, such a shoddily constructed comparison will only serve to diminish insouciance. As an outcome, our primary objective here would be to demonstrate that informality, particularly unofficial stewardship, should not be befuddled with secrecy or scandal. Unofficial stewardship, on the other hand, has the prospects to be even more constructive and transparent. This is the only component of bigger developments in international entanglements - to consult and resolve issues thru collaborations, to forge alliances, and nail out methodologies and arrangements out the front of institutional structures as well as (occasionally) away from the instantaneous spotlight. The sophistication and multiplicity of perceived issues, as well as a large number of key stakeholders, are driving considerable attention to unstructured oversight channels and frameworks.

The aim of this research paper is to research the work of Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) and, more specifically one of its many working units – Working Group 2 (WG2). CGPCS and WG2 are prime examples of unofficial governance structures that might also conceivably serve as an inspiration for collaboration on substantial issues in international symbolic importance. It will be observed in this manuscript about the activities that are performed within two groups in three distinct areas: First – Sharing / Communication of Information/Data and Gathering/Collection of Knowledge. Second – Promotion towards International Legislative Norms. Third – Encouragement regarding Multi-lateral Solutions.

With regards to this, Specific attention is provided towards Human Rights Protection, due to the need for a Human Rights component in the case of Somali Piracy.

¹ Valentina Pop, 'Eurogroup Chief: 'I'm for secret, Dark Debates' (*Euobserver: Economics Affairs*, 21 April 2011) <<https://euobserver.com/economic/32222>> accessed 27 June 2021

The very first part of the paper delves into the significance of the term "informal stewardship." As a result, it benefits from the rapidly expanding literature on the subject. It also incorporates ideas from the context of international relations, particularly structuralist analyses of epistemic social groups and norm dissemination. Additionally, it is further outlined the importance of Human Rights and the incorporation of them in policies with regards to piracy off the coast of Somalia. The main essence of this research paper will reveal the innovative side of the work of the CGPCS and its Working Group 2. It will be further analyzed about its structure, working tactics and most evidently, its achievements and activities.

STRUCTURALIST ANALYSES OF EPISTEMIC SOCIAL GROUPS AND NORM DISSEMINATION

The main propositions of this section are predicated on the several transitions that have been pondered in past few decades. They're more about how states and international organizations act and decide things on a worldwide scale. These would be the transitions from the government to (international) democracy, from nation-state dominance to non-state performers' involvement in global affairs, from official to informal decision-making, and from legal frameworks to non - binding norms. All this is linked with the much larger spectrum of the world's perceived issues, as well as the more quantifiable existence of an international community functioning inside the framework of the law. Michael Zurn has presented a valuable interpretation of international cooperation that includes three main characteristics.

First – Global Governance is “Totality of Norms”, i.e. Norms, Rules & Programs, further their procedure of reworking, monitoring & recital.²

Second – It is in pursuant to that instances were dealing is required with “Denationalized & Deregionalized Problems”

Third – Global Stewardship is claimed to be providing “Transnational Common Goods”, although the actual result may differ from the claim.

² Micheal Zurn, *Global Governance as Multi-Level Governance* (The Oxford Handbook of governance 2012) 730

As a matter of fact, global governance encapsulates the valuable contribution to international affairs of all actors, respectively state and non-state, who inhabit the world space. When accosted by upheavals or unparalleled anomalies these actors, for even the most part, operate with opposing interests intending to work out a solution. Stakeholders seldom can (or would like to) act on their own as a result of economic globalization and increasing interconnectedness. These problem-solving sessions can result in new international structures or standards that have the prospects to govern international behavior in the future. The inauguration of the Human Rights standard/system/framework is a pretty good parade with respect to this. The brutal violations of these rights were to be traced from the 20th Century which led to a complex international system for their protections. States (and progressively, quasi stakeholders) are now strictly adhered to human rights obligations, or face stigmatization and punitive measures when they do not. All of that is constantly supervised by international and regional organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). When it relates to the protection and promotion of human dignity, this human rights system has several deficiencies but also has numerous achievements.

The variety and quality of global actors – states, international organisations, multinational corporations, and worldwide civil society organisations – has led to an increase in the outlets through which they interact. There are evident numerous points of contact with regards to actors having collided in their interests, values, and goals during the ordinary course of activities. Traditional Diplomacy is not evident towards a sufficient method of reconciliation of positions & negotiations. The operatives who inhabit the international space interact more frequently and on a wider range of topics. Because of the intricacies of world affairs, it is unfeasible to formulate all non-national judgement procedures. This is where informal governance comes into the equation.

