

The 2013 Yaounde code of conduct: an evaluation

Kabiru Tanimu

Senior Advocate Nigeria. Former Minister of Special Duties and Inter-Governmental Affairs

Keywords:

Yaoundé Code of Conduct, maritime security, Gulf of Guinea, piracy, sea robbery

Abstract

This paper examines the Yaoundé Code of Conduct - the maritime Security framework of 2013 for countering piracy/sea robbery in West African states of the Gulf of Guinea. Premised against the pernicious and near perennial challenge of low maritime domain awareness and a poorly organized ocean governance infrastructure which has undermined the thriving of the blue economy and the Safety of Life at Sea in the region. The paper examines the Yaoundé Architecture through the lenses of piracy/sea robbery as it effects the blue economy. Triangulation was used both as a methodology as well as method of data collection from a critical mass of global and regional maritime stakeholders-agencies/actors in the region as well as secondary sources, to interrogate the seemingly perennial and ever-dynamic phenomenon of Piracy and Sea Robbery in the Gulf of Guinea. The paper concludes with some recommendations aimed at improving upon and consolidating on the gains of the Yaoundé Architecture through the Yaoundé Code of Conduct in countering piracy/sea robbery along with other transnational maritime crime in the Gulf of Guinea.

Email address for corresponding author: kabiraish@gmail.com

First submission received: 05th September 2024

Revised submission received: 18th October 2024

Accepted: 20th December 2024

Introduction

Since 2012, the disturbances of Piracy and Sea Robbery have constituted a significant setback to maritime commerce, sea travels, and offshore hydrocarbon/crude extraction and vessel movements in the Gulf of Guinea. Consequently, the region has been the global epicentre of maritime crime and piracy since 2012. (IMO 2020; 2021, IMB 2018, 2019, 2020). In response to the trend, West and Central African states signed the Yaoundé Code of Conduct in 2013 and established the transnational cooperation mechanism known as the Yaoundé Architecture as expressed in the Yaoundé Code of Conduct. However, piracy's persistence, expansion, and flexibility in the Gulf of Guinea suggest that the transnational cooperation mechanism is not without its limitations.

Against this premise the chapter sought answers to the following posers: what are the governance framework put in place for contending with piracy and sea robbery in the Gulf of Guinea? What are the merits of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct and how has it fared against its stated objectives ten years on? How has the Yaoundé Code of Conduct strengthened regional cooperation and ocean governance in the Gulf of Guinea? What are the areas of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct limitations and how can they be improved upon? What measures are in place to enhance regional security through collaboration? What lessons are to be drawn from the Yaoundé Code of Conduct for its consolidation?

Over the past two decades, there has been a surge in international concerns about maritime safety and security, with particular attention to the danger that insecurity on the seas pose to global commerce, peace and stability.

Conceptual Framework

The African Integrated Maritime Security Strategy (AIMS) became a well-articulated framework that filled some gaps created by the warping and near unconscious status of the ailing Gulf of Guinea Commission. It is in concert with the AIMS that the Yaoundé Code of Conduct was conceived in 2013 with functional Inter-Regional Coordinating Centre (ICC) designed to run through five Multinational Maritime Coordinating Centres, also called Zones A, D, E, F, and G, reporting to it (the ICC). This framework is what constitutes the Yaoundé Architecture. From this design, Togo, Benin Republic, and Nigeria make up the Zone E of the Architecture. The sub-regional arrangement makes it such that Zones G, F, and E comprise West African States (ECOWAS), while Zones D and A are Central African States (ECCAS), respectively. Thus, the Yaoundé Architecture and its protocol cover the entirety of the Central and West African sub-regions out of the continent's five Regional Economic Communities.

