COMBATING ILLICIT MARITIME ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE GULF OF GUINEA: PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES

BY
TONY ARCHIBONG BASSEY
ID No.

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DECLARATION

I, Tony Archibong Bassey, the author of this study, hereby declare that except for the reference to other works, which I have duly acknowledged, the work presented here was conducted by me, a participant at the Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy University of Ghana, under the supervision of Dr Ken Ahorsu.

I also declare that this work has never been submitted partially or wholly to any institution for award of a certificate.

Signature .................................. Date ..................................
Tony Archibong Bassey
(Student)

Signature .................................. Date ..................................
Dr. Ken Ahorsu
(Supervisor)
DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to the ongoing efforts to fight against piracy in the Gulf of Guinea.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank the Good Lord for His many mercies and favour over my life. His grace has been sufficient for me throughout my Masters programme.

I am extremely grateful to my beloved family for their immense support. My darling wife, Felicia, had been very understanding. As for my kids, they showed their support in many humorous ways.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APS - African Partnership Station
CCDS - Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff
ECCAS - Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS - Economic Community of West African States
EU - European Union
GGC - Gulf of Guinea Commission
GoG - Gulf of Guinea
IFIS - International Financial Institutions
IMB - International Maritime Bureaux
IMO - International Maritime Organisation
IUU - Illegal Unregulated and Unreported
LECIAD - Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy
MEND - Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta
MOWCA - Maritime Organisation of West and Central Africa
NIMASA - Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency
RMAC - Regional Maritime Awareness Capability
UN - United Nations
USA - United States of America
WAGPP - West African Gas Pipeline Project
WTO - World Trade Organization

TABLE OF CONTENTS
CHAPTER ONE:
RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 Background
1.2 Research Problem
1.3 Objectives
1.4 Hypothesis
1.5 Scope of Work
1.6 Theoretical Framework
1.7 Literature Review
1.8 Rationale of Study
1.9 Sources of Data and Methodology
1.10 Arrangement of Chapters
Endnotes

CHAPTER TWO:
OVERVIEW OF SECURITY THREATS IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

2.0 Introduction
2.1 The Socio-Economic Significance of the Gulf of Guinea
### CHAPTER THREE: ASSESSING PROGRESS TOWARDS SECURITY IN THE GULF OF GUINEA: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.0 Introduction</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 State Initiatives to Fight Piracy</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Sub-Regional Initiatives to Fight Piracy</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 The Role of International Actors</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Assessment of Progress Made Thus Far: Challenges</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.1 Poorly-Resourced Maritime Personnel and Infrastructure</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.2 The Rhetoric Regime</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.3 Uniformity of Legal Frameworks</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.4 Donor-Fatigue</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Prospects of a Secured Gulf of Guinea to Regional Integration</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.1 Promoting Intra-Regional Trade</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.2 Harmonizing Maritime Policies</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.3 Establishing a Regional Naval Force</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER FOUR:
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Introduction - - - - - - - - - - 56
4.1 Summary of Findings - - - - - - - - - - 56
4.2 Conclusions - - - - - - - - - - 57
4.3 Recommendations - - - - - - - - - - 59
Bibliography - - - - - - - - - - 62

ABSTRACT
Combating piracy has become an important issue in maritime discourse in West Africa. The increasing spate of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea in particular is at the core of this work. This has become an urgent case because of the fact that the Gulf of Guinea remains an important source of resources for countries in West Africa, serving as source of money and the promotion of human security by providing employment and source of food for money people in West Africa. This work qualitatively analyses existing literature on insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea with emphasis on incidence of piracy, and how that enhances other transnational crimes in West Africa, against the backdrop of insecurity in the Niger Delta of region. This work establishes the linkage between maritime security and regional integration, making a case for collective efforts towards combating piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, and why a safeguarded Gulf of Guinea is important to the promotion of regional integration in West Africa. This work concludes that West African states still lack the needed infrastructure to combat piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, although some efforts have been made thus far. It recommends the promotion of governance and human security, equipping maritime forces in West Africa, an integral role by ECOWAS in combating maritime security as means to combating piracy and ultimately promoting maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.
CHAPTER ONE
RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 Background

The global maritime environment is a precious asset, which forms an important aspect of the ecosystem. In its intrinsic state, maritime environment offers ecological balance for human kind, and provides such basic services such as providing water for the sustenance of humankind to endowing states with capabilities that enable them to achieve their foreign policy goals. For West African states, the fact the maritime industry fuels international trade and by implication, national and regional development is important.1 At the onset of the 21st Century, hardly two decades after a tide of violent civil strife swept across the West Africa, the discovery of oil and gas in the sub-region and the wider Gulf of Guinea promised to make it a geo-strategic region. However, transnational security threats such as terrorism and piracy, among others, add a new twist to the sub-region’s security dilemmas. Hitherto, threats to security in West Africa were largely conceptualized in terms of its member states’ their susceptibility to land-based internal sources of threats.2 Security, which, was conceptualized principally in ‘land-based’ terms has since the latter half of the 2010s, as a result of the deteriorating maritime security conditions along the Gulf of Guinea, has resulted in a paradigm shift to include sea-based security threats. Motley of maritime threats such as piracy and sea-based armed robbery, arms trafficking, human trafficking, illegal fishing, discarding of poisonous wastes and pollution of the sea, and emerging maritime ‘terrorism’ threaten to undermine maritime livelihood, travel, trade, and exploitation of resources of the region. The phenomena and dynamics of these maritime threats bring to the fore the currency that non-state actors and organised crime have achieved in today’s ever globalizing world, and international political economy, especially in terms of transnational security threats.
Securing energy resources is, however, not the only security concern confronting the sub-region. Protection of fish stocks, arms and drug trafficking, human trafficking, harbor security, and piracy undermine other marine commercial interests, threaten ages-old traditions and livelihoods, and scare away potential foreign investors. Illegal fishing alone is reported of robbing the Gulf of Guinea an estimated $350 million in revenue annually.\(^3\) The United Nations (UN) states that 90% drug trafficking in the sub region is conducted by Sea.\(^4\)

This study focuses on piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, its effects on West Africa and the efforts West African states, individually, collectively and in collaboration of other international actors have done to contain the menace of piracy. In recent times, apart from the Gulf of Aden and the Strait of Malacca, the Gulf of Guinea (GoG), where spiralling incidence of pirate have created an enclave of insecurity, has been identified as one of the risky sea-routes for maritime transport in light of threats engendered by pirates. There is growing awareness that the vast resources in the GoG are being plummeted by piracy. The scourge of piracy in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, and the negative ripples it can have on other littoral states in West Africa is grave. In the likelihood that the GoG is not shielded from insecurity, it would have adverse effect on human security. Oil and gas production levels would be significantly reduced and in turn, reduce the foreign exchange earnings of oil producing countries in the GoG.

The fishing industry, cited as providing employment to 5.6 million people and exports earnings of $711 million annually for West African states would be negatively affected as Illegal Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) in the GoG has dire consequences for the sustenance of the fishing industry in West Africa.\(^5\) For West Africa, a region most of whose straddle the GoG,\(^6\) the GoG is a strategic asset because of its potential for national and regional development. Regionally, since the security of West African states is interlocked, a
weakness in the security of one littoral state in the GoG can spread to others in the region. Importantly, resources from the GoG can help to resolve some of the challenges of regional integration in West Africa through creating incentives for increased intra-regional trade, good governance, harmonization of maritime policies, revamping of regional infrastructure, etc. The above stated reasons account for why combating maritime security must be of a priority for all West African states, be it littoral or land-locked. This is why the ascendancy of piracy and other related threats to the GoG must be of concern to all West African states. In 2008 for example, the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) reported at least 58 pirate attacks in the GoG, with Nigeria having the highest prevalence. More so in 2011, there was a rapid spread of piracy across Nigeria, Ghana, Cote d’Ivoire and Guinea with a total of about 18 attacks. The unfortunate aspect is that if criminal gangs detect a weakness in the maritime security of West African states, then it serves as an encouragement for them to engage in organized and transnational crimes such as arms and human trafficking, and illicit trade in narcotics.

Several measures have been undertaken to resolve maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea. The sophistication in maritime threat, in addition to the limited capabilities of the state navies in the region to ensure maritime security gave rise to the establishment of regimes to collectively police the GoG. Notable amongst these regimes are the Maritime Organisation of West and Central Africa (MOWCA) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC). These measures have failed to safeguard the GoG from threats originating from pirates, particularly from the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. This already has created a boomerang effects on Ghana, whose relatively new oil industry is an attractive avenue for pirates. The considered view of this work is that if the Gulf of Guinea is secured, it can serve as a resource pool for driving regional integration in West Africa. To that extent, what are the prospects of
impervious security in the Gulf of Guinea in relation to regional integration of West African states? Combating maritime insecurity therefore must be based on the collective approach by all West African states. However this collective approach is likely to be hindered by some challenges. To that extent, what are these challenges? What measures can be implemented in the form of recommendations?

1.2 Research Problem

The resource-rich GoG has understandably become one of the most active exploration and production zone for oil and gas in Africa. It has become a hub for transport but also an enclave of piracy and other related crimes including narcotics trade. From 2003 to 2011, incidents of piracy/armed robbery at sea had grown from 59 to 380 within the West African coast of the GoG. It is also on record that through IUU in the GoG, West African states lose about $300 million annually. It is also estimated that Nigeria alone loses several billions of dollars from oil bunkering and seizure of oil cargoes. Meanwhile regional integration in West Africa is in need of stimulants such as improved infrastructure and increased intra-regional trade.

The above raises the question how the issues of Maritime Security and Safety in the Gulf of Guinea can be secured. Admittedly, since 2010 West African states individually, collectively, and in collaboration with other international actors have invested both human and material resources in fighting the piracy menace. The challenge of securing/managing the Gulf of Guinea is enormous; does it require individual or collective effort? With most West African Countries lacking the essential platforms for Maritime protection, another question that arises is how ready are West African States to provide Maritime Security for their territorial and international Seas. Or the effective and efficient solution lies far beyond the borders of West
African nations and may require a critical blend of tangible and intangible resource of the world’s superpowers? Do West African states have the necessary resources to combat piracy and related crimes in the GoG? The study seeks to answer these questions.

