

**TACKLING EMERGING MARITIME SECURITY CHALLENGES  
THROUGH COLLABORATIVE REGIONAL FRAMEWORK**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Most littoral nations utilise the interconnectedness of the maritime commons to spur transportation and exploit the living as well as non-living resources within their maritime domains to optimise their economic prosperity. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the total cargo transported through international maritime trade grew from about 6 billion tons in 2000 to over 11 billion tons in 2019 depicting a growth rate of about 85 per cent. This huge commercial potential, including other burgeoning economic activities that characterise the maritime environment, has led to attendant emerging maritime security challenges.

2. Emerging maritime security challenges encompass contemporary illegal activities by state and non-state actors within the maritime environment that disrupt economic activities and impinge on the economic prosperity of nations. The spectrum of emerging maritime security challenges include piracy and armed robbery at sea; terrorism; drug and human trafficking as well as trafficking in nuclear materials and firearms. It also involves illegal activities in the fisheries sector and waste trafficking leading to intentional and unlawful damage to the marine environment. These challenges threaten both the value of global ocean assets placed at about US\$24 trillion. It also includes the ocean's contribution to the global economy, which is about US\$1.5 trillion to US\$3 trillion a year, representing 3 to 5 per cent of world economic activities. This therefore necessitates the establishment of collaborative regional frameworks to contain maritime security challenges.

3. Collaborative regional frameworks are the multilateral initiatives that encourage countries to work together by leveraging their resources and comparative security advantages to contend with common maritime security challenges. These frameworks create structures to improve maritime security

through the commitment of maritime stakeholders having a shared desire for measurable improvement in regional maritime security.

4. France for instance, has a collaborative regional maritime security framework with the United Kingdom (UK) to jointly contribute to maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) for protecting their strategic maritime interests. The signing of the GoG Code of Conduct (Yaoundé Code of Conduct) on 25 Jun 13 in Yaoundé, crystallised a collaborative regional framework to contend with the multifaceted maritime security challenges in the GoG region. This agreement between 25 heads of government and senior representatives from the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS), focuses on regional solutions to regional problems. The operationalisation of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct has stimulated multilateral collaborative efforts amongst member States. Despite this, there still exists some capacity and capability gaps which are required to stem maritime crimes in the GoG.

5. Undoubtedly, there is an ever-pressing need for deeper implementation of collaborative regional frameworks to diminish the freedom of action exploited by criminal elements in African maritime space. The purpose of this presentation therefore is to proffer strategic options that are aimed at improving collaborative regional maritime security frameworks towards tackling emerging maritime security challenges. This is in accordance with the Sea Power for Africa Symposium theme, **‘Integrating Africa’s Maritime Domain Awareness Infrastructure towards Effective Ocean Governance’**. Accordingly, the presentation will first give an overview of emerging maritime security challenges and collaborative regional framework in Africa. It will thereafter cover imperatives for collaborative action to counter maritime security challenges and the role of Extra Regional Forces in strengthening Africa’s regional security architecture. Lastly, strategic options will be espoused to improve collaborative regional maritime security frameworks within regions in Africa. The presentation will be limited to multilateral collaborative regional

frameworks. It is also assumed that adequate diplomatic arrangements would be sustained towards ocean governance.

### AIM

6. The aim of this presentation is to discuss how emerging maritime security challenges could be tackled through collaborative regional frameworks in Africa.

## OVERVIEW OF EMERGING MARITIME SECURITY CHALLENGES AND COLLABORATIVE REGIONAL FRAMEWORK IN AFRICA EMERGING MARITIME SECURITY CHALLENGES

### EMERGING MARITIME SECURITY CHALLENGES

7. The maritime environment has historically been inundated with diverse challenges spanning statutory maritime boundary delineation, safety of life at sea and security concerns, amongst others. Maritime boundary delineation is increasingly becoming a critical security concern particularly as most African littoral States are expanding interest in exploring the resources in their Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ). These interests have consequently increased controversies over maritime boundary delineation. The maritime boundary contentions between Ghana-Cote D'Ivoire; Somalia-Kenya; Gabon-Equatorial Guinea and Guinea-Guinea Bissau, amongst others, could negatively affect the collaboration required to concretise well-structured regional frameworks.