CGPCS AND WORKING GROUP 2 - ESSENCE

The CGPCS originated from a restricted diplomatic initiative introduced in January 2009 towards dealing with the piracy crisis into an expansive, adaptable, multi-faced mechanics.

This by the year 2014, had has been evident in a simulative and coordinated action by stakeholders from every sector of global society virtually, affected with the problem of piracy.

The Contact Group's scalability, which has encouraged a huge spectrum of inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and even some constituents from private corporations and democratic institutions, has made it an extremely irregular – possibly unique – interface for dealing with a global security obstacle. The Contact Group's achievement in combatting this complicated subject makes it an excellent case study worth considering seeing what learning can be drawn from its pliable structure and agile organizational architecture, and whether analogous openness and bluntness precepts can be implemented to other aspects of international security. Since folks first began taking to the sea to commute, commerce, relocate and colonize, pirates have represented a danger to sailors. Piracy was only considered a relic of the past during the last century.

Pirates, on the other hand, were indeed front-page headlines in 2007, drawing the ire of shipbuilders, naval officers, and public officials all over the globe. Small clusters of pirates functioning from the ungoverned coasts of Somalia had created a sophisticated financially viable variant of this ancient practice: kidnapping and taking ships and crews hostage, far beyond the reach of any corporation or nation that could be capable of paying. Pirates held captive upwards of 40 ships and 700 merchant seamen in 2008, ransoming them for hundreds of thousands of dollars, which was being used to fund other illegal activities both in and out of Somalia. The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia, as well as any UN agency, has been unable to respond appropriately to this menace. As a result, numerous countries deployed battleships to the Gulf of Aden to chauffeur humanitarian assistance shipments and safeguard merchant navies transiting the crucial trade routes that run along Africa's eastern side.

- Contact Group

In the past decade, UN Security Council (SC) has published numerous Resolutions on Piracy in Somalia.³ First Being, Resolution 1816, i.e. June 2008, that states information in three aspects affected by piracy:

- Prompt, Innocuous and Operative delivery of Humanitarian assistance towards Somalia,
- Commercial Maritime routes safety
- Navigation routes in International Waters.⁴

Furthermore, UN Charter – Chapter VII, this resolution provides for states to:

- Upsurge and Co-ordinate their consistent efforts to deter the acts of piracy and armed robberies at Sea,
- With fulfilling this duty, Corporation is required with other states, organizations at the regional level & others like International Maritime Organization (IMO),
- Ensuring that their actions taken are in accordance with the International Laws, Maritime Laws including that of International Human Rights Law.

Resolution 1851 from December 2008, at the height of piracy attacks near Somalia's coast, provided for the development of "an economic integration mechanism to act as a prevalent contact point between and among states, international and regional organizations on all aspects of fighting piracy and aggravated burglary at sea off Somalia's coast." Under the recommendation of this emarginated the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, in 2009.

The main characteristics of the Group are addressed in the section below. There have been implemented the three dimensions of casualness identified by Neuhold and Christiansen, notably framework, procedure, and consequence when trying to formulate these attributes. The CGPCS and Working Group 2 descriptions were created utilizing relevant data from

³ First UN Security Council resolution dates from June 2008, (March 2016) dates to November 10, 2015

⁴ Resolution 1816 (2008), "Adopted by the security council at its 590-2nd meeting on 2 June 2008" (*United Nation-Security Council*, 2 June 2008)

reports submitted under the Training and information Project, which has been started by a conglomerate of academic institutions and has been the official site of the CGPCS since 2015.⁵

CONTACT GROUP ON PIRACY OFF THE COAST OF SOMALIA

Features of Working Group 1

1. Framework – Task, Mandate, Institutional Backing - The Contact Group was formed pursuant to the UN SC Resolution, but still, it isn't the part of UN System. Its main objective was to formulate all counter-piracy efforts near Somalia and further encourage cooperation towards finding the solution to the said problem. The purpose was to fight piracy off the coast of Somalia. This group's main focus is this only, it doesn't formulate or focus in any other area, no matter how serious they might be.