Maritime safety and security architecture in the Gulf of Guinea (Yaoundé Architecture)

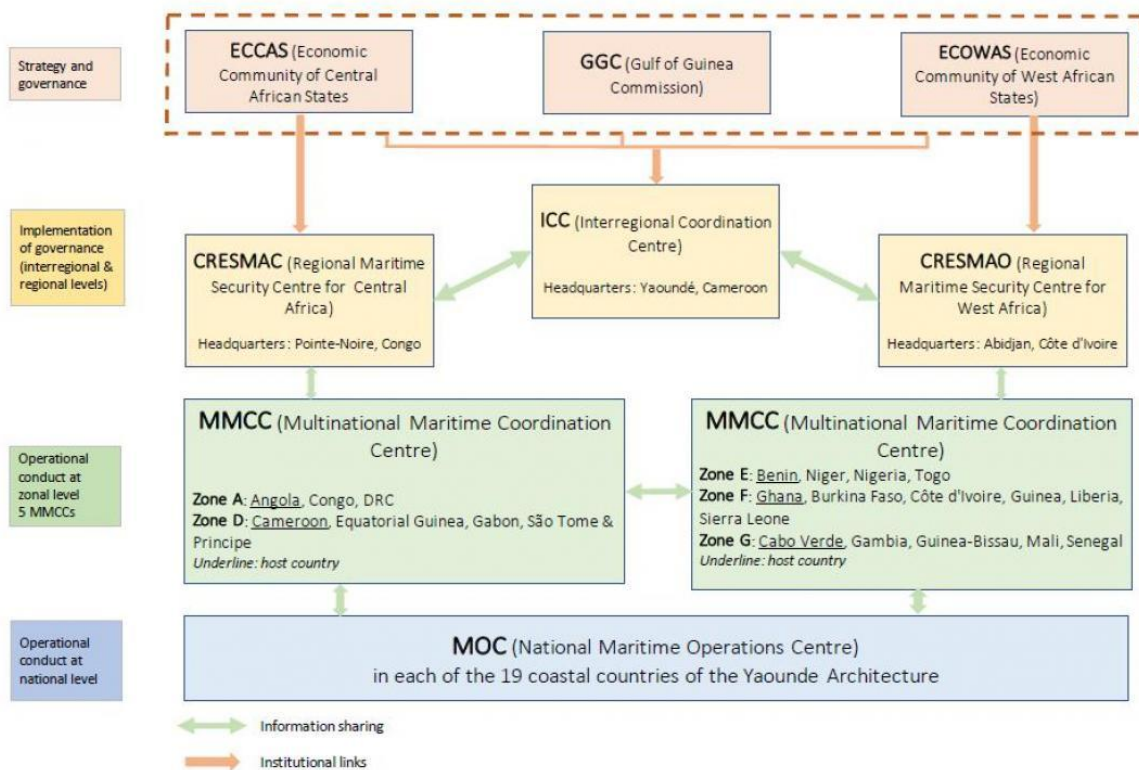


Figure 1 Map of the Inter-Regional Coordination Centre ICC Source: the ICC

At the strategic level of the Yaoundé Architecture are the ECCAS for Central Africa, ECOWAS for West Africa both interfacing with the Gulf of Guinea Commission. The Implementation structures that report to each of the three strategic level organizations are the CREMAC which reports to ECCAS and CRESMAO which reports to ECOWAS. Both CRESMAC and CRESMAO in turn report to and are coordinated by the ICC which serves as the implementation level of governance at the inter-regional and regional levels in addition to being implementation Headquarters of the Framework. This is followed by the Zonal structures also called the Multinational Maritime Coordination Centre (MMCC) for each of the Regions. There are five MMCCs in all, namely Zones A, D, E, F and G. Three of the zones (MMCC) namely Zones E, F and G are under the West African sub- region or CRESMAO/ECOWAS while the remaining two are under the CRESMAC/ECCAS. The distribution of states under the zones by region are as follows:

ECCAS Region

Zone A: Angola, Congo and DRC

Zone D: Cameroun, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Sao Tome & Principe

ECOWAS Region

Zone E: Benin Republic, Niger, Nigeria and Togo

Zone F: Ghana, Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire, Guinea Liberia and Sierra Leone

Zone G: Carbo Verde, Guinea Bisau, Mali, Senegal and Gambia.