1.3 Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- Examine threats to maritime security in the GoG;
- Explore the geostrategic importance of the GoG;
- Assess mechanisms adopted to resolve insecurity in the GoG thus far;
- Identify the challenges and prospects of combating maritime insecurity in the GoG;
- Make recommendations on how best to combat maritime insecurity.

1.4 Hypothesis

Combating maritime insecurity will lead to achievements of regional objectives of ECOWAS.

1.5 Scope of Work

This work focuses on piracy in the GoG although other related crimes are acknowledged. It examines piracy from primarily but not limited to insecurity in the Niger Delta region, Nigeria. This is because most of the literature is of the view that the menace of piracy in West Africa has its source from the Niger Delta Crisis. However with the extension of piracy activities to the rest of the West African sub-region there is the need for a more comprehensive study. Although other countries such as Angola and Cameroon straddle the GoG, this work focuses on threats to the GoG from the point of West Africa, a region with at least eleven states whose maritime waters are embedded in the GoG. This work adopts the
definition of piracy as provided for by the International Maritime Breaux (IMB),\(^{14}\) and broadens further the definition of piracy by the IMB to also include “security threats in the territorial waters of states”, a point that is not explicitly noted in the IMB definition.\(^{15}\)

### 1.6 Theoretical Framework

This study is based on Karl Deutsch’s pluralistic security communities. Despite the gargantuan progress made towards regional security cooperation worldwide, the traditional realist security premises of states as rational actors in pursuit of national security and international influence in an anarchical world persist. ‘Weak’ states are defined as being poor medium for ensuring domestic security. They are also conceptualised as a source of general insecurity in the interstate system. Nevertheless, as Krause and Williams note, for realists, ‘states are the subjects; anarchy is the condition.’\(^{16}\) This is all the more so given that the anarchical condition at the international level is itself a social construction, rather than a natural phenomenon. But for Wendt, there is nothing about the anarchy itself which forces states to treat it as an insecure self-help system. ‘If states find themselves in a self-help system, this is because their practices made it that way.’\(^{17}\) This unwillingness to conceptualise politics in non-state terms has a real significance for thinking about security. Walker asserts that the security of states has come to dominate our understanding of the meaning of security, ‘because other forms of political community have been rendered almost unthinkable.’\(^{18}\)

There is a growing body of literature on the general phenomenon of regionalism in world politics, particularly in the new regionalism that has emerged since the 1990s that are taking on security issues.\(^{19}\) According to the logic of practicality, practices are the result of inarticulate know-how that makes what is to be done self-evident or commonsensical.
Insights from philosophy, psychology, and sociology provide empirical and theoretical support for this view. Though complementary with other logics of social action, the logic of practicality is ontologically prior because it is located at the intersection of structure and agency. This article develops a theory of practice of security communities arguing that peace exists in and through practice when security officials' practical sense makes diplomacy the self-evident way to solving interstate disputes. In order words, it is practical and self-evident that contemporary transnational security threats cannot be conceptualised form a state centric perspective; neither can it be approached and secured efficiently from national and conventional security regimes.

A security community is a number of states, sub-region or region whose members have evolved and come to share common normative values, whereby instrumental use of violence has been banished, become unlikely or unthinkable. Richard van Wagenen was the first to coin the term in 1950s, however it was the seminal work of Karl Deutsch et al in 1957 that the concept of security communities became accepted theoretically as a paradigm. They labeled a security community as “a group of people” trusting “that they have come to agreement on at least this one point: that common social problems must and can be resolved by processes of ‘peaceful change.’” People in a security community are bound together by the “sense of community” undergirded by common goals such as magnanimity, trust, and empathy. These common interests foster peaceful resolution of socio-political conflicts normally by adherence to norms, rules, procedures, institutions, and alternative lifestyles. Deutsch made a distinction between amalgamated and pluralistic security communities. Amalgamated stated are those that denounced their sovereign independence and become unitary states in search and promotion of peaceful co-existence. However, pluralistic security communities retain their sovereignty even as they seek peaceful co-existence through
collaboration on issues of mutual interest. Deutsch argues that the pluralistic security communities are easier to establish and maintain than their amalgamated counterparts.

Contemporarily, the concept has gained greater international currency as a result of the redefinition of the concept of security in more pluralist terms, and due to the contribution made to it by constructivist scholars. Adler and Barnett redefined the security community by shared identities, values, and meanings, multi-purpose direct interactions, and reciprocal long-term goals. They outlined a typical evolution of a security community along a continuum of nascent-ascendant-mature: denoting their ability to meet the rudimentary conditions of peaceful change and capacity to respond collectively to common threats through supranational or transnational mechanisms, respectively.

Deutsch’s pluralistic security communities is very relevant to developments in contemporary West Africa. States are independents but they have adopted a number of protocols that prohibit war among its neighbours, and unconstitutional change of governments. They have equally resolved to collectively fight terrorism, money laundering, among other transnational threats. Besides, the concept reflects the ascendance and currency of non-state actors, single issues, and emerging normative consensus in fighting transnational crimes.

Security and community are being linked together in many creative ways, whether in terms of human security or regional stability. This phenomenon essentially re-writes the traditional state-centric security discourse. Again, contemporary cooperation and collaboration among states and non-state actors to secure communal, regional and international security are increasingly being seen as ends in themselves. It is in this manner that securing of the Gulf of
Guinea maritime security is a collective responsibility that requires the collaborative efforts of both state and non-state actors.

1.7 Literature Review

Security remains an important issue among states. As a result there have been several measures to combat all forms of insecurity ranging from international terrorism and piracy. For African states the necessity of combating maritime insecurity cannot be gainsaid, owing to the resources that maritime spaces offer to African countries. In addition globalization has ensured that maritime spaces remain integral to trade and communication, and even as a tool that can help states to promote their foreign interests, as mentioned at the onset of this chapter.

In a globalized world, it is imperative to ascertain the linkage between marine spaces and globalization and one hand, and the exacerbation of insecurity on the other hand. In his work *Globalization and Maritime Power*, Sam Tangredi acknowledges the role of globalization in advancing the intensification of maritime commerce and communications. However, Tangredi states that globalization has become the “dominant element of the current security environment”. This is because the opening-up of borders and interdependence of states on marine resources has also led to security concerns. Currently, terrorists and other armed groups commit predation on maritime spaces. In Africa, for instance, the GoG and Gulf of Aden have maintained prominence in maritime discourse as a result of insecurity.

As a global common, maritime space is also regulated by international law, specifically, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). In his article *Regional Arrangement in the Oceans*, Alexander highlights that prior to the First Law of the Sea
Conference (UNCLOS I), all oceans spaces, except narrow bands of coastal waters, were conceived of as high seas which were open to use by all nations. This situation was favourable to the interests of the major maritime powers but without the preparedness of these powers to make adequate concessions to the special needs of less developed nations. This created a vacuum that needed to be filled to favour less developed nations through cooperation with either the developed nations or amongst themselves. In 1977 when drafting the third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III), Alexander identified the influence of developing states which operated together under the Group of 77. Alexander mentions that “region” has 2 connotations. One relating to the expanse of water or sub-expanse of water such as the Atlantic and GoG respectively. Conversely, the other connotation is a group of states having similar interests in ocean matters. For the purpose of identification, he stated 3 main types of marine regions. These include physical regions, management regions and operational regions. While the physical regions are identified based on the physical conformity, the others are defined by a shared problem and steps taken to solve management matters respectively. Additionally, the latter regions provide a more effective basis for problem solving.

Hekken and Brettle are of the view that a large part of African littoral waters is still unsafe despite international efforts to combat piracy and the unprecedented times for maritime related economic development witnessed by African states. Marco and Allison argue that the prevalence of illegal maritime activities is not merely limited to state inadequacies like weak governance, under-resourced forces and incomprehensive concept of engagement in maritime security sector reforms by the international community. They argue that in addition to the following challenges, state officials are colluding with non-state actors by providing them privileged information about the movement of cargoes. This enables non-state actors
such as criminal groups and gangs to accurately predict the movement of oil cargoes in the territorial waters of states in order to undertake piracy.

In their article, *Danger in the Gulf of Guinea*, Galamas and Bilala argue about the spite of piracy attacks in the Gulf of Guinea despite numerous efforts by the countries therein to combat this menace. They indicate that while piracy attacks in the Gulf of Aden have decreased, West Africa’s growing exploitation of its natural resources is turning the GoG into a piracy hotspot. Also, they allude that the region’s natural resources, notably oil, cocoa and minerals, have made it a major commercial hub and piracy amongst other illicit activities is growing both in scope and intensity. However, Francisco and Anne did not highlight if piracy was conducted in isolation or performed in conjunction with other illicit activities like illegal oil bunkering and kidnapping.

Francisco and Anne contend that the collective efforts undertaken by states in the GoG region are commendable but the mixed success indicates shortcomings. They suggest that one major shortcoming to the success of these efforts is the elusiveness in achieving consensus strategies on combating piracy. Francisco and Anne traced this shortcoming to the different campaigns undertaken by several regional organisations within the region. Notably, organisations like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC) and Maritime Organisation of West and Central Africa (MOWCA) have all established different maritime security efforts. Though Francisco and Anne have commended the commitment of leaders of regional bodies like ECOWAS, ECCAS and GGC to work together, such commitment is contradicted by their inability to cohere their anti-piracy strategies.
In his article *Enhancing Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea*, Gilpin gives a grim view of the extent of piracy in the GoG as the 11 coastal countries along the West and Central African countries that lie between Ghana and Angola.\(^{30}\) Gilpin posits that the GoG as one of the most troubled global waterways by topping the list of piracy hot spots worldwide since late 1990s according to International Maritime Bureau (IMB), thus, reflecting a heightened level of maritime insecurity in the region. Gilpin suggests that the main vulnerabilities in the GoG were identified in maritime domain awareness, legislative and judicial arrangements and weak infrastructure, as a result of the relatively ephemeral role of maritime security in many ECOWAS states. However, considering the enormous economic value of the GoG, Gilpin recommends a focus on maritime security because it can help in the promotion of human security, considering the economic potential it yields.