8. On the other hand, maritime crimes constitute the crux of emerging maritime security challenges in Africa. Piracy, alone has become a significant threat to the economic prosperity of several African states, considering that over 90 per cent of African imports and exports are moved by sea. According to a report prepared by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the total economic cost of piracy in West Africa was estimated at US\$777.1 million annually between 2015 and 2017. These evaluations include first order costs such as ransom payments, insurance costs and security operations, as well

as second order costs, like extension of shipping routes that significantly increases transport costs.

9. Other emerging maritime security challenges include Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. Globally, losses to IUU is estimated at about US\$23.5 billion annually with the GoG being a key hotspot. The menace of IUU fishing often catalyses other maritime crimes such as maritime pollution, human smuggling and other forms of trafficking in arms, contraband items including drugs. Approximately 40 million tonnes of cocaine, with an estimated street value of US\$2.1 billion transits West Africa for Western Europe each year, representing 20 per cent of the total in Western Europe. The expanding scope and impact of these maritime crimes underscore the importance of collaborative regional frameworks in Africa.

### **COLLABORATIVE REGIONAL FRAMEWORKS IN AFRICA**

10. The Sea Power for Africa Symposium (SPAS) has been a veritable platform for the periodic gathering of African Heads of Navies and Coast Guards since its maiden edition hosted by the South African Navy in 2005. Other veritable frameworks include the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC) that was signed in 2009 (amended in Jeddah, 2017) involving 20 coastal states of East and Southern Africa including the Arabian Peninsula. This framework is designed to foster counter piracy operations through information sharing, training and developing maritime awareness. The Yaoundé framework is also focused on driving cooperation for the repression of transnational organised maritime crime, including piracy, maritime terrorism and IUU fishing. This reinforced the Central Africa Regional Maritime Security Centre (CRESMAC) which was established in 2009, and birthed the West Africa Regional Maritime Security Centre (CRESMAO), all coordinated by the Interregional Coordination Centre (ICC) in Yaoundé. The recent establishment of the Yaoundé Architecture Regional Information System (YARIS) by the Gulf of Guinea

Interregional Network (GOGIN) in May 2021 add to the encouraging collaborative efforts for tackling common maritime security challenges.

11. At the continent level, the African Union (AU) adopted African Charter on Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa (Lomé Charter) is another potent statutory framework. The Lomé Charter seeks to reinforce maritime security in Africa towards boosting economic activity and ensuring sustainable use of the maritime environment. Equally, the Africa Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIMS) 2050 outlined some platforms to stimulate collaborative frameworks such as the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOWCA) MoU on the establishment of an Integrated Coast Guard Function Network. It also includes the Combined Exclusive Maritime Zone of Africa (CEMZA) amongst several others. Certainly, the efforts being made for partnership gives credence to the increasing consciousness of the imperatives for collaborative action to counter maritime security challenges.

### **IMPERATIVES FOR COLLABORATIVE ACTION TO COUNTER MARITIME SECURITY CHALLENGES**

12. African countries glaringly appreciate that safeguarding the 18,950 miles of coastline on the continent necessitates alliances. The overarching need for these alliances to counter emerging maritime security challenges demand a ‘whole-of-region’ strategy in which the roles, functions and resources of agencies are synchronised. Discussed further are 2 imperatives namely, promoting maritime law enforcement and the growth of the Blue Economy.

### **PROMOTING MARITIME LAW ENFORCEMENT**

13. Promoting Maritime Law Enforcement (MLE) involves institutionalising protocols and operating procedures that synergises maritime security efforts across nations in Africa towards enhanced administration of maritime laws. Criminality and criminal elements in the maritime environment are not limited by maritime space as epitomised in recent cases of trans-border piracy attacks. It is thus imperative for MLE to be able to meet up with the realities of

contemporary dynamics of maritime crimes. The drivers for promoting MLE are further elaborated.

14. **Integration and Synergy in Maritime Law Enforcement.** Integration and synergy offer a significant range of maritime security benefits since it provides a comprehensive approach to tackling maritime security challenges and initiation of response mechanisms. It equally creates vital overlaps in maritime security architecture that fosters overall efficiencies. For instance, Algeria is part of a collaborative regional maritime security framework called the 5+5, which was established in the 1990s. The framework bridges the maritime space between Northern Africa and Southern Europe bringing the states of Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, and Malta together with Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya. This buttresses the necessity for integration and synergy in collaborative actions towards promoting MLE for countering emerging maritime security challenges.