Note that all underlined states are the host countries of their Zones. Lastly but by no means the least is the national Maritime Operating Centers (MOC) for the nineteen coastal states of the Yaoundé Architecture which sits at the bottom of the hierarchy which may be described in context as the tactical level of implementation. Presently, 95 per cent of the maritime centres within the Architecture are now connected to the platform for information exchange that aims to encourage collaboration and coordination in times of crisis among the Yaoundé Architecture’s maritime operational centres, thereby enhancing the campaign against maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea. (Isabelle, 2022) (Mboob, 2022, p. 84). All layers of the security framework, from interregional to operational centres of agencies within a state, are connected via the network. Nigeria, Guinea, and Togo are the most recent states to receive training and connect their maritime operational centres (MOC) to the network (GOGIN, 2022).

The adoption of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct resulted in the creation of an interregional maritime security mechanism, the Yaoundé Architecture, to optimize maritime cooperation across the Gulf of Guinea. The nerve center of the Yaoundé Architecture is the Interregional Coordination Centre for the Implementation of the Regional Strategy for Maritime Safety and Security in Central and West Africa. Based in Yaoundé, the Interregional Coordination Centre was established in September 2014 and operationalized in February 2017. It is responsible for enhancing coordination, mutualization and systems interoperability, as well as the implementation of the respective regional maritime strategies of the Central African and West African common maritime space. The Interregional Coordination Centre consists of five divisions, namely: Political Affairs and International Cooperation; Information Management and Communications; Training and Practice; Legal Affairs and Judicial Cooperation; and Administration and Finance. Linked to the Interregional Coordination Centre are the Regional Centre for Maritime Security in West Africa based in Abidjan, the Regional Centre for Maritime Security in Central Africa based in Pointe-Noire and several Multinational Maritime Coordination Centers that implement the respective maritime strategies in the ECCAS and ECOWAS space and ensure regional coordination and cooperation. As operational centres, the Regional Centre for Maritime Security in West Africa and the Regional Centre for Maritime Security in

Central Africa are tasked with coordinating information-gathering, analysis and dissemination of processed information between themselves and the Multinational Maritime Coordination Centres, as well as with international partners that are active in their respective areas of the Gulf of Guinea. The Regional Centre for Maritime Security in Central Africa became operational in 2014, and the Regional Centre for Maritime Security in West Africa was declared formally operational in 2022.

The Multinational Maritime Coordination Centres are mandated to monitor maritime activities and share actionable maritime security-related information with relevant stakeholders at the inter-zonal level. There are five Multinational Maritime Coordination Centres, comprising zones A and D, which are under the Regional Centre for Maritime Security in Central Africa and ECCAS, and zones E, F and G, which are under the Regional Centre for Maritime Security in West Africa and ECOWAS. The Multinational Maritime Coordination Centres in zones A and G, under ECCAS and ECOWAS, respectively, are yet to assume operations.

The Gulf of Guinea Maritime Collaboration Forum and Shared Awareness and De-confliction (GoG-MCF/SHADE) was also initiated by the Nigerian Navy and the ICC in 2021 to supplement and expand information exchange and dialogue among maritime stakeholders in the region and beyond (Giulia, 2021). The forum's objective is to establish efficient operational counter-piracy cooperation between regional and international Navies, the maritime sector, and Yaoundé Code of Conduct's (ICC) reporting centres, with a focus on the operationalization of the Yaoundé Architecture. Osagie, (2022).