Although Gilpin draws attention to deterioration of security in the GoG, he fails to demonstrate the extent to which the security of the GoG in linked to the socio-economic challenges of the Niger Delta region, Nigeria. This is critical because of the fact that the continuous spiralling of piracy in the GoG has been attributed largely to the poor state of security in, as noted already, the Niger Delta.\(^{31}\) Attempts at combating piracy in the GoG, therefore, cannot be divorced from that of the Niger Delta region, bringing into sharp focus the inability of Nigeria to bring to a successful conclusion, militancy and underdevelopment in the Niger Delta region of This positive correlation between insecurity in the Niger Delta and the GoG implies that any attempt at combating piracy.

In his article, *The Geo-strategy of Oil in the Gulf of Guinea: Implications for Regional Stability* Freedom Onuoha identifies two potential threats to security in the GoG. The first
aspect deals with how the security inadequacies of the GoG are accentuated by that of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. To this end, Onuoha argues that:

[W]est Africa] is replete with weak and fragile states, high circulation of small arms and light weapons (SALW), oil theft, sea piracy and insurgency. Particularly worrisome of these threats are sea piracy and the lingering militancy in the oil-rich Niger Delta, caused by prolonged years of oil-induced environmental degradation and protracted marginalization of the region by successive managers of the Nigerian post-colonial state.32

The second aspect deals with the geo-strategic importance of resource endowment in the GoG, particularly oil.33 This is against the backdrop that the region’s hydrocarbons have not escaped the attention of global powers in the international system, such as the United States of America (USA) and China. Oil from the GoG is important to the economic security of industrialized countries, China and USA. On one hand, these countries are aware that security is needed to ensure an unhindered supply of oil from the GoG, while oil-producers such as Nigeria also need to their security agencies to safeguard oil infrastructure. This above mutual interest scenario has, for example, enabled Nigeria to import arms from both China and the USA.34 The concern is that the exportation of arms into Nigeria could potentially be available to militant groups in the Niger Delta region, who then can use it for piracy within the territorial waters of Nigeria and that of the whole of the GoG.

If any region has to prioritize maritime security, it must be ECOWAS. This can be explained by observing two critical points, which form the core of this work. The first reason is that for several years, ECOWAS has worked towards regional security. If issues of insecurity have emerged in the area of maritime security, it falls within the domain of ECOWAS’ institutional objectives. The second reason is that maritime security cannot be overlooked because of its implications for West African states. If West African states focus on maritime security, they would have recognized that oil and gas resources from the GoG can augment the energy needs of the sub-region. Resources from the GoG can also be invested in regional projects such as improvement in rail and road infrastructure. Fishing in the GoG can also
provide revenue to states such as Liberia, Guinea, Benin, etc, while oil and gas exploration in Nigeria and Ghana would be safeguarded from armed militia and rebel groups that rely on oil rents for survival.

The above noted relevance of the resource endowments of the GoG is an indication that maritime security, if considered as a core issue in regional integration discourse, can help in assuaging some of the difficulties which have hindered regional integration. The collective interests of all the states that border the Gulf of Guinea and all West African states are guaranteed if they cooperate under ECOWAS because regionalism offers a good platform for regional development. Other actors such as the USA and the European Union (EU) are useful partners that can augment efforts by individual West African states also have to craft mechanisms and invest in their respective naval infrastructure, and the ECOWAS to solve the security problems in the GoG. Other sub-regional organizations in Africa, whose countries border the GoG, as mentioned previously, can be part of an overall strategy to combat piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. As noted previously, it is noteworthy that ECOWAS and other sub-regional bodies have already initiated measures to jointly work on the security of the GoG.

1.8 Rationale of Study
Several researches have been carried out on maritime insecurity in the GoG. However this work links maritime security to regional integration by demonstrating the extent to which a secured GoG can help in regional integration while combating insecurity with emphasis on piracy.

1.9 Sources of Data and Methodology
The study relies on mainly secondary sources of data. Reference materials conference proceedings and reports, books, journals and articles were consulted from the Ghana Armed
Forces and Staff College Library, Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD) and Balme Libraries, University of Ghana, Legon. The extracted data from these sources are qualitatively analysed and related to the key themes in this work.

1.10 Arrangement of Chapters

The study is arranged into four chapters. Chapter One consists of the introduction and research design; Chapter two discusses the importance of the GoG and threats to insecurity posed to it; Chapter three comprises an assessment of efforts undertaken to protect the GoG, the challenges thus far, and the prospects of a secured GoG vis-a-vis regional integration. Lastly, Chapter Four contains the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.
Endnotes

2 Barry Buzan, People States and Fear
4 will
6 The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is made up of fifteen countries. West African states whose maritime borders are in close proximity to the Gulf of Guinea are: Senegal, the Gambia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Cote d’Ivoire, and Ghana.
13 Ibid. The eleven countries have either their territorial waters in the GoG or are closely borered by the states that straddle the Gulf of Guinea. These West African states are Senegal, the Gambia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Cote d’Ivoire, and Ghana.
14 The IMB defines piracy as “act of boarding or attempting to board any vessel with the apparent intent to commit theft or any other crime, and with the apparent intent or capability to use force in furtherance of that act.”
15 Article 101 of the United Nations Convention on the law of the Sea (UNCLOS) defines piracy as: “(a) Any illegal acts of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by the crews or passengers of a private ship or a private aircraft, and directed: (i)On the high seas, against another ship or aircraft, or against persons or property on board such ship or aircraft; (ii)Against a ship, aircraft, persons or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any state; (b) Any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or of an aircraft with knowledge of acts making it a pirate ship or aircraft;(c) Any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b). Based on the above piracy per the UNCLOS can not occur in the territorial waters of states. Any crime in the territorial waters of states can, therefore, not be legally defined as piracy. That of the IMB, which is considered more inclusive states as follows: “(an) act of boarding or attempting to board any vessel with the apparent intent to commit theft or any other crime, and with the apparent intent or capability to use force in furtherance of that act.”
18 Walker went on to explore some of these issues at length in Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994). The ‘anarchy problematique was also explored by Dalby, see S Dalby, ‘Security, Modernity, Ecology: The Dilemmas of Post-Cold War Security Discourse’ Alternatives, Vol 17, (1992), p. 105.

25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid. p 89.
30 Gilpin, R., op.cit.
33 Ibid.
CHAPTER TWO
OVERVIEW OF SECURITY THREATS IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

2.0 Introduction

This chapter of the work assesses piracy in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG). The socio-economic and geographical factors that highlight the vulnerability of West African states with regard to insecurity, thereby the certainty of piracy and how it fuels other transnational crimes are also examined. This assessment is done against the backdrop of the strategic importance of the GoG.

2.1 The Socio-Economic Significance of the Gulf of Guinea

It was also explained in the previous Chapter, the extent to which the GoG is geo-strategically important to the energy security of the globe. Table 1 shows the crude oil production level for some regions of the World in relation to the GoG. Additionally, the GoG has an outstanding global energy equation in terms of its deep sea reserve as indicated in Table 2. The GoG holds the World's third largest deep water reserves with about 52.48 billion barrels of proven reserves which by far surpasses those of the United States of America (USA) and China, having 20.68 and 25.58 billion barrels of proven reserves respectively.

It can be inferred that the gargantuan potential of deep water oil reserves in the GoG has generated a lot of interest from the Western World, especially the USA, who seek this as a major source of energy.¹ Oil production figures are projected to increase by about 19 per cent by 2030 as shown in Table 3 below. It is expected that Western oil companies would have invested between $40 billion and $60 billion in the GoG between 1999 and 2019.² Since petroleum energy is vital to many countries including the USA, the GoG is likely to have
increasing investments in decades to come. A combined reading of Tables 1-3 shows one significant point: That the GoG is integral to supplying oil in the international market and therefore, is an important aspect to the energy security of the globe.

FIG. 1 MAP SHOWING GULF OF GUINEA MARITIME ENVIRONMENT

Source: Encarta Encyclopaedia 2004
### TABLE 1: GLOBAL OIL PRODUCTION AS AT DECEMBER 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial</th>
<th>Region/Country</th>
<th>Daily Production (Million Barrels per day)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Gulf of Guinea</td>
<td>5.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Persian Gulf</td>
<td>26.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>10.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>10.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>4.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>2.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### TABLE 2: DEEP WATER RESERVES OF CRUDE OIL AS AT DECEMBER 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial</th>
<th>Region/Country</th>
<th>Proven Reserves (Billions Barrels)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Gulf of Guinea</td>
<td>52.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Persian Gulf</td>
<td>794.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>60.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>20.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>25.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>10.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>13.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 3: PROJECTED OIL PRODUCTION OF GULF OF GUINEA 2010 TO 2030

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2030</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(c)</td>
<td>(d)</td>
<td>(f)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>3,042,000</td>
<td>3,729,000</td>
<td>4,422,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>2,026,000</td>
<td>2,549,000</td>
<td>3,288,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Equatorial Guinea</td>
<td>466,000</td>
<td>653,000</td>
<td>724,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Congo Brazzaville</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>314,000</td>
<td>327,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Gabon</td>
<td>291,000</td>
<td>279,000</td>
<td>269,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Cote d’Ivoire</td>
<td>71,000</td>
<td>83,000</td>
<td>94,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>72,000</td>
<td>66,000</td>
<td>61,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Congo</td>
<td>33,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>23,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6317000</td>
<td>7723000</td>
<td>9233000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Another valuable resource found in the GoG is natural gas. Natural gas has become increasingly important to meet world energy demands. Natural gas now accounts for 22 percent of the world’s energy consumption in light of increasing demand. One point to note is that natural gas is expected to generate electricity among West African states through the West African Gas Pipeline Project (WAGPP). It is predicted that the demand for natural gas will grow significantly in the foreseeable future. Table 4 reveals the statistics of world proven gas reserve. Considering the quantity of gas reserves in the GoG, it is safe to say that the region will continue to play a significant role in meeting global demands for natural gas for decades to come.
### TABLE 4: WORLD PROVEN GAS RESERVES AS AT DECEMBER 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial</th>
<th>Region/Country</th>
<th>Estimated Proved Gas Reserves (Trillion Cubic Feet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Gulf of Guinea</td>
<td>203.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Persian Gulf</td>
<td>2,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>1,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>272.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Unlike the Gulf of Aden, the GoG is not an international shipping route for vessels transiting from the US and Europe to the Middle East. However, the GoG serves as the sea lines of communication from the region to US and Europe for the purpose of transportation and global trade which is mainly conducted via the sea. Moreover, the unrestricted nature of the GoG and absence of natural hazards like typhoons and hurricanes makes the GoG a suitable route for navigation as the propensity of accidents at sea is quite low.