2. Composition – Members & Type of Participants - Open – Towards all interested and affected states. At present, there are more than 80 Participants (More than 60 states and 20 Organizations), including territorial organizations, private parties, NGOs. Prior, there were two criteria in order to enroll: 1. Actors that have competent resources and 2. Territorial states are directly affected. In a later period of time this criterion was demolished and a 'Discursive shift from membership to participation' was made.

3. Structure: Units Inside - Originally there were Five Working Groups formed as per the problems identified by the Contact Group. WG 1 – Chaired by the UK, deals with military cooperation and capacity development. WG 2 – Chaired by Denmark, Handle legal issues. WG 3 – Chaired by South Korea, Co-operation with the shipping industries. WG 4 – Chaired by Egypt, Deals with public diplomacy and advocacy. WG 5 – Chaired by Italy, Deals with disruption of financial flow Network of Pirates.

⁵ Maciej Popowski, 'Contact Group on Piracy of the Coast of Somalia' (*Deputy Security General EEAS, EU Chairman on Piracy Coast of Somalia*) <<http://www.lessonsfrompiracy.net/files/2015/06/CGPCS-Internet-release.pdf>> accessed 17 June 2021

4. Chairmanship: Nature & Tenure - Chairmanship is Voluntary and on a Rotating basis. Turkey, Singapore, the Netherlands in 2011; UAE, Spain, India in 2012: the USA in 2012: EU since 2014: Seychelles since 2016.

5. Funding & Resources - No budget as per rules. WG2 established the legal basis for the establishment of a Global Trust Program to Support States' Counter-Piracy Development projects Off the Coast of Somalia (the "Trust Fund") from May 2009. It accepts voluntary donations from state governments, corporations, and other organisations, but it distributes funds to UN agencies (such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and others). Approximately 22 million USD will be used to support initiatives such as infrastructure development, the transition of pirates to Somalia's detention centers, and matters related to inquiry, court proceedings, and imprisonment, among other things.

6. Procedure: Frequency of Meeting, Agenda Setting, Location - The Group holds parliamentary sessions on a routine basis, with alternating benches. There have been 18 parliamentary session sessions as of March 2016, with the 19th scheduled for July 2016. Except as otherwise specified, the sessions are conducted at the UN headquarters (for example, in 2015 it was decided that one session will be held in the region).

7. Overall Approach of the Group - The group has indeed been interpreted as an attempt at international cooperation, an example of an unofficial or exploratory system of government, and a "research lab" (Christian Bueger); an "innovative multi-stakeholder accordance with regulatory requirements" (EEAS Presentation); and a "fluid network structure" (EEAS Presentation) (the Burden-Sharing Report).

Dr. Christian Bueger has carried out extensive research on the concept of piracy, neutralize initiatives, and, in specific, the Contact Group. For the purposes of this analysis, it is critical to highlight the characteristics that, in his opinion, distinguish the Group from those other groups on the one hand, while also contributing to its casualness on either. The points to the aforementioned: 1) no institutional members, but stakeholders from diverse backgrounds; 2)

The segregation of the plenary from of the working groups, which allowed for improved focusing on individual issues and the emergence of "global governance of experts"; and 3) the Group's exceedingly specific and limited directive. 4) the more "casual" manner in which people communicated during meetings, which resulted in "an exploratory and imaginative environment."

▪ Working Group 2

Working Group 2 was created as a separate service within CGPCS and thus shares many of the same character traits as the others. The attributes of WG2 are summarized in the table below.

Features of Working Group 2

1. Characteristics -

- Held 15 meetings, At Copenhagen, Vienna, London, Seychelles, and Djibouti
- In 2014, transformed into the Legal Forum of CGPCS, Co-chaired by Portugal & Mauritius, which reported to CGPCS.
- It serves as a Knowledge gathering/ knowledge sharing forum, instead of a decision-making body.

2. General Achievements -

- Advanced level of exchange of information and professional counsel in the fight toward piracy.
- Clarification of established regulatory foundational principles for combating piracy, with only focus on human rights violations.
- Contribution to the conception of a "worldwide network of appropriate legal stakeholders".
- Promotion of the "Legal Piracy Agenda Internationally".
- Producing outcomes that could be useful towards other Working Groups' work, such as storage.

3. Specific Achievements –

- The creation of a legal toolbox for prosecuting pirates, which includes a variety of legal papers, relevant international conventions, guidance, and other resources.
- A serious contribution to the discussion over how and where taken prisoner pirates must be tried.
- The conception of the legislative structure for said Trust Fund.

