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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas
on behalf of the European Commission
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The EU has launched several initiatives to respond to the crisis in the Red Sea. In particular, the Operation ASPIDES¹ has the mandate to protect merchant vessels, with a priority for EU vessels, and is aiming at ensuring freedom of navigation by closely protecting merchant vessels and monitored their transit. Moreover, since 2008, Operation ATALANTA² has actively contributed to the build-up of the regional maritime security architecture, whilst specific support is being provided to the Somali government in building up a maritime component able to face the challenge of piracy.

Beyond Common Security and Defense Policy-related activities, the Commission is encouraging and actively engaging in the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) initiatives to bolster maritime security and combat illicit activities at sea, such as piracy. As an example, the EU is funding the Red Sea Programme, funded co-implemented by the IMO, to enhance maritime and port security and safety of navigation in the Southern Red Sea and Gulf of Aden region. In June 2025, the IMO Maritime Safety Committee adopted the Resolution MSC.578(110) on the Encouragement of maritime information-sharing through the use of national and regional maritime information-sharing centres to enhance maritime safety and security.

More broadly, bilateral EU support to countries in the region also seeks to address the root causes of instability.

¹ Council Decision 2024/632/CFSP, 19 February 2024: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec/2024/632/oj/eng>.

² Council Joint Action 2008/851/CFSP, 10 November 2008: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/joint_action/2008/851/oj/eng.