15. **Harmonisation of Maritime Law Enforcement Standard Operating Procedures.** Institutionalising harmonised MLE SOP is necessary for countries to synergise and synchronise MLE processes. This would engender adherence to best practices as a mandate, and ensure consistency. Essentially, it would foster sustainment of institutional knowledge, while removing duplication of functions towards collaboration against emerging maritime security challenges.

16. **Mechanisms for Information Sharing.** Information sharing remains one of the most dynamic elements in maritime security architecture as it ensures that states have the necessary information to take proactive or responsive actions. The vast nature of the oceans present particular challenges for states seeking to improve their knowledge of the range of activities undertaken at sea; this necessitates emplacement of a robust platform for information sharing. It involves protocols that clearly identify who need to know what information, for what purposes, and the timely dissemination of such information. The imperatives of a mechanism for information sharing are therefore underpinned by the need for a regional network of national maritime information exchange

partnerships with tools for alerting maritime partners. This increase efforts for collaborating to tackle maritime security challenges facing the continent.

### **GROWTH OF THE BLUE ECONOMY**

17. The growth of the Blue Economy depends on the emplacement of measures and mechanisms that enable the optimal exploitation and sustainable utilisation of the diverse resources that the seas provide towards economic prosperity of littoral nations. In Africa, 38 countries are bordered by the ocean or the sea covering about 23.4 million square nautical miles(nm), plus about 11.7 square nm of Continental Shelf. The different sectors in the Blue Economy such as tourism, mineral, oil & gas, fishery, port & shipping, as well as blue carbon growth make known the essence for littoral nations in Africa to collaborate to create the enabling environment for this sector to thrive. The current Blue Economy potential in Africa is no doubt a major factor in unlocking the economic prospects of the continent. Elements of the Blue Economy in Africa are reportedly worth about US\$ 296 billion, and supporting over 49 million jobs. This is projected to grow to about US\$ 405 billion and 57 million jobs by 2030 representing a growth of over 36 per cent, with a further projection to reach US\$ 576 billion of value and 78 million jobs by 2063.

18. West Africa alone is home to some of the most diverse fisheries in the world, which are spread along the 5,500 km coastline of this region. With little or no law enforcement, IUU fishing is rampant in the area, with 40 per cent of fish caught illegally representing the highest level in any region in the world. Oil & Gas marine resources management also constitute another major factor that makes collaborative action imperative. Looking at the huge natural gas reserve potentials on the continent, it amounts to a total of more than 800 trillion cubic feet, with predictions that the production of natural gas will expand by 80 per cent by 2035. Therefore, ensuring growth of the Blue Economy in Africa necessitates regional and extra regional collaborative actions in strengthening regional security architecture.

## **ROLE OF EXTRA REGIONAL FORCES IN STRENGTHENING REGIONAL SECURITY ARCHITECTURE**

19. The need for countries outside Africa to protect their huge investments that flow through the maritime sector required their diverse contributions towards strengthening Africa's regional maritime security architecture. Such countries that are referred to as extra regional forces in this context. The following paragraphs will discuss further ways of improving the contributions of these extra regional forces to Africa's maritime security network.

### **HUMAN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN MARITIME LAW ENFORCEMENT**

20. The evolving nature of maritime security challenges, coupled with the need for proactive maritime security posture, requires constant capacity development in law enforcement, detection/interdiction, investigation, prosecution, detention and regional cooperation. Consequently, the existing skills and expertise of security agencies in MLE could be enhanced through well packaged skills-based training and knowledge-based education. The efforts of extra regional forces in human capacity development for MLE over the years is well recognised and significantly appreciated. Most of these human capacity development packages have been a good blend of both theoretical and practical lessons often materialising in routine maritime and naval exercises.

21. The annual Exercise OBAGAME EXPRESS sponsored by the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) through its Africa Partnerships Station (APS) framework, involves improving Maritime Domain Awareness, information-sharing practices, and tactical interdiction expertise training to enhance the collective capabilities of participating nations to tackle maritime security challenges. The 2021 version of the Exercise took place between 14 and 27 Mar 21, involving about 32 countries including extra regional participation from Brazil, Canada, Denmark, France and Netherlands amongst others.