Ulrik Trolle Smed recognized a crucial component of Denmark's job in the task of WG2, such as the very initial implementation of "outside knowledge and experience" in the face of anthropology representatives like Dr. Douglas Guilfoyle and Associate Professor Birgit Feldtmann, in his assessment of Denmark's duties in the job of WG2. This illustrates the advantages of bringing in academicians to collaborate with legislators and government officials on a proposed solution. Scholars tend to bring unique perspectives and expert knowledge to a forum, resulting in its individuals from discrimination and technocratization. It is also an incentive for academicians to "own a voice" from outside conference facilities and "on the ground," where plans and practices are forged. Without hesitation, the Lessons Learned Proposal is a significant move in the right direction.

WORKING GROUP 2 ACHIEVEMENTS

▪ Goals - Inspiration and Effectiveness

Working Group 2 was entrusted with trying to come up with recommendations for how imprisoned pirates could've been brought to justice, consistent with international law, constitutional provisions, or additional arrangements. The cohort was conceptualised and expects to be able to work in a multi-lateral ecosystem, predicated on negotiation, contemplation, and exchange of ideas but instead of enforcement and formalization, according to the Chairman's Conclusions of WG2 conferences. As a result, WG2 "highlighted the importance of delegating responsibility and the need for active participation with all States, international organizations in the detainment, detainment, and prosecutorial of accused

pirates."⁶ WG2 does not make the final decision, but it does not ignore important binding transcripts that already exist. "States that are stakeholders to treaty obligations that necessitate criminalizing and instituting jurisdiction over pertinent infractions should incorporate such obligations,"⁷ However, prior to actually analyzing the WG2's instant results, it is important to discuss how the cohort fits into the notions that guide our research and are listed above. We do this by examining the dialect and, more importantly, the material of some of the group's records, namely the Chairman of WG2's meeting Conclusions.

Summarizing from the first to four WG2 meetings, these were the publicly available ones, particularly on the US Maritime Administration's webpage. Despite the fact that only four summaries (out of 13) were examined, it is believed those who were adequate for gaining a better understanding of the Goals of the group, processes, and work style at this initial point. First and foremost, two terms in the manuscript of the analyzed Conclusions play a vital role. The passages emphasize the importance of communicating "knowledge gained" and pursuing "inspiration" as crucial components of the work processes at so many contentions. According to the Meeting 4 Findings, a US Embassy representative prepared a report on the lawful difficulties posed by convicting regional states, while the United Kingdom provided a research report about the use of force in maritime law enforcement. Both papers were passed around the group as a source of inspiration.

All of this paints a picture of the Working Group as a location where members teach one another lessons in an environment that allows rather than pressures them to function. Another concept referenced is that of 'burden-sharing,' which refers to states in the region acquiring and prosecutors' pirates. The constant requests for burden-sharing and related proposals are a clear manifestation of the multidimensional treaty that has been adopted. Only a portion of the group's output, in contexts of information submitted, tasks assigned, and interventions taken are highlighted below.

⁶ Regina Asariotis, 'Maritime Piracy. Part II An Overview of The International Legal Framework and of Multilateral Cooperation to Combat Piracy' (*United Nations Conference on Trade and Development*, August 2014)

⁷ *Ibid*

The classifications were defined according to the research design described at the beginning of this article and are: Knowhow sharing/Information assembling, Relevant international norms (UNCLOS and international human rights law) should be elevated. Multilateral remedies should be encouraged.

WORKING GROUP 2 ACTIVITIES

Meeting 1 -

- It was pointed out that below UNCLOS Art. 100, all Governments are obliged to work cooperatively to the fullest extent practicable in the fight toward pirate attacks (promotion of international legal norms).
- It was classified as a compendium of the worldwide legal justification for prosecuting presumed pirates to ensure that all existing laws in international law were understood (promotion of international legal norms)

Meeting 2 -

- The United States distributed a Counter-Piracy Procurement Incident Report and Paperwork Blueprint to other representatives as a source of motivation for prospective research in the field (know-how sharing/information gathering);
- The WG was given a brief description of the enforcement tools that INTERPOL could provide by delegates from the institution (database, analytical support, etc.). The International Maritime Organization (IMO) referred to its “general guidelines on the management of piracy” (encouragement of multilateral solutions and knowledge sharing/information gathering).
- Data about pertinent bilateral treaties and arrangements among states are communicated to evaluate their effectiveness... (information gathering/knowledge sharing)
- The Working Group approved a briefing report by Germany on the legal structure for a potential Worldwide Trust Fund (encouraging multilateral remedies);