#### 2.2 Threats to the Gulf of Guinea

There is no denying the fact that the GoG is buffeted by myriad of domestic, regional and transnational threats, making it vulnerable. The insecurity which pervades the GoG has served as a disincentive for potential investments, resulting in a colossal $2 billion financial loss annually, a significant amount which could have helped transformed the haemorrhaging economies of West African states if applied judiciously.⁵
The end of the Cold War and the wave of globalization of crimes have culminated in transnational crimes in maritime domains. These crimes include piracy, illegal immigration, environmental security, economic and financial security, information security, armed robbery at sea, stowaways, human trafficking, pollution and small arms trafficking, among others. These crimes generate vast amounts of money for international organized crime syndicates and terrorists organizations. Laundered through the international financial system, this money provides a huge source of virtually untraceable funds. These monetary assets can then be used to bribe government officials, bypass established financial controls, and could be used to fund additional illegal activities in the EEZ. In Developing countries such as those found along the coast of West Africa, these transnational threats could seriously undermine or collapse the political, social, economic and judicial systems.

2.2.1 Socio-Economic and Geographical Features: Primed for Insecurity?

To understand the insecurity in the GoG, it is necessary to draw attention about the extent to which the socio-economic and geographical features of West Africa is a recipe for insecurity. Geographically, the arbitrary demarcation of the boundaries of West African states by colonialists made the region prone to insecurity as a result of the emergence of splinter states constituted by diverse groups with divergent viewpoints about nation-building. This is because among other factors, the geography of West Africa “runs inward from the coast, cutting across ethnic, cultural, and linguistic boundaries.” This unpleasant geography is cited as “the greatest obstacle to the achievement of more stable West Africa.”

The unpleasant nature of the geographical boundaries of West Africa is also enmeshed in that of the GoG, which encompasses several countries “with a coastline of nearly 3500 miles that
runs in an arc from West Africa to Angola.” Such a vast coastline means that West African states are confronted with a maritime space that, if not adequately policed, would become “ungoverned spaces” to be exploited by pirates. The fact that pirates have exploited the security gaps in the GoG, leading to loss of lives and investments running into several billions of dollars across West Africa, shows the extent to which the GoG has become a high risk terrain for the maritime industry.

The economic weaknesses of West African states persist while dependence on external sources for their socio-economic development persists. From structural adjustment to economic recovery to the “economics of democratization”, West African states have had to depend on International Financial Institutions (IFIS) for aid. Regional economic integration has failed to enable West African states to break the shackles of poverty, leading to low investment, high inflation, low volume of intra-regional trade, conflicts, poor culture of savings, weak infrastructure, etc. In recent times, China has also become a key source of funding for states such as Ghana and Nigeria, although it is yet to be seen if the aid from China and other sources have been invested into maritime security.

Cumulatively, lack of economic development and poverty, and low investments into maritime security have had the effect of undermining efforts at combating maritime threats. For a significant number of governments in West Africa, it would be inconceivable to commit resources to combating maritime threats when resources are also needed to fight widespread poverty and possibly, win the next election. Security across West Africa is fragile, notwithstanding ECOWAS’ appreciable resolve to ameliorate insecurity in the region. Unfortunately, as mentioned already, the fragile state of security on land in some West African states has adversely affected the territorial waters of the GoG. Perhaps no one
provides a better understanding on the land-water security nexus and how that relates to piracy than the current Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), who is of the opinion that:

Piracy cannot be resolved only at sea. Despite the commendable efforts of the many navies patrolling the coasts, there is simply too much water to patrol and an almost endless supply of pirates. Stability on land would, undoubtedly, improve the situation [in the GoG].

For example, arms proliferation on land can enable aid pirates’ access to arms to fuel conflicts in the GoG. Also if governments fail to provide basic and public goods such as infrastructure and health, disgruntled people would take up arms and become pirates in the GoG. On the other hand, the inequitable use of natural resource from maritime domains has been mentioned as one of the causes of conflicts in West Africa. In Nigeria for instance, several decades of oil and gas production has not transformed the lives of its citizenry. This is more baffling if one takes into consideration the fact that over $300 billion dollars of oil rent has accrued to the state. The unfortunate aspect is that the naval force of Nigeria has not seen any significant improvement in its capabilities. This has resulted in increasing pirate activities in the Niger Delta region as different groups emerge, such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta region (MEND), resorting to violence for equitable development.

From an operational perspective, the activities of pirates includes “hostage-taking of oil workers, sabotage of oil facilities, attacks on oil vessels, illegal oil bunkering, kidnapping and ransom receipts, among others.” A unique feature of piracy in the GoG, in contrast to other havens of piracy including the Gulf of Aden off the coast of Somalia, is that “piracy is the organized, sometimes highly sophisticated, illicit taking of oil. They steal the oil, make a couple of black market circles of the stuff, and then deposit it back into the global supply.” In the face of these threats from pirates, it would have been expected that maritime
infrastructure in West Africa would have recorded an overhaul. But if Africa’s largest producer of oil, Nigeria, is handicapped in the area of maritime security then what about others states such as Ghana, Benin, Togo and Cote d’ Ivoire, who are yet to realise significant windfall from exploration of oil resource? The stark truth is that West African states that straddle the GoG are ill-prepared to confront insecurity in the GoG.

That West African states belong to the ‘small power’ category with reference to their ability to fight maritime insecurity, therefore, is not surprising. This categorization means that West African states do not invest into maritime security. They have not purchased ships and patrol boats to police their territorial waters. Apart from Nigeria with a relatively robust naval capability, the rest of West Africa cannot boast of any meaningful naval capability. They have to depend, just like they have done in the case economic development, on external sources of funding when defending their territorial waters. This may not suffice in the long term because donors can decide to halt funding without any notice. Inability to safeguard territorial waters can also spur transnational threats in the GoG. This has led to increasing incidence of piracy in the GoG has shown on Table 5 below.

2.2.2 Porous Maritime Situational Awareness
At the crux of the increasing spate of piracy in the GoG is the porous nature of maritime situational awareness. Maritime situational awareness comprises a continuum of activities including information sharing and collaboration among various stakeholders in maritime transport, trade, surveillance and security. This requires that shipping lines, insurers, merchants, governments, coast guards, navies, air force and other seafarers have to develop a credible database on intelligence gathering at sea, routes of ships that use the GoG, risky spots in the GoG, pre-emptive measures against pirates at sea, etc. The vast stretches of the
GoG requires adequate policing to ward off any threats to maritime security. The GoG has become susceptible to insecurity because those states that border the GoG lack the logistics and capacity to safeguard their maritime domains. For West African states that border the GoG, capacity to ensure domain awareness is absent.

There are no safeguards to protect territorial waters and governments have not demonstrated any yearning to establish maritime domain awareness regime that would halt any potential insecurity in the GoG. In a technologically advanced globe, where countries have the technology to detect threats thousands of miles off their territorial waters, and even beneath sea level, the porous nature of maritime domain awareness show how vulnerable the GoG to pirates and other transnational crimes.

2.3 Stormy Waters: Profiling Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea

Table 5 shows the record of actual and attempted attacks against ships in the GoG. The GoG had about 369 pirate attacks on ships between 2003 and 2011, with 235 of these occurring within Nigeria alone. Nigeria had a peak record of 42 incidences in 2007 but declined to its lowest of 10 incidences in 2011. In 2011, neighbouring Benin and Togo reached their highest records of 20 and 6 respectively. It could be inferred that Nigeria’s efforts at combating piracy in 2011 may have caused pirates to seek Benin and Togo as alternative operating areas. This indicates that the problem has been pushed towards Benin and Togo which have lower capacity for maritime law enforcement.22
**TABLE 5: ACTUAL AND ATTEMPTED ATTACKS AGAINST SHIPS IN AFRICAN WATERS, 2003-2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cote d'Ivoire</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Togo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equatorial Guinea</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sao Tome and Principe</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabon</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR Congo</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>52</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from International Maritime Bureau Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships Annual Reports 2003 to 2011.

As noted earlier, piracy and armed robbery at sea in the GoG largely involve the looting of cargo, stores and other valuables found on board ships. In some cases, pirates attack ships and kidnap foreign members of the crew for ransom. However, it is more common for pirates in the region to attack tankers and siphon their cargo. These tankers are sometimes held up for 2
weeks while the cargo is transferred to smaller vessels and sold to interested buyers. This method of operation differs from the style of demanding for ransom for the return of a hijacked ship and its cargo that is commonly practiced in the Gulf of Aden. The growing nature of pirate attacks within the region, as seen in Table 6, points to an increase in organised crime activities, particularly along the Togo-Benin-Nigeria-maritime axis. The region has large, poor and restive population emerging from a wave of violent conflict despite the availability of abundant energy resources. Some members of the populace in the region are lured into piracy and armed robbery at sea due to the harsh living conditions in the midst of rich energy resources.