22. Exercise GRAND AFRICA NEMO is also a routine exercise organised by the French Government in conjunction with the United States and European Union, among others. More recently, the United States of America deployed its Expeditionary Sea Base 4 (ESB 4) USS HERSHEL “WOODY” WILLIAMS for combined maritime security capabilities exercise with the Nigerian Navy, Spanish Navy, and members of Ghana’s Special Boat Squadron (SBS) on 11 Aug 2021. The ESB 4 had since 2020 conducted other human capacity development training exercises with the Royal Moroccan Navy, Senegalese Navy and Ivoirian Navy, including port visits to Kenya, South Africa and Namibia. The foregoing illustrates human capacity development roles in MLE that extra regional forces have undertaken to strengthen regional architecture towards tackling emerging maritime security challenges.

### **INFORMATION GATHERING AND INTELLIGENCE SHARING**

23. The debilitating effects of maritime insecurity on global trade and international shipping require extra regional forces to strengthen regional architecture by facilitating information gathering and intelligence sharing protocols. It would be recalled that one MT MAXIMUS, a United Arab Emirates owned ship hijacked in February 2016 off the coast of Cote D’Ivoire was intercepted by the Nigerian Navy based on intelligence shared by the United States Navy. The fact that several countries were stakeholders in this scenario, clearly points to the fact that extra regional forces have a role to play in information gathering and intelligence sharing towards tackling emerging maritime security challenges.

24. MDAT-GOG information system which was earlier mentioned has been a critical information gathering and intelligence sharing portal supporting the Yaoundé regional architecture. Through its maritime situational awareness broadcasts, the MDAT – GOG has supported the Multinational Maritime Coordination Centres for Zones D and E. The Gulf of Guinea Inter-Regional Network (GoGIN) launched in December 2016, is a €9.3 million project that aims to improve safety and maritime security by supporting the establishment of

the Yaoundé Architecture Regional Information Sharing (YARIS) network. Governments of extra regional naval forces have also displayed support for the development of information gathering and intelligence sharing systems in support of regional architecture. The foregoing shows that the establishment of information sharing networks by extra regional forces, can strengthen regional architecture for tackling maritime security challenges.

### **STRUCTURED MARITIME PATROLS**

25. Extra regional forces justify their role in structured maritime patrols in Africa based on the direct impact maritime crimes like piracy have on other countries. This is typical for countries like Denmark which has a shipping line of more than 32 vessels operating about 40 per cent of maritime trade in the GoG region, making approximately 2,500 port calls a year. These investments, in addition to Denmark's offshore energy interests would understandably spur her desire to reinforce existing maritime security architecture in the GoG. Denmark has therefore initiated the process of deploying a Danish frigate HDMS ABSALON to the GoG from November 2021 for an initial 5-month patrol. In a related development, the United Kingdom in October 2021 deployed HMS KENT on a maritime security/training/exercise mission to the GoG. The ship scheduled visits to Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Gambia and Cape Verde, while also participating in Exercise GRAND AFRICAN NEMO 2021.

26. The foregoing clearly shows growing interests in maritime security by extra regional forces, predicated on the need to tackle challenges affecting the common interests of maritime stakeholders within Africa and beyond. What is however deficient, is an overarching framework to regulate and streamline the support of extra regional forces towards institutionalising a more sustainable structured maritime patrol system that tangibly reinforces maritime security architecture in Africa. It is noteworthy that while piracy and armed robbery at sea might be the focus of extra regional forces, other maritime crimes like drug trafficking, smuggling of arms and ammunition as well as IUU fishing require

commensurate attention. These suggest the need for African states to develop proper measures to ensure that structured maritime patrols by extra regional forces are tailored towards supporting the overall regional security architectures that address all maritime issues in the region.

### **INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING**

27. Many African MLE agencies lack critical maritime security enablers and resources to execute their mandates and enforce security. Improving institutional capacity building is anchored on establishing a strong foundation for successful capacity-building partnerships that would support and strengthen the operational functions of African MLE agencies. The Support to West Africa Integrated Maritime Security (SWAIMS), which started in 2019 with €28 million under the auspices of the European Union, could be a veritable model for institutional capacity building. This programme supports implementation of the ECOWAS Integrated Maritime Strategy (EIMS) seeking the improvement of maritime security and safety in the GoG. It particularly involves improving law enforcement and governance frameworks capacity and implementation.