- Developing detailed Scope of Work for a Global Trust Fund...as along with other operations associated with implementing GCPCS objectives for fighting piracy in all of its forms, reference to the attached concept paper, and taking strategic advice from the Contact Group into consideration (encouragement of multilateral solutions).
- Conversations on the detainment of alleged pirates, along with accordance with regulatory human rights treaties (advancement of international legal norms) are ongoing.
- In addition to alternatives for national indictment (know-how communication gathering, reinforcement of multilateral solutions, and expansion of social legal norms), international and regional processes for the indictment of alleged pirates should be considered.

Meeting 3 –

- Dr. Douglas Guilfoyle gave an overview of the international law for prosecuting alleged pirates. The compilation supplied very helpful guidelines on these issues, according to the delegations.
- Examining analytical strategies that could help states ensure trial. The United States of America proffered a revised exact algorithm on affirmative defenses... The Chair will organize an information sheet to complement the blueprint in collaboration with the US and UNODC, taking into consideration the IMO guiding principles (understand sharing/information gathering/encouragement of multi-lateral remedies).
- The implementation of new or revised legislative changes, as well as other interventions, appropriate input progress in guaranteeing trial.
- The WG addressed issues related to human rights adherence when entrapping and detaining individuals alleged of piracy, predicated on a demonstration by France... The United Kingdom did a presentation about the use of coercion in maritime law enforcement.

- A generic framework for drafting a Memorandum of Understanding on the circumstances of transmission of alleged pirates, gang members, and seized estate was proffered by the United Kingdom.
- The Dutch government disclosed on an unofficial conference on the creation of a pirate's court held in The Hague on July 7, 2009, at which a joint German/Russian paper titled "Toward the International Court for the Indictment of Pirates" was portrayed. Portugal published a model on the creation of a Somali positive correlation ("hybrid court") to prosecute piracy-related offences off Somalia's coast. Based on the UN's perception, OLA presented accurate data on the establishment and operation of international courts and tribunals. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime did a presentation on relevant threads, including that the possibility of establishing a separate courtroom in Kenya including the use of prisoner transfer programs.

Meeting 4 -

- Based on a demonstration by UNODC, shared the information on the structure to enable piracy inquiries through consensual legal support.
- INTERPOL gave a detailed demonstration of the role of law enforcement in the fight against piracy, including INTERPOL's applications and services for international police collaboration in the maritime piracy context... INTERPOL urged states to examine how their nationwide processes for cooperating with INTERPOL are working.
- UNODC provided the Working Group with a fact sheet on the learnings from UNODC's legal appraisals in the region... The Chair stated that the UNODC, OLA, and IMO are still working together to compile piracy laws and regulations.
- The Working Group will generate a research report on this topic (the tribunal), which will serve as the foundation for the Contact Group's first in-depth discussion. The paper will take into consideration all previous intervention strategies and papers presented in the Working Group on this topic, and it will be written in close collaboration with interested Working Members of the group.

- The WG will create a comprehensive number of effective tools (checklists, guidelines, templates, and compilations) to assist States and organisations involved in this endeavor.
- A fact sheet on the lessons learned from UNODC's legal appraisals in the region was provided to the Working Group... The UNODC, OLA, and IMO are still continuing to work together just to collate piracy laws and regulations, according to the Bench.
- Few countries and organisations, according to the Netherlands, support the development of a comprehensive international or regional hybrid court. Instead, many states and organisations stressed the importance of bolstering existing prosecutorial processes through capacity building. Portugal addressed a non-paper mostly on the creation of a “Somali Special Chamber for the Prosecution of Pirates as Well as other Related Crimes off the Coast of Somalia” within the Somali judicial system, but potentially in a neighboring country.
- The critical and urgent need for humanitarian intervention among all impacted countries and organisations was emphasized. The prospect of trying to transfer inmates from the trying to prosecute state to a third-party prison was highlighted as one probable burden-sharing strategy.
- The most viable system would have been a specialized/dedicated piracy chamber, which would be developed within one or more States' existing domestic criminal justice systems and situated in one or more States willing and able to prosecute, including Somalia if it does become possible. It was also agreed that worldwide components would be included.
- The Canadian government gave an informal presentation on detention and human rights issues... Continued proceedings on this issue are required to ensure that States and organisations are fully aware of the problems and potential solutions.