The situation seems worsened by oil exploration, environmental pollution, politics and challenges in the region, particularly the Niger Delta, which has motivated pirates to continue their activities. Over the past decade, piracy and armed robbery at sea in the GoG has been most prevalent around Nigeria's maritime domain. Such development is not surprising considering the fact that Nigeria is the highest crude oil exporter in the region with a daily crude oil production of 2,555.35 thousand barrels as at 2012. Consequently, most pirates are bound to operate within Nigeria's maritime domain as tankers transit the area regularly. It could be adjudged that during the Niger Delta militancy era, piracy was perpetrated by militants for the purpose of equitable distribution of national development. However, after the amnesty granted to militants in August 2009 by late President Musa Yar’Adua of Nigeria, piracy and armed robbery at sea took the dimension of organised crime and transnational security threat. Pirate attacks such as the September 2011 attacks on the tankers MT CANCALE STAR and MT OCEAN CENTURION off the coast of Benin and Togo respectively attest to the transnational nature of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the GoG.
Related to the problem of piracy is the increasing incidence of IUU fishing in the GoG, as explained in the previous chapter of this work. In states like Nigeria, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, the number of fishermen operating at sea has drastically reduced over the years. This has further led to economic hardship amongst the masses who engage in fishing as occupation. The attacks on fishermen left many trawlers idle since 2008, thereby resulting in job losses. The attendant fall in fish catches have raised the cost of sea food and reduced fish protein intake by teeming number of people. As a result, frustration exists amongst such affected people, thereby stirring up dissention towards the government and undermining political stability. In the long run, the general security situation in the GoG, if not stemmed, would degenerates into intractable security challenges.

2.3.1 The Problem of Smuggling

The paucity of policing of coastal waters across West African means smuggling by sea across the sub-region is very high. It is obvious that traders, in their quest to deny states the revenues needed for development, would obviously opt to pursue activities that inure to their benefits, i.e. avoiding the tax through smuggling. Ultimately, lots of revenue is lost as a result the inability to conduct rigorous patrols across the territorial seas of states across West Africa. This deficiency could however be obviated if West African states evolve an integrated or regional approach in tackling marine security. Through a regional approach, states across West Africa can complement each other apparently to address the loss of revenue as a result of smuggling.

2.3.2 Illicit Trade in Drugs and Proliferation of Arms

West Africa has become a hub of illicit trade in weapons and narcotics. Arms, particularly small arms and light weapons have devastated the sub-region as exemplified by countries
including Liberia and Sierra Leone. It has been proven that “the availability of small arms in West Africa is a very serious problem as “while small arms and lights weapons (SALWs) do not, of course, cause conflicts, they soon become part of the conflict equation by fuelling and exacerbating underlying tensions, generating more insecurity, deepening the sense of crisis, and adding to the number of casualties.” But the availability of arms poses threats to not only security (land) but also marine. Somali pirates have shown that easy access to small arms and light weapons can successfully aid marine-related crimes. With the widespread nature of small arms and lights weapons in the sub-region, therefore, the signs are foreboding. Easy access to the foregoing no doubt will be an incentive for gangs who are motivated to partake in nefarious activities onshore.

Besides the prevalent of small arms and light weapons, West African countries have gained notoriety as both transit and destination point for illicit drugs. Drug cartels spanning South America to Europe, have often exploited the laxity in the security of West African states, and transported huge volumes of drugs via littoral states in West Africa. Countries including Ghana and Senegal are targets, using vessels and canoes which inexplicably escape the attention of security operatives. Although West African states have been overwhelmed by drugs trade, there appears to be no concerted efforts at remedying the effects of this practice, and ultimately combat drug trafficking. The porous maritime features of the GoG will further encourage a thriving and flourishing business in narcotics.

2.3.3 Unreported and Unregulated Fishing

One of the challenges of the GoG is the illegal poaching of resources such as fish. Exporting fish, for example, can provide revenue for government. However as mentioned in previous chapters of this study, West African states have been unable to reap optimal benefits from

31
fish stocks as they are unable to exercise control over their maritime territories. It has to be mentioned that poaching has cost implications for the sub-region as it is estimated that the sub-region incurs a loss of about $370 million annually as a result of poaching by vessels from Asia, Europe which are obviously more sophisticated than most vessels within the sub-region. These challenges are exacerbated as naval forces operating within the sub-region do not have the capacity to deflect any potential threats from aggressors. There is also a nexus between poaching and human security. For instance, the inability of vessels to harvest fish in large quantities has the rippling effect of reducing the quantum of seafood on the local market. Meanwhile, fish is a significant source of livelihoods for households and individuals and is a veritable source of proteins, according to data gleaned from international institutions, particularly the United Nations (UN).

Poachers from outside the sub-region continue to use their overwhelming naval power to stymied efforts by vessels within the sub-region, particularly those within the fishing communities to generate income as they are unable to have bumper harvest, and by inference, unable to generate enough income for livelihood. Poaching could be nipped in the bud if West African states collectively evolve a mechanism which would promote a hands-on approach to confronting the poaching menace. However, considering the lack of patrol vessels in the sub-region to police the marine domain of the sub-region, the incidence of poaching could rise considerably and may never be halted if the protection of maritime territories is not promoted.

2.4 Mutually Reinforcing Threats to the Gulf of Guinea

The illicit activities plaguing security within the GoG are interrelated. Piracy is often interrelated with other crimes like illegal oil bunkering, drug trafficking and illegal arms sale.
This has become possible because security lapses in the GoG have encouraged other gangs to promote insecurity in the GoG. This has led to increasing incidences of transnational crimes such as drug and human trafficking, and small arms trafficking, among others. The perpetuation of these transnational crimes aid pirates in the GoG. The point is that transnational crimes are interdependent. In addition transnational crime syndicates use their resources to influence people in authority, thereby evading prosecution. The fact if there are lapses in the security architecture of the GoG it would help transnational crimes to flourish based on a vicious cycle of insecurity. Pirates need arms so that would encourage the proliferation of arms and light weapons; narcotic peddlers have an interest in weakened security in the GoG so they can continue to make West Africa a transit and destination points for drugs from South America.

To sum up, it cannot be denied that piracy in the GoG is threatening the application of resources for both national and regional development. This creates doubt about the long term efficacy of the GoG if the increasing spate of piracy is not abated. Although it can be noticed that Niger Delta area is at the heart of the security problems of the GoG, other West African states that border the GoG are also at risk and must work together for security in the GoG. This involves myriad of programs and strategies from national to regional levels, and that of joint initiatives with developed countries. An evaluation of these measures is done in the next chapter.
Endnotes

2 Onuoha, F.C, op.cit.
3 See Pham, P., op.cit.
4 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
15 Land is being used in a restrictive sense, that is, excluding water bodies.
30 Ibid.
CHAPTER THREE

ASSESSING PROGRESS TOWARDS SECURITY IN THE GULF OF GUINEA: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

3.0 Introduction

Combating piracy in the GoG has spurred states to work together. To this end several measures have been implemented. This chapter assesses the measures adopted at the state, regional and international levels to combat piracy in the GoG. The challenges of the initiatives are also examined, and the prospects of a safeguarded GoG to regional integration are also explained.

3.1 State Initiatives to Fight Piracy

States have also taken laudable steps in enhancing their individual maritime domain awareness capability. Sao Tome and Principe, Nigeria and Ghana are currently leading the way in enhancing their individual maritime awareness capabilities. Sao Tome and Principe and Nigeria, aided by the United States of America (USA) has established some Regional Maritime Awareness Capability (RMAC) centres along her coastline.\(^1\) The RMAC is basically a surveillance system composed of Automatic Identification System, surveillance radars, cameras and marine radios into a common user interface Computer.\(^2\) It has the capability of providing radar and visual coverage of at least 37 nautical miles (nm) radius while the night navigation camera covers 5 – 7 nm radius depending on weather conditions.\(^3\)

In addition, Nigeria has established an elaborate security structure called Operation Pulo Shield in January 2012.\(^4\) This was established to combat militancy in the Niger Delta but was transformed to eliminate piracy, crude oil theft and pipeline vandalism, amongst others within Nigeria's maritime domain. Operation Pulo Shield draws on the capacity of the security
services of the Nigerian Army, Nigerian Navy, Nigerian Air force and Nigeria Police in combating illicit activities in the GoG.

Ghana, assisted by the USA, has recently established a Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) Centre which has similar characteristics with Nigeria's RMAC as was alluded to by Lieutenant Commander Samuel Ayelozono of the Ghana Navy Eastern Naval Command at Tema.\(^5\) Though the MDA centre is still in the installation phase as at 8 August 2013, it has great prospects for improved awareness of Ghana's maritime domain. Both the RMAC and MDA centres in Sao Tome and Principe, Nigeria and Ghana respectively aim at boosting awareness of the maritime environment. Thus far these measures have focused on combating piracy in the territorial waters of Ghana and Nigeria, not much can be said for states like Liberia, Benin and Togo who lack such facilities to enhance their MDA capabilities. The concern is that pirates could take the lacuna in states like Liberia, Benin and Togo to perpetrate further acts of piracy in the sub region.

Another measure adopted by some GoG states in managing piracy and armed robbery at sea is through procurement of patrol ships. Ships are a \textit{sine-qua-non} for the projection of sea power and security of a nation’s Sea Line Of Communication (SLOC). Additionally, they are paramount in curbing illicit activities within a nation’s maritime domain. In January 2012, Nigeria acquired an Offshore Patrol Vessel named Nigerian Navy Ship THUNDER which has the ability to conduct sustained sea patrol for a maximum of 45 days.\(^6\) Through this latest acquisition, the Nigerian Navy has arrested several suspected perpetrators of illegal oil bunkering and other maritime crimes.\(^7\)
Likewise, Ghana recently added 4 Fast Attack Crafts with a maximum sea endurance of 20 days to her naval inventory in November 2012. The addition of these ships has bolstered the sea patrol efforts towards combating piracy and other illicit activities in the GoG. It is expected that the presence of numerous patrol ships and their patrolling activities would deter potential pirates from operating. However, the immediate beneficiaries of these sea patrols are the states which acquired the vessels. As a result, piracy and armed robbery at sea has comparatively reduced over time. However, the latest trend is that pirates have begun to relocate their activities into weaker neighbouring countries like Benin and Togo.