28. Another model programme is the Support Programme to the Maritime Security Strategy in Central Africa (PASSMAR), which was launched in 2019 providing €10 million of support to the Central Africa region. This is done by reinforcing the institutional, legal and operational framework for cross-border maritime cooperation including private sector and civil society. In strengthening operational functions, extra regional forces could involve local stakeholders through an iterative and detailed needs assessment analysis process that co-creates solutions with stakeholders. Despite the need for external support, countries in Africa equally need to channel significant energy towards internal measures that create the right operating environment for the prosecution of maritime security mandates. Based on this need, the Nigerian Navy has made some modest efforts in institutionalising major initiatives across the spectrum of regulatory mechanisms and MLE which I intend to expatiate further.

## **EFFORTS OF THE NIGERIAN NAVY IN IMPROVING MECHANISMS FOR COLLABORATIVE REGIONAL SECURITY ARCHITECTURE**

29. The Nigerian Navy stimulated several mechanisms to promote collaboration in regional security architectures. The Navy has established improved regulatory frameworks as well as responded to distress calls for support to enhance collaborative efforts amongst the security agencies in-country and the region at large.

### **IMPROVED REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS**

30. The Nigerian Navy has made tangible efforts in contributing to the governing imperatives for improving mechanisms for collaborative regional security architecture. In 2016 the Navy led other MLE agencies in the country to produce the first version of the Harmonized Standard Operating Procedures (HSOP) on Arrest, Detention and Prosecution of Vessels and Persons in Nigeria's Maritime Environment. This policy document which streamlines MLE activities in-country, is a reliable mechanism for further collaboration through regional security architectures.

31. The Suppression of Piracy and Other Maritime Offences (SPOMO) Act of 2019 is another policy tool supported by the Nigerian Navy towards ensuring that necessary statutes are in place to ensure judicial conclusion of counter piracy operations. Since its promulgation, several pirates have been convicted, including 10 pirates involved in the hijacking a Chinese fishing vessel, FV HAI LU FENG II, in May 2020. As piracy is a crime of universal jurisdiction, this law is a mechanism for collaboration in prosecuting piracy cases, thus strengthening regional security architectures.

### **ENHANCED SURVEILLANCE CAPABILITIES**

32. Building on the gains of the Regional Maritime Awareness Capability (RAMC) system, the Nigerian Navy under the auspices of the Office of the National Security Adviser, has also acquired the Falcon Eye Surveillance System. This system, which has Automatic Identification System (AIS)

capability and Over the Horizon Targeting, has proven to be effective in maritime surveillance.

33. The enhanced surveillance capabilities of the Nigerian Navy through the Falcon Eye System were further demonstrated recently when it was used to exploit information shared by Interpol to track, monitor and interdict a vessel MV CHAYANEE NAREE in early October 2021 for attempting to smuggle illicit drugs suspected to be cocaine into Nigeria from South America. Apart from these surveillance systems, the Nigerian Navy is expanding its Air Arm as well as investing in Unmanned Aerial Surveillance systems capabilities. These would no doubt boost the surveillance capabilities of the Service thus strengthening mechanisms that would enhance collaboration in regional security architectures.

### **UPGRADED MARITIME ENFORCEMENT CAPABILITIES**

34. The Nigerian Navy has progressively sustained its fleet renewal programmes aimed at upgrading its maritime interdiction capabilities thus positioning her for effective regional security collaborations. In this process, the NN has leveraged its Naval Dockyard Limited, Naval Shipyard Limited, and other home-grown patrol boat manufacturers in an effort to encourage and improve indigenous shipbuilding capabilities. The NN has also boosted its offshore patrol capabilities with the acquisition of Offshore Patrol Vessels (contract for 2 new ones have just been signed), different types and categories of Fast Patrol Craft, Fast Patrol Boats, Hydrography Survey Vessel and a Landing Ship Tank. These are in addition to several Inshore Patrol Boats that enable the Nigerian Navy saturate the country's complex riverine terrain as part of its Brown Water Operations to discourage maritime criminalities. In partnering other MLE stakeholders, the Navy has remained the backbone of the Deep Blue Project initiative sponsored by the Ministry of Transportation. This project delivers significant land, sea and air capabilities that reinforce the maritime enforcement operations of the NN.