CONCLUSION

Working Group 2 has completed its primary objective, which was to compile a legal toolbox and propose a legislative structure for piracy prosecution. The Legal Forum, which did

succeed, was established with the goal of providing resources and information on the legal implications of piracy and counter-piracy. The number of piracy attacks off the coast of Somalia is presently markedly smaller than it was previously. More crucially, some aspects of the CGPCS' work could potentially serve as a model for future global governance arrangements. The CGPCS is "a unique inclusionary and consensual ad hoc collaborative construct," according to its own words.⁸

This interpretation, provided five years well after its founding, captures well the various factors that contributed to its distinctiveness and achievement. A UN Security Council Resolution refers to the CGPCS as an "international cooperation framework to act as a common point of contact." As a result, the Group is more than just a group looking for a quick fix. It also serves as a forum for various actors to express their opinions on how international relations should progress or global problems should be addressed. Working Group 2 is, in this sense, the site of a clash of value systems and cultural rules. Such a clash can be seen in the EU and its Member States' specific application that pirates not be sent to a nation in which they could face the death penalty. In this regard, it's worth noting that the Contact Group provided a platform for some "unexpected" actors to make a recommendation and develop solutions. It put old maritime power and authority like the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain, as well as small local states like the Seychelles and Mauritius, at the forefront of its activities. At the same time, the CGPCS started to develop a multilateral dilemma force made up of countries, international institutions, regional organisations, and shipping industry executives.

Concurrently, the group 'hatched' experience and expertise, as demonstrated. In this context, the CGPCS is an epistemic neighborhood of practice, because it has produced a new set of practices, or at the very least a creative development of new ones, such as the complex web of hybrid justice mechanisms that involve several African states, as a result of the cumulative know-how. The establishment of the Trust Fund is yet another fruitful activity in knowledge sharing as well as community development. However, it is important to remember that any propagation of ideas and practices would be unfeasible without any of the influence channels

⁸ *Ibid* 53

that the CGPCS provided. Its ability to communicate with international bodies with enforcement powers, such as the Security Council, was a key factor in its success.

Turning back to the threefold definition of 'informal', we might argue that CGPCS fits better into the second and third designations, identified by Christiansen and Neuhold. The Group's process of cooperation and discussion did not necessitate formal statements from all members. On conversely, they were willing to bring and make much of any contribution they deemed appropriate. The Contact Group, on the other hand, did not generate any legal papers; instead, it relied on specific suggestions, papers, and conferences. At the same time, some of its considerations did result in some sort of formal arrangement. This can only be regarded as a positive in the context of an informal system of government. Of course, we should proceed cautiously when concluding the CGPCS's future applicability.

When it came to piracy, such a mechanism worked, but piracy has been widely condemned for centuries. Will such a tool be appropriate for dealing with other issues? Even in the scenario of Daesh and the Syrian war, we can see how difficult it is to find an intergovernmental alternative. As there are more and different interests involved, there are tensions between members of the international community.

As a result, examining the generalizability of international mechanisms for dealing with serious problems is a promising future research direction. A combination of different or more contact groups or similar formations could be another area for future research. It would also be intriguing to see if any states or quasi-actors have been particularly active as well as vocal in this regard. This could aid in the investigation of how actors use the soft platform to increase their values and achieve their goals. In order to get a better understanding of the Contact Group and its sub-units, more analysis of the group and its sub-units is required. More documents provided by CGPCS or reflecting its discussions and style of work would be extremely helpful to such a study. Long story short, this will improve the transparency of its methods as well as the credibility of policies developed as a result of its operations.

The CGPCS can be viewed as an innovative mechanism for trying to seek multilateral solutions informally, relying on sharing knowledge, expertise, and debates between equals, thanks to the outputs of Working Group 2. As a result, when we believe in casualness, we must look for promising models of unofficial governance that go beyond its secret and dark rooms (while always maintaining them in mind). The CGPCS, I believe, is one of those very examples. Its example demonstrates how starting with something "simpler" like combating piracy can lead to successful unofficial international cooperation patterns.