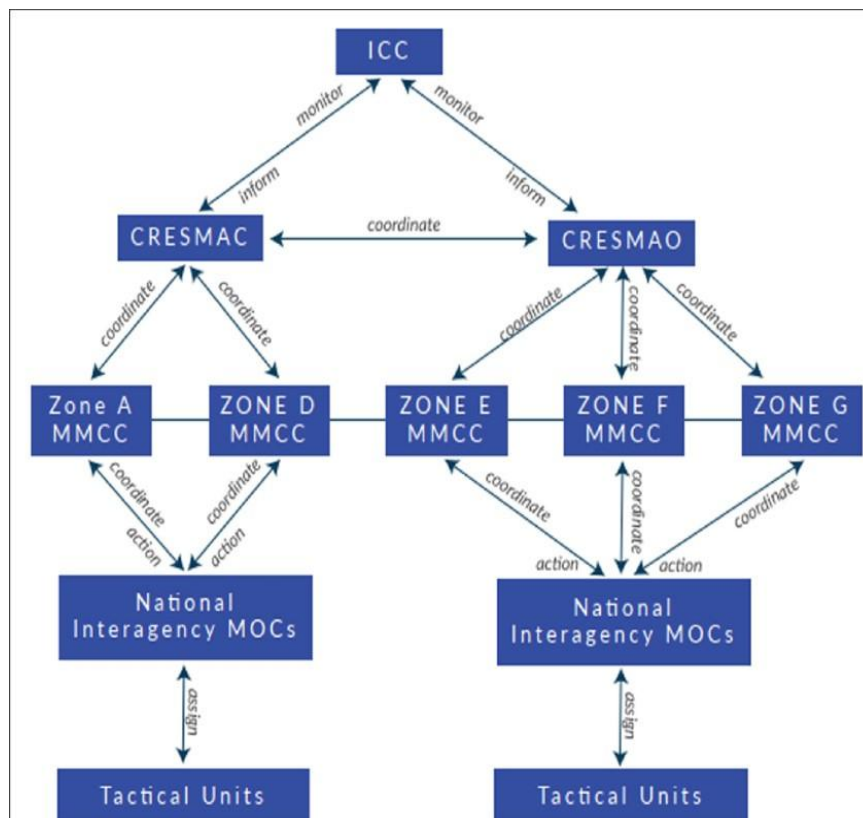


Figure 2. Yaoundé Architecture. Source: The Inter-Regional Coordinating Centre (ICC)

Motivation for the paper

This paper is written at a time when the Gulf of Guinea has earned both the record of being the world's most dangerous maritime lane as but as typifying as one viable template of transnational cooperation in ocean governance as seen in the recent gains recorded by the Yaoundé Architecture. The study attempted to flag up some of the prospects and challenges the worrisome maritime security threats of littoral states in the region and Nigeria in particular. This will be examined against the premise of global security discourse with a corresponding mitigation response. It also seeks to enhance the maritime domain awareness of Nigeria and Nigerians, commensurate to the noteworthy contribution of sovereign national wealth drawn from the sea in addition to asserting the footprint of authority at least within the 200 nautical miles offshore, as an important and critical part of its sovereign space to which the paucity of governance or its lack thereof, has been manifest.

The importance of maritime lanes to the global economy cannot be over emphasized. One of such lanes is the Gulf of Guinea. Others includes the Gulf of Mexico, the Strait of Hormuz leading out of the Persian Gulf through the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea; the Strait of Malacca linking the oil supplies from the Middle East with major Asian consuming markets by connecting the Indian Ocean to the South China Sea and the Pacific Ocean; the Bab el-Mandeb connecting the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea; the Panama Canal linking the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean through the Caribbean Sea; the Suez Canal, providing passage from the Red Sea and Gulf of Suez to the Mediterranean Sea, and the Turkish Straits or Bosphorus linking the oil supplies from the Caspian Sea to the Mediterranean Sea markets through the Black Sea.(Mañe 2005).

The Gulf of Guinea area by virtue of its geography and location, constitutes a source to a range of vices and criminality ranging from maritime robbery attacks, piracy, kidnapping, trafficking of narcotics, arms and people, smuggling of illicit goods, inter-state dispute, Illegal Unregulated and Unreported fishing (IUU), environmental/maritime pollution and other transnational crimes, all of which pose a major threat to maritime security in the area and ultimately to the economic development of the entire region. The geostrategic and economic importance of the Gulf of Guinea is evident in a number of ways: For one, the Gulf maritime area serves as a critical gateway to the world not only for all its littoral countries but also for land-locked states which depend on access to the sea for their imports and exports of goods and services from and to major global markets. Until 2001 (the last two decade), when the region gained its current notoriety as a dangerous navigation lane, the Gulf of Guinea had been pivotal to international navigation as a relatively safer, even if longer route connecting the Far East to countries in the North and South of the Atlantic. Given that over 90 per cent of global freight is moved by sea, the Gulf of Guinea has become a viable sea route for international trade and commerce, especially so, that the shorter Arab Gulf passage is costlier, more chocked with higher volume of vessels owing to congested space and friction of traffic flow. Moreover, Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region constitutes a riskier alternative due to wars, traditional instability and other forms of violence in the region.