Additionally, the threat of contemporary piracy has brought about bilateral and sub-regional collaboration among the littoral states and their security forces, especially naval forces, to synergize and build capacity to surmount the maritime security challenges in the GoG. The governments of Nigeria and Benin set up a combined maritime operation for the patrol of their waters in October 2011. The bilateral cooperation, code named Operation Prosperity, is in line with the Maritime Organisation of West and Central Africa (MOWCA) coastguard function network initiative, backed by the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) boats through a public-private partnership pact with Global West Company.

It is expected that the combined operation would expand to involve the navies of Ghana and Togo so as to increase the span of surveillance and reduce maritime threats. The collaboration by such states in combating piracy amongst other illicit maritime activities attest to the transnational nature of the threat within the region, thereby requiring cooperation to manage. Such collaboration reduces the bureaucracy in obtaining diplomatic approval for hot pursuit in another country’s territorial waters. Also, state collaboration promotes intelligence
gathering. Thus, it would benefit states in the GoG to collaborate in order to effectively combat piracy and other illicit maritime activities within the region.

### 3.2 Sub-Regional Initiatives to Fight Piracy

As part of efforts to combat piracy and other illicit maritime activities in the GoG, ECOWAS West African Defence Chiefs established a sub-committee on maritime security. In Abuja on 5 October 2011, the ECOWAS Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff (CCDS) recommended that membership of the sub-committee on maritime security be expanded from 5 to 10 members to further strengthen regional response to the security threats of illicit maritime activities.\(^{11}\) Republic of Benin, Cote d’Ivoire, Senegal, Sierra-Leone and Togo were to join Cape Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau and Nigeria in the sub-committee that would make proposals to the CCDS within 2 months on issues relating to regional security.\(^{12}\) Already, the committee has recommended the development of maritime situational awareness among its member states by building data on known organised criminal gangs, inter-agency collaboration, information and intelligence sharing, amongst other strategies. ECOWAS long-term plan is to establish an (ECOWAS) Maritime Force as an integral part of the ECOWAS Standby Force.

As noted already, both West and Central Africa are cooperation to combat piracy in the GoG through the MOWCA. The MOWCA is promoting a plan to establish a coast guard which is expected to address regional maritime security challenges. During the IMO/MOWCA summit of July 2006, it was agreed that an integrated sub-regional coast guard network; a centre for information and communication; transit facilitation and ‘sealed grid;’ and a regional maritime fund to support set objectives would be established.\(^{13}\) The MOWCA is pursuing the establishment of a regional coastguard and several communication and information centres to
monitor maritime activities in the region. However, these goals are being impeded by lack of funds and political will from member states. However, the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and subsequently implementation have still not being undertaken. Implementation must be accelerated in order to derive the benefits of collaboration under the auspices of MOWCA. MOWCA would therefore require urgent financial assistance from well-meaning nations and non-governmental organisations like the UN to actualise these plans.

Thus far collaborative efforts between Nigeria and Ghana have yielded positive results. For instance, positive benefits have been achieved through greater collaborative information sharing. On 8 March 2011, Ghana Navy arrested Mt.Madina alleged to be carrying stolen crude oil from Nigeria at Saltpond Oil Fields in Ghana. At the time of the arrest, Mt. Madina was transferring the crude oil to Mt Varg Star, a tanker that was legitimately being used for operations in the Saltpond Oil Fields. The arrest was made based upon request from Nigerian authorities.

3.3 The Role of International Actors

The USA and Europe remain key partners in combating piracy in the GoG. West African states have been compelled to rely on the USA and the European Union (EU) as a result of a limited capacity to combat maritime insecurity in the GoG. A majority of the collaboration with donor states and organisations like the US have occurred mainly in training and capacity building of the sub-regions maritime constabulary forces. The USA navy has been building the capacity of some of the maritime constabulary forces in the GoG through its African Partnership Station (APS) initiative. Exercise Obangame Express is an initiative of the USA,
under the auspices of the Africa Partnership station (APS), which has been undertaken annually since 2010 by states from the GoG region.\textsuperscript{16}

The APS is aimed at improving the response capabilities, interoperability of communications and sharing of MDA information between navies in the GoG. The USA Navy has, through the APS, trained and equipped navies of the GoG to develop their capacity to enforce effective security within their own jurisdictions. Several regular training and joint exercises have been conducted to the benefit of naval forces of the GoG states. Some of the training encompasses small boat drills, riverine operations, live-fire exercises, amphibious raids, leadership development, natural disaster response, medical awareness, and disease prevention.

Several US Naval Ships have visited states in the region and trained numerous personnel in courses such as on Vessel Boarding Search and Seizure. The arrival of USS Simpson, flagship of the APS, to Tema Port for a 3 day visit to Ghana from 18 to 20 February 2012 is a case in view, which was utilized to train personnel of the Ghana Navy on some coast guard duties.\textsuperscript{17} Usually, such personnel are given considerable time to spend on board US Naval Ships for training purpose. The diverse bilateral and multilateral cooperation and collaboration attained so far suggests bright prospects in combating piracy amongst other illicit maritime activities within the GoG. The African Command (AFRICOM) is also another platform that is helping West African states to fight terrorism as well as piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. These collaborations are making the GoG navies, individually and collectively, more self-reliant in safeguarding the GoG. The establishment of these collaborative partnerships could critically aid the joint-partnership with the USA for a secured GoG.
The EU has made significant effort to enhance security within the GoG. In November 2011, the EU held an Expert Mission on “Fighting Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in the Gulf of Guinea” in Accra. The mission sought measures to aid state governments in the GoG in developing regional cooperation in coast guard and maritime law enforcement functions for the purpose of achieving effective maritime security. Consequently, the EU intended to establish a regional maritime security and safety training centre; facilitate a regional maritime information sharing; improve coast guard functions and eventually work towards the development of joint operational coordination capacity.

This EU Expert Mission was preceded by the EU Indicative Programme 2009-2011 for the instrument of Stability in the Gulf of Guinea established the ‘Critical Maritime Routes’ programme (CMR) to augment maritime security and safety. Though the EU’s initiative is laudable, only two West African states, Ghana and Nigeria have benefitted from the training programmes. Thus concerns still remain over when the EU’s initiatives would be extended to countries such as Benin, Togo and Cote d’Ivoire who were not beneficiaries in this scheme. These states will miss out of the innovations and training skills that could be derived therein to combat piracy. It would have been preferably for such a scheme to be initiated from the sub-regional perspective considering the transnational nature of piracy in the GoG. Possibly, MOWCA could have facilitated this scheme for all her state members to partake.

Additionally, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has executed some initiatives to promote more coordinated approaches to maritime security challenges in Africa, such as a July 2008 seminar for the development of an integrated coast guard network in West Africa.
3.4 Assessment of Progress Made Thus Far: Challenges

The following challenges are likely to hamper efforts thus far made in safeguarding the Gulf of Guinea. They are explained as follows.

3.4.1 Poorly-Resourced Maritime Personnel and Infrastructure

West African states still have tenuous maritime infrastructure. Records show that Nigeria, although endowed with the largest naval force within the sub-region has at her disposal, a little over 5,000 naval personnel, at most fifteen warships, while maritime reconnaissance is severely deficient because of the availability of only 4 helicopters, a ludicrous state of affairs that mirrors the naval capability within the sub-region.\textsuperscript{18} Regrettably, Naval Operating Bases in Nigeria lack fundamental facilities including jetties, surveillance radars, and shore batteries as a result of several years of neglect. Presumably, the lack of basis facilities for the Naval force of Nigeria has limited the force’s to effectively patrol the territorial waters of Nigeria as a considerable aspect of its operations are focused providing security for onshore oil exploration and shipment.\textsuperscript{19}

The capacity of Ghana Navy, second largest in West Africa with only 1,000 personnel pales into insignificance against the backdrop of the herculean nature of safeguarding maritime security.\textsuperscript{20} The poor state of maritime infrastructure in both Ghana and Nigeria mirror that of the overall state of maritime infrastructure in West Africa. This is worsened when one considers the fact that West African states could be dissuaded from investment into maritime capacity because contending issues of bread and butter constitute a significant aspect of the core areas of governments’ development strategy. Many governments, perhaps, interested in winning the next election, are encouraged to focus on the provision of basic necessities, thus consigning maritime infrastructure to the bottom on the scale of preference. A compelling
case for an improved regional maritime capacity at the regional level is vitiated by the current socio-economic status of West African states, which looks grim.

3.4.2 The Rhetoric Regime

The pessimism of West African states to incept robust maritime strategies is also borne out of the fact that ECOWAS has a knack for lack of optimal implementation of regional strategies. From trade liberalization to security cooperation, ECOWAS has been hampered by a lack of verve and political will to implement decisions and directives aimed at boosting regional integration. For example trade liberalization remain stunted because member-states have been unable to synergise their trade policies to take advantage of the expanding markets for trade due to globalization. This has weakened the negotiating powers of West African states in negotiating for better terms of trade on multilateral platforms, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and European Union (EU).