35. There is also a gradual expansion and development of Naval Bases and Forward Operating Bases to provide the necessary support infrastructure for MLE activities. Cumulatively, these efforts are yielding tangible benefits as the IMB reports that the GoG recorded 28 incidents of piracy and armed robbery in the first nine months of 2021, in comparison with 46 for the same period in 2020. Most notably, the IMB submitted that Nigeria reported only 4 incidents in the first 9 months of 2021, in comparison to 17 in 2020 and 41 in 2018. The upgrading of the NN maritime enforcement capabilities is therefore a reliable effort that creates effective mechanisms for supporting collaborative regional security architectures.

### **STRENGTHENED INTER-REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**

36. The Nigerian Navy has made concerted efforts to strengthen inter-regional partnerships towards improving collaboration for regional security architectures. Since the operationalisation of National Maritime Operation Centres, the Nigerian Navy has responded to numerous information received on the possible perpetration of maritime crimes especially piracy such as the case of the Chinese Fishing Vessel FV HAILUFENG 11. The vessel was intercepted at 146 nautical miles south of Lagos, the pirates arrested, and the hostages comprising Chinese, Ivoirian and Ghanaian nationals freed.

37. The commitment of the Nigerian Navy in strengthening inter-regional partnerships motivated the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2018, with the heads of the Navies of the Republics of Benin, Togo and the Higher Commander of the Gendarmerie of Niger Republic for the implementation of joint patrol of the Maritime Zone E. The MOU was aimed at establishing cooperation for Joint Maritime Patrol through the pooling together of both material and human resources to enhance the security of the maritime area of the ECOWAS Zone E countries. Working with the Multinational Maritime Coordination Centre in Cotonou, Benin, the Nigerian Navy is in the process of operationalising the first of the joint operations/patrols scheduled to commence soon. The foregoing amongst several other efforts clearly depicts the

modest efforts the Nigerian Navy is making in strengthening inter-regional partnerships towards improving mechanisms for collaborative regional maritime security architecture. These efforts notwithstanding, there is the need for a discussion around some strategic options that are germane to the improvement of collaborative regional maritime security frameworks.

### **STRATEGIC OPTIONS TO IMPROVE COLLABORATIVE REGIONAL MARITIME SECURITY FRAMEWORKS**

38. The strategic options to improve collaborative regional maritime security frameworks are resolution of maritime boundary disputes, multilateral training and education programmes, as well as transfer and prosecution agreements for pirates. Other strategic options are, combined patrols and Ship Riders arrangement, along with enhanced funding for MLE capabilities. These options are expatiated further.

### **RESOLUTION OF MARITIME BOUNDARY DISPUTES**

39. The potential insecurity that would emanate from maritime boundary disputes would no doubt pose a significant challenge for collaboration amongst MLE agencies in Africa. It would however offer opportunities that could be exploited by criminal elements. Although, the technical issues involved in maritime boundary disputes are complicated, they can be resolved in furtherance of maritime security.

40. In the interest of boosting maritime security therefore, it is opined that African nations need to seek peaceful resolutions through bilateral and regional conflict resolution mechanisms where possible, before internationalising disputes. Additionally, provisional means of resolving maritime boundary disputes such as the Joint Development Zones (JDZ) between São Tomé and Príncipe and Nigeria could be exploited to mitigate chances of disputes impinging upon collaboration for maritime security.

### **MULTILATERAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMMES**

41. Multilateral training activities are required so that littoral countries in Africa can jointly develop tactics, techniques and procedures (TTP) that

improve their interoperability. The operationalisation of multilateral training and education programmes particularly at sub-regional levels assist in forming closer relationships that are necessary for enhancing stability and security in the maritime environment. By so doing, trust would be built between MLE agencies that would enhance efficient mobilisation.

42. The coming together of MLE agencies from different countries under training and educational programmes creates opportunity to sharpen collective skills, shared learning with better understanding of the maritime environment. For the GoG, Article 14 of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct provides a statutory basis for the advancement of multilateral training and education programmes, as a strategic option to improve collaborative regional maritime security frameworks.