The Gulf of Guinea which constitutes one of the world's geostrategic regions in terms of maritime importance has come under some instability evident by noted insecurity and violence at sea in recent time. This trend has tended to undermine the economic viability of littoral states that are contiguous to it and limiting the maximization of the region's economic and resource potentials for the member states of the region. The creation of the Yaoundé Architecture/Yaoundé Code of Conduct to fight against the high rate of illicit activities including (piracy/sea robbery) in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) was a timely and novel move by states of the region to stem the prevailing tide. The merits of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct ten years on, is that it has allowed for seamless sharing of actionable security related information within member coastal states in the GoG. In this regard, the Yaoundé Architecture/Yaoundé Code of Conduct has yielded

tremendous positive results as the crime rate has drastically reduced as the statistics suggests. The aim was for the coordination between member states of ECCAS and ECOWAS. Free sharing of information amongst the GoG countries to fight against maritime crimes the key among which includes piracy and sea robbery. Developing capacity in human and material resources to enable effective fight against crime in the GoG. (Interview #1 2023)

Prior to the Yaoundé Architecture in 2013, piracy was quite high averaging about over 100 attacks annually. But as at date, the incidences have dropped significantly with 2022 witnessing only less than 10 reported cases. (Interview #3, 2023). This is a huge success in terms of improvement in the region. Interview #3, (2023) maintained that key milestones so far attained by MOCs/states/Zones in their implementation of the Yaoundé Architecture includes the establishment of 19 National MOCs all of which have been activated across the 19 coastal states of the Gulf of Guinea (see Table 1). Secondly, the establishment and actualization of the two Regional Coordinating Centres (RCC) and the four Multinational Maritime Coordination Centres (MMCC) all of which have been established – as known by their zonal names Zones D, E, F and G is not a mean task. The proposed zonal architecture makes five zones including Zone A in Angola albeit that it is yet to come upstream as at date, only zones D, E, F and G have been made functional. Thirdly, most navies have made some improvements in asset acquisitions. For instance, Senegal, Ghana, Cote d’Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Angola and Nigeria have acquired new naval platforms to improve their response capabilities in the region. Fourth, MDA systems have been inducted into the working frameworks of most navies in the region. Whereas, the Yaoundé Architecture was designed as an ideal template, its implementation is not without some teething challenges and odds. Some of the obstacles being faced by stakeholders and actors includes.

- a. Outdated national maritime laws,
- b. Limited commitment to maritime governance,
- c. Weak resource mobilisation and to a limited extent,
- d. Weak political will among some states (Interview #3, 2023).

In view of the viability and importance of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct among other multilateral instruments on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, the attainment of its tenth anniversary is worth some critical evaluation if not to identify some milestones attained, at least to identify implementation challenges encountered and gaps that beg for improvement in the bid to strengthening the idea for consolidation going forward. The Yaoundé Architecture as a pointer to a major achievement recorded by states of West and Central African regions cannot be faulted.

While a litany of issues constitutes the broad spectrum of maritime crime in the Gulf of Guinea maritime area, the article focuses only on piracy and sea robbery among other transnational maritime crime in the area.

Data on incidents of Attempted and Actual attacks from 2018- 2022

Location	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
AFRICA						
Angola			4	3	4	11
Benin	5	1	6	2		14
Cameroun	2	1		1		4
DR Congo	1	1	1	1		4
Sao Tome and Principe			1	5		6
Equatorial Guinea		2	2			4
Gabon			2	2		4

Ghana	5	3	1	3	5	16
Guinea	1	1	1			3
Gulf of Aden*	1			1		2
Ivory Coast		1	2		1	4
Liberia		1				1
Mozambique		1	3	1		5
Nigeria	31	21	14	4		50
The Congo [Brazzaville]			1	1		2
Togo	1	3	1			5
Total at year end	46	36	39	24	10	

Table 1 Gulf of Guinea Locations of Actual and Attempted Incidents 2018 to 2022. Source: IMB /Field work 2022

Such a precipitous decline in incidents is welcomed, however, increasingly this is being met with claims that the risk to commercial operations throughout the Gulf of Guinea has also lessened. (Dryad 2021). The importance of risk-based decision making for all commercial operators within the Gulf of Guinea means that it is vital that sudden and steep changes in trends of incident data are examined in detail. Indeed, by using a simple logic-based investigation of available maritime security data, it is apparent that the basis for such a decline is likely to be fragile and conditional upon loosely correlated actions, strongly indicating the fragility of any assessment that correlates a reduction in threat with a decline in incident.