The envisaged monetary union remains a pipe dream because ECOWAS states have not complied with the critical benchmarks, required for the inception of a single currency in West Africa, among others. Mindful of the aforementioned challenges, therefore, the fear is that promoting maritime security could also be hampered by similar implementation bottlenecks and therefore, the sustainability of a regional strategy driven by maritime security may be doubtful. The rhetoric for maritime security is auspicious but the commitment required for implementation is deficient. If the gap between rhetoric and implementation is not addressed, then all documents and programmes bearing the insignia of maritime security would gather dust on the shelves of West African states.
3.4.3 Uniformity of Legal Frameworks

The absence of a uniform legal regime on piracy is still a sticking point in evolving a regional approach towards ameliorating threats to the GoG. This also aggravated by the fact that there bilateral or multilateral mechanisms for the repatriation of perpetrators of piracy from one state to another in West Africa. Perhaps the absence of a common policy on the legal boundaries may be symptomatic of the absence of universal definition of piracy. Nonetheless the lack of a common, regional legal framework on piracy undermines the delivery of justice. Such a discrepancy makes it daunting for justice systems to enable a fair and speedy trials of piracy-related cases. The absence of a uniform legal regime may also have the unintended consequences of lowering moral among prosecution teams, who may be frustrated by judicial bottlenecks in the quest to seek justice for victims of piracy. A uniform regional legal regime is imperative so that regardless of where piracy is committed, to the extent that it happened within the territorial waters of West African states that straddle the GoG, fair and speedy trails are assured while bottlenecks in the justice systems of West African states are profoundly reduced.

3.4.4 Donor-Fatigue

The sustainability of maritime-driven security initiatives supported by the European Union (EU) and the United States of America (USA), in the long term is doubtful. Presently, the EU and USA necessarily have to support West African states as maritime commerce remains a veritable source of imports for the EU and USA markets and thus, have both economic and security interests to protect. In the long terms, the EU and the USA may be overstretched as they attempt to prioritize their internal socio-economic challenges. The EU for instance, would have to deal with the economic crises which have paralyzed some member-states.
including Greece as resentment against financial integration grows within the EU amidst threats by countries including the United Kingdom to withdraw from the Union.

The above anticipated challenges may occupy the front burner of the EU leading to a creep in providing financial, logistical and operational support for West African states. Similarly the USA, with its mounting economic difficulties and determined not to be bogged down by the security perils of other countries, could scale down its resources for other states while she devotes more attention to internal economic morbid symptoms. Curiously, though, it could also be the case that countries may refuse international help to deflect any possibility of neo-colonialism, or that officials may be benefitting from the status quo, that is, poor maritime security. This appears to be the situation as Nigeria turned down any form of assistance after it was estimated that $100 million would be needed to prevent the piracy of oil in the GoG. Instead Nigeria opted to play a leading role which culminated in the establishment of a Gulf of Guinea Commission. However the Commission remains ineffectual in light of unity of purpose among countries that straddle the GoG, especially from Angola. Evidently the unwillingness of Angola to accept the leading role of Nigeria could be attributed to a political turf war, which would only worsen insecurity in the GoG. Presumably if Angola were a West African state it would readily accept the leadership role of Nigeria, evident by its continuing contribution to the sustenance of regional integration.

3.5 Prospects of a Secured Gulf of Guinea to Regional Integration

At the outset of this work the point was made that security in the GoG is an important aspect of regional integration. If the above mentioned measures are implemented substantially then West African states can be hopeful about achieving appreciably, some of their regional objectives. This is because resources from the GoG can spur regional integration, especially
if countries such as Nigeria and Ghana altruistically apply their resources from the GoG for regional-oriented projects such as providing natural gas for electricity and revamping regional infrastructure. This is not impossible because Nigeria in the 1970s provided oil at concessionary prices to promote the economic development of states in Africa.\textsuperscript{22} This was done to also promote regional unity and mobilize efforts towards regionalism. But these positive aspects of the GoG can become a reality only if the GoG is protected from piracy. In ensuring security in the GoG, West African would also be helping in regional integration. The extent to which a security-proof can aid regional integration is discussed as follows:

3.5.1 Promoting Intra-Regional Trade

With an estimated population of over 300 million, West Africa is an enormously vast market for trade and foreign investments. This means that intra-regional trade is lucrative and can potentially drive economic development in the sub-region. Currently, however, it is estimated that the volume of trade within West Africa is less than 3% almost all West African states remain net importers.\textsuperscript{23} One of the challenges of trade in West Africa is the poor state of road networks in the sub-region, which makes the cost of transporting goods from one country to the other prohibitive. This is also exacerbated by the numerous road blocks and check points, where some customs officials extort money from traders. Several promises to fix road networks across the ECOWAS zone remain platitudes. The challenges posed to regional trade as a result of the poor means of transportation can be allayed through maritime commerce as an alternative means of transportation for traders. With effectual maritime security it should be possible for maritime commerce to flourish as many people channel their mode of transporting goods in the sub-region through maritime domains.
In addition to reducing dependence on road transportation, port cities would also experience a spiral in their revenue mobilization. On the other hand, land-locked countries in West Africa may be adversely affected in the event of thriving maritime commerce. However this can be resolved by ECOWAS through a compensatory mechanism which would reduce the cost of trade among littoral and landlocked states for goods that are earmarked for intra-regional trade or consumption. With increased intra-regional trade, there is a real potential for a benign terms of trade with the rest of the globe, increased foreign direct investments in regional trade, which can lead to expansion in the capacity of local industries to produce, export and remain competitive on the international market. Characterized by the aforementioned business climate, the value of the local currencies of West African will become robust against that of the major trading currencies, a situation that can help solve some of the difficulties of financial integration in West Africa, such as fluctuation values of local currencies and balance of payment deficit and, ultimately aid financial integration in West Africa.

3.5.2 Harmonizing Maritime Policies

One of the prospects of combating maritime insecurity is that it serves as a basis for West African states to integrate their national policies into a single regional policy. This include collaboration to protect the safety of crews and their cargoes onshore and offshore, coordination of shipping policies to enhance efficiencies at ports of littoral states, effective control of maritime ebb and flow for purposes of undercutting unwarranted traffic along shipping route in the GoG, and to pool regional efforts towards the implementation of multilateral conventions needed for a development-oriented maritime sector in West Africa.24
3.5.3 Establishing a Regional Naval Force

It is apparent that not a single West African state has the needed logistical and operational demands to ameliorate insecurity in the GoG. But the foreboding symptoms of maritime insecurity create an incentive for regional efforts in the sphere of preventing insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea. This would require considerable investments into first, the naval capabilities of littoral states of West Africa at the national level and second, a drive towards the establishment of a sub-regional naval force that brings together, the naval forces of all West African states. Again Ghana and Nigeria are expected to be playing leading roles as they have always done in pushing for political, economic and security cooperation of the West African sub-region.

With the best naval force in addition to untrammelled access to financial windfall from oil exports, Nigeria is uniquely positioned to rally all West African states towards the establishment of a robust and technologically savvy regional naval force, capable of confronting any strand of insecurity in the GoG and other domains. If a regional naval force is effectual it would spill-over into other endeavours of security cooperation, including ridding the sub-region of perils such as the illicit narcotics trade and the proliferation of arms, terrorism, among others. With a benign security profile occasioned by effectual security cooperation, West African states would become a haven for socio-economic development and political stability needed to attain optimal levels of human security across the sub-region.

3.5.4 Confronting Maritime Insecurity as a Collective

A collective approach to regional security is one of the vital organs of the system of regional integration. One benign aspect of maritime security is that it would have the effect of strengthening regional security cooperation in West Africa. This is because of the fact that
threats posed to the exploration of resources from maritime domains adversely affect the survival of states across the sub-region. For example the activities of armed militias in Nigeria can negatively affect that of Ghana’s oil and gas industry likewise that of other West African states located along the Gulf of Guinea including Benin and Guinea. Intuitively this is foreboding. However mutual vulnerabilities in the arena of maritime security would create a platform for regional security cooperation through the pooling of logistical and financial resources to confront the menace.

For resource endowed countries in West Africa, regardless of whether the resource is from land or aquatic sources, disengaging from regional security architecture would prove inimical to the economic and security interests of West African states because of a harmony of interest that is, ensuring the viability of maritime domains. Security agencies across West Africa can share information and forensic data of individuals and groups that are seen as threats to maritime security. For instance, Nigeria’s security operatives can collaborate with their counterparts in Ghana on how best to tackle internal insurrection triggered by the presence of oil discoveries. The ECOWAS can also serve as the conduit for security chiefs across West Africa, particularly those from resource-endowed countries to deliberate on, and use their expertise to identify the best approach to adopt in relation to addressing maritime insecurity in West Africa.

3.5.5 Investments into Logistics, Capacity building and Border Controls

The prioritization of maritime security can potentially nudge West African states into providing the needed logistics needed to police maritime domains under the guise of ECOWAS. The implication is that West African states, because of the existential threats posed by maritime insecurity, would have no option than to invest in naval capacity. This is
because of the fact that for oil-dependent economies such as Nigeria and Gabon, and nascent oil industries including Ghana and Cote d’ Ivoire, policing and safeguarding waterways has become a matter of national security and economic interests. Failure to do invest in maritime security implies loss of government revenue. The re-awakening of maritime security would, therefore, have the unintended consequences of intensifying the narrative on maritime security in West Africa thereby exerting enormous pressure on West African states to provide speed boats, helicopters, scans and surveillance equipments, improve the conditions of service of naval personnel, and participate in multinational counter-piracy initiatives at both regional and global levels.

The interest in maritime security is not mutually exclusive from that of threats posed on land. This means that through investments into maritime security, West African states will also be remedying some of its security perils on land. For example by apprehending pirates on West Africa’s waterways the demand side of the proliferation of arms can be significantly curtailed. This also means that adequate measure would have to be evolved on land so that the supply side of the proliferation of arms is nipped in the bud, which can be done through, among other things, good governance and the implementation of exiting protocols on arms manufacturing and proliferation. With the logistics and capacity to confront insecurity on waterways, it would not be daunting to replicate similar measures on land.

3.5.6 Diversification of Exports

West African states remain exporters of primary commodities such as cocoa, coffee, oil among others. However they have not been able to apply these resources adequately, failing to optimally explore the opportunities offered by the commodities boom in the 1980s as they failed to diversify exports. Through maritime security West African states can also focus on
other export commodities, particularly the fishing sector. A regional approach through auditing of fishing stocks and sustainable fishing programmes, the policing of maritime domains can help West African states boost exports of fish and minimize dependence on traditional export commodities. A blossoming fishing industry can trigger a chain effect leading to the establishment of local industries with the capacity to export processed fish to serve the needs of West African states and the globe. The creation of employment as a result of the fishing sector also means significant number of people can be extricated from absolute and vicious cycle of poverty.

