

**ST JOHN'S, Antigua** – As nations worldwide continue to grapple with modern day piracy and robbery on the high seas, 45 officials from around the region are meeting in Antigua this week to discuss those and other maritime security matters.

From July 28 to 31, the Antigua & Barbuda Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping (ADOMS) and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) are hosting the [Sub-regional Seminar on Maritime Surveillance Monitoring and Communication Systems for Maritime Security](#).

According to the International Chamber of Commerce International Maritime Bureau data, 76 Antigua & Barbuda-flagged vessels were attacked between 2009 and 2013.

Director of ADOMS Dwight Gardiner told OBSERVER *media* that while piracy has not been prevalent within the Caribbean region it affects Caribbean-flagged vessels attacked in other parts of the world like the Somali basin.

“It is critical that the Caribbean states are aware of these dangers and have the requisite legislation in place to effectively implement measure to reduce maritime security risk,” he said.

Gardiner said that cooperation was key if the Caribbean is to stay one step ahead of maritime security threats.

“This seminar on maritime security is very timely for the Caribbean region because what we have within the region are quite a few countries which are flag administrations which means they have vessels registered under their flag,” he said.

Through ADOMS, over 1,200 vessels pay fees to be registered by Antigua & Barbuda and fly the nation's flag.

"Statistically, 90 per cent of all goods are transported by sea and it is a necessity to have ships, and the ships that sail on the high seas must be accorded a nationality. Antigua & Barbuda is one of the nations that provides that service," Gardiner said.

IMO Head of Maritime Security Tracy Peverett said the meeting would focus on the relationship between shore-side security, ship-side security, and the latest maritime communication technologies.



Source: The Daily Observer, Antigua & Barbuda