Some Dynamics and Changing Trends

The nature and incidence of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea has evolved over time. In June 2021, the UNODC Global Maritime Crime Programme traced the emergence of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea to around 2005, when militant groups in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria attacked oil and gas infrastructure. At that time, piracy incidents classified as “boarding and robbery” constituted 70 per cent of reported incidents, with more than 70 per cent of all the vessels attacked being oil and gas support vessels (UNODC 2021). From 2005 to 2009, only approximately 15 per cent of reported piracy incidents in the region were “kidnapping for ransom” piracy cases. The situation evolved from 2010 to 2015, as some pirate groups mixed kidnapping and hijacking, primarily targeting tankers loaded with refined products in instances of so-called “petro-piracy”. Owing to several factors, such as the global fall in oil prices, the instances of hijacking of tankers decreased over time and there were almost none by 2016.

From 2016 to 2021, the pirate groups in the region altered their patterns, shifting their focus towards “kidnapping for ransom” piracy. According to a study under the UNODC Global Maritime Crime Programme, which synthesized data from other sources over a three-year period (2018–2020), “kidnapping for ransom” piracy peaked in 2020, with approximately 140 individuals reportedly abducted at sea. The pirate groups operated indiscriminately, targeting vessels of all types, including fishing vessels, and increased their activities further afield. Several cases at the time were reported beyond 200 nautical miles from shore. (UN 2022).

UNODC reported an observed shift in 2020 and 2021 from ECOWAS to ECCAS regional waters. Similarly, according to the figures of the Interregional Coordination Centre, 62 per cent of incidents of maritime crime reported in the Gulf of Guinea in the fourth quarter of 2021 occurred in ECCAS waters. This represents a significant shift when compared with the fourth quarter of 2020 when approximately only 20 per cent of incidents reported in the region were in ECCAS waters. Essentially, although pirate groups remain primarily based in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, they seem to have shifted some of their activities to the waters off Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe, in part for operational

reasons, including evading the increased patrols by Nigerian Navy assets. Nevertheless, there is insufficient evidence to imply a more permanent prevalence of pirate groups outside their usual hub of operations in the Niger Delta. (UNODC 2021). The study found that the effect of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea is multifaceted, with the region incurring direct, indirect and opportunity costs as a consequence of maritime insecurity. Interlinked with the other significant governance, security and socioeconomic challenges confronting the Gulf of Guinea States, piracy and armed robbery at sea threaten to hamper the long-term and sustainable development of the region. (UNODC 2021).

Theoretical Model

This paper draws inspiration from Anna Herrhausen's (2007) analysis of basic organization forms. The Yaoundé Architecture resembles a network in terms of its organizational setup, as the participants are independent actors with a common problem. This approach is useful as it recognizes and respects the sovereignty of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct signatory states and at the same time provides a mechanism for handling the common problem of blue crime. Networks solve problems through social control elements and through structural elements (Herrhausen, 2007). The Yaoundé Architecture has created several organizations to help the network coordinate (structural elements), but their roles are not clear and may be overlapping. Social control elements (common culture and education, among other things) also need revision: Increasing and intensifying bonds on an organizational and individual level can strengthen the Yaoundé Architecture. Furthermore, lack of implementation and funding of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct along with a trust deficit between commercial maritime actors and the Architecture also impede effectiveness. In sum, the advantage of considering the Yaoundé Architecture as a network is its ability to guide the member states towards avenues of improving the structure, while keeping in mind that an expansion of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct mandate is unlikely to take place. As the paper focuses on the Yaoundé