### **TRANSFER AND PROSECUTION AGREEMENTS FOR PIRATES**

43. Experiences show that the transfer of pirates presents many challenges, such as preserving evidence, as well as dealing with the complexity of criminal prosecutions amongst others. The absence of formal frameworks to guide transfer and prosecution protocols could discourage counter piracy operations due to the cumbersome burden of handling arrested pirates particularly of foreign countries. In contrast, the presence of such frameworks encourages neighbouring states, as well as extra regional forces to interdict pirates knowing that their transfer and prosecution would be handled suitably. It is therefore important for states, particularly within sub-regions, to have formal agreements for the transfer and prosecution of pirates arrested in the course of MLE. This will eventually improve collaborative regional maritime security frameworks towards tackling maritime security challenges.

### **COMBINED PATROLS AND SHIP RIDERS ARRANGEMENT**

44. The Ship Rider agreement, whereby MLE agents from one country board another country's vessel for interdiction operations, could be considered for adoption. This is because combined patrols and Ship Rider agreements are designed to remove policing barriers in international maritime boundaries, in



order to prevent criminals from taking advantage of the contiguity of borders for illegal activities. The Ship Rider concept has been employed successfully in the Caribbean to fight drug traffickers by enabling countries employ their combined maritime assets to disrupt criminality on the seas. Combined patrols and Ship Riders arrangements are clearly force multiplier engagements that improve collaborative regional maritime security frameworks towards tackling maritime security challenges.

### **ENHANCED FUNDING FOR MLE CAPABILITIES**

45. Nations and governments in Africa, particularly in areas of heightened maritime crimes, need to consider that while maritime security is expensive, the impacts of maritime insecurity are much more debilitating. The Blue Economy has significant potentials to boost the economic landscape of Africa. This could however be diminished by maritime insecurity which would fester without commensurate investment in requisite security capabilities to counter maritime crimes. Through enhanced funding for MLE capabilities, collaborative regional maritime security frameworks could be improved towards tackling maritime security challenges.

### **CONCLUSION**

46. Littoral States in Africa are in a dilemma contending with emerging maritime security challenges described by contemporary illegal activities by state and non-state actors within the maritime environment. These disrupt diverse economic activities and impinge on the economic prosperity of the nations. To this end, collaborative regional frameworks were established to synergise MLE efforts through multilateral initiatives leveraging resources and comparative security advantages in contending with common maritime security challenges for collective economic prosperity.

47. This SPAS is a model for collaborative regional interactions, a veritable tool for the exchange of maritime security strategic ideas through periodic gathering of African Heads of Navies and Coast Guards. It reinforces other existing frameworks under the auspices of the African Union as well as the

Regional Economic Communities. Imperatives for these alliances to counter maritime security challenges demand a ‘whole-of-region’ strategy in which the roles, functions and resources of stakeholders within collaborating countries are used to further maritime security goals. These imperatives particularly refer to promoting maritime law enforcement and growth of the Blue Economy. The Drivers for promoting MLE are the integration and synergy in MLE, harmonisation of national standard operating procedures, inter-regional interoperability and strengthening mechanisms for information sharing

48. In protecting their national interests abroad, Extra Regional forces have committed resources to support regional maritime security architecture to stem piracy which threatens the economic base of nations. These current roles could be further enhanced through human capacity development in MLE, routine maritime and naval exercises as well as intelligence gathering and information sharing. Others are structured maritime patrols and harmonisation of maritime security support initiatives.

49. The Nigerian Navy on its part has taken deliberate actions aimed at improving mechanisms for collaborative regional security architecture. These efforts include improving regulatory frameworks and enhancing surveillance capabilities. The Navy has also upgraded its maritime enforcement capacities and strengthened inter-regional partnerships. Finally, the need for further considerations of other strategic options to improve collaborative regional maritime security framework was considered. These were the resolution of maritime boundary disputes, multilateral training and education programmes as well as transfer and prosecution agreements for pirates. Others are, combined patrols and Ship Riders arrangement, along with enhanced funding for MLE capabilities.

50. The future of the African Blue Economy is undoubtedly bright. There is however an existential need to tackle emerging maritime security challenges through collaborative regional framework. I thank you all for listening. Onward Together.

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