3.5.7 Revamping Road and Rail Infrastructure

The development of road infrastructure is essential to the movement of persons, goods and services. This is important for trade in the sub-region because poor road networks increase the cost of transporting goods and services from one point to the other. Land-locked countries within the ECOWAS sub-region need good roads to transport their goods to the ports of littoral states in West Africa. Currently, ECOWAS has, as one of its cardinal objectives, the construction of the trans-coastal Highway to link Lagos to Nouakchott, and the trans-Sahelian highway linking Dakar, Senegal, to N’Djamena, Niger. The is expected to provide the needed impetus that would spill-over into the revamping of the almost comatose rail networks across West African states to provide alternative transportation route. What is required is the financial muscle from ECOWAS states to enable an effectual implementation of this ambitious infrastructural overhaul.

To promote the above mentioned infrastructural overhaul, vastly endowed West African states, particularly Nigeria, would have to invest heavily into these infrastructural projects. If insecurity in the GoG is reduced to appreciable levels, boosting oil production for countries
such as Nigeria and Ghana, the financial windfall can provide the needed war chest for revamping road and rail infrastructure in ECOWAS. Improved road and rail infrastructure can reduced significantly, the prohibitive cost of doing business within the ECOWAS region which, among others, is occasioned by factors including that of poor road and rail networks linking ECOWAS states. It would also help to reduce cargo traffic in the territorial waters of states, thereby reducing the potential for robbery and killings in the Gulf of Guinea.

3.5.8 Boosting Energy Supply

As acknowledged already, the state of electricity supply in West Africa is perilous in the face of increasing demands for power in West Africa, while the importation of power remains a drain on the coffers of West African states. With increasing cost of crude oil on the international market, continuous importation of oil would thwart developmental projects. Mindful of these difficulties, and as part of its objectives to ensure equitable distribution of power, ECOWAS has invested in constructing an oil and gas pipeline to connect countries within West Africa apparent to ensure universal access to electricity in the sub-region. The gas and oil endowments of West African states, therefore, can ensure uninterrupted fuel and gas supply for generating electricity, and assisting investors to build their electricity generating capacity. The generation of electricity, however, is inextricably linked to a secured GoG. Failure on the part of West African states to collectively prioritize maritime security including that of the GoG would aggravate the poor state of power supply in West Africa.

A safeguarded GoG can also help in increasing oil production levels in West Africa to enable intra-state oil among West African states possibly at concessionary prices. Thus instead of
spending billions of dollars importing crude from outside the ECOWAS sub-region, the importation of crude would be concentrated within oil-exporting countries in West Africa. This can have a spill-over effect on the economic development of oil exporting countries, which would then trickle down to less endowed countries. For instance a booming oil industry in Nigeria would generate employment for not only national of that country, but also migrant workers from other West African states. The establishment of refineries can also trigger the emergence of allied industries, such as the rubber, petrochemical, and pharmaceutical industries. This is as a result of the fact that the oil sector serves as feeder industry as petroleum products are widely used in for the production of synthetic rubber, plastics, fertilizers, pesticides, and propane. This can serve as a platform for employment generation for not only nationals of resource endowed countries but also, migrant workers from other West African states.
Endnotes

1 See www.gmsa.gov/gmp/Africa_Partnership_Station.pdf, accessed on 13/01/2013.
2 Ibid.
5 Interview with Lieutenant Commander Samuel Ayelozono, Commanding Officer of the Basic Leadership Training School Eastern Naval Command Tema, Ghana Navy, conducted on 20 April 2013.
10 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
CHAPTER FOUR
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Introduction
The objective of this chapter is a discussion of findings, conclusions and recommendations towards the security of the Gulf Of Guinea (GoG). This is based on all the points examined in the previous chapters of this work.

4.1 Summary of Findings
The incidence of piracy has attracted the attention of the international community including West African states. This has become necessary because the GoG remains a bastion of resource reserve that provides revenue for individual states and can potentially promote regional integration. It is this motivation that has encouraged states in West Africa, although the piracy problem is not exclusive to West African states. There have been efforts to stem insecurity in the GoG by West African states to give meaning to the notion that a collective approach to solving the security problems of GoG is the best.

To summarize the key findings of this research, several points must be made: Piracy has the potential to undermine security in West Africa but can also be used as a tool to promote regional development; Nigeria has the onerous responsibility to combat piracy due to the integrate nature of insecurity in the Niger Delta region and the GoG, West African states have a number of measures at national, regional and global levels to help resolve the security problems of the GoG; West African states are limited because they do not have the personnel nor the infrastructure to combat maritime piracy; the efforts by West African states are being complemented by external donors including the European Union (EU) and the United States
of America (USA). The predicament is if West African states can have the political will and commitment to invest into maritime security, considering that ECOWAS has thus far not being effervescent in combating maritime security.

This should not necessarily take away the fact that a regional approach to securing the GoG is the most favourable option. This would ensure that West African states are able to pool their meagre maritime resources together to enable a regional approach. This requires more contributions from Nigeria and Ghana, two countries that have traditionally been supportive of regional integration efforts. It is only a collective approach that the insecurity in the GoG can be halted for the overall benefit of West African states.

4.2 Conclusions

The incidence of piracy may not be new but it is apparent that the intensity of piracy in the GoG that has reached an alarming rate. This demands immediate action from West African states that border the GoG. The unfortunate aspect is that West African states still lack the needed infrastructure and resources to combat insecurity in the GoG. This also underscores the importance of a collective approach to stemming the adverse effects of piracy in the GoG. If that is the case then West African states have to work together to stem the tide of insecurity that is eating away the resource endowments of the GoG. Thus far piracy, the reference point of this work, constitutes one of the key security threats to the GoG, although it has to be mentioned that piracy is also closely linked to other transnational crimes such as human trafficking as well as illegal fishing in the territorial waters of West African states that border the GoG.
Some West African states must bear a disproportionate share of the responsibility of stemming insecurity in the GoG. Threats to the GoG have been most pronounced in the territorial waters of Nigeria, the Niger Delta region to be precise. Therefore the overall security of Nigeria, this work notes, is closely associated to the extent to which the socio-economic challenges of the Niger Delta region is resolved. This is why Nigeria must be at the forefront of any regional efforts at stemming insecurity in the GoG. If this becomes successful, then Nigeria can accumulate more worth from oil exploration and use the worth to promote regional developmental projects as it did in the 1970s, a point that was explained in Chapter three of this work.

This can also ensure that Ghana is insulated from any threats emanating from the Niger Delta region. This work has established three main points. The first point is that the overall interests of West African states is adequately served if they work together as one unit is stemming insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea. The second issue is that there have been several initiatives ranging from national to regional to global levels. However it is not obvious if these initiatives have yielded the desired results. This is probably expected because West African states have a perennial problem with regard to implementation of regional projects or programs.

It is also noticed that these initiatives have as their funding components, resources from donors. This practice is not helpful for the long-term sustainability of such initiatives. that if West African states are able to secure the GoG then it the resources from the GoG can help accelerate the processes of regional integration and for that matter regional development. The third point is that the GoG, if safeguarded, can accelerate the processes of achieving regional integration goals as enumerated in Chapter three of this work. This includes the
production of natural gas for electricity supply, enough financial resources to revamp regional infrastructure, diversification of exports, boosting of intra-regional trade, etc. Mindful of these benefits, it is prudent that ECOWAS marks maritime security as one of its core security issues in regional discourse.

4.3 Recommendations

The following constitutes the recommendations of this work.

- West African states have no choice but to promote and practice good governance as a consequence of regional efforts toward combating maritime insecurity. Those that depend on natural resource have the added impetus to do so because of great expectations that natural resource endowment is a magic wand for economic prosperity. By practicing good governance socio-economic opportunities are most likely to become abundant. This serves as an encouragement for people to invest in education rather than violence and banditry. Transparency and equity would be required if an enabling environment can be promoted for economic development and to ultimately prevent grievance-based conflicts.

- West African states must show commitment to combating piracy in the GoG. The commitment should include the provision of resources to the navy and other security agencies in their individual countries. Resources such as speed boats and ships and other surveillance objects must be purchased for security agencies to help them undertake their naval duties. Officials at strategic border points should also be equipped with scanning equipments, and intelligence sharing among individual West African states is supported. If territorial waters of West African states are secured, other transnational crimes such as arms trafficking, narcotics trade and human
trafficking will be reduced. It is important for leaders in the sub-region to eschew the practice of lip service to investments into maritime security. The commitment should also manifest in all the regional initiatives that have been crafted to promote the security of the GoG.

- Nigeria should also provide basic necessities for the population in the Niger Delta region. This will ensure that the grievances that have led to intractable conflict in the region are resolved. This will have positive implications for the overall security of the GoG as the challenges of the Niger Delta region exacerbate insecurity in the GoG. To that extent the political leadership of Nigeria must work towards the promotion of good governance including reducing levels of corruption while promoting transparency in the allocation of national resources.

- The ECOWAS should also play a frontline role in combating insecurity in the GoG. The Community has no operational framework to fight piracy in the sub-region. It is important that the ECOWAS establishes an architecture that has operational features to fight piracy. If ECOWAS can achieve its objectives, it has to rely on the resources of its member-states that depend on natural resource from the GoG. It must also work with other regions that border the GoG to combat piracy. Therefore the GoG must be designated as a strategic asset that has to be safeguarded from insecurity.

- West African states must also ensure that they have common laws on piracy. As noted in Chapter three of this work the prosecution of pirates across the sub-region can be enhanced since there are common laws among the member-states of West Africa. This strategy must become an integral part of the legal curricula of West African
states so legal officers would not have challenges when dealing with pirate-related cases. This will encourage law enforcement agencies to effect arrest as they are assured of speedy prosecution of culprits. Synergizing laws on piracy among West African states is therefore, very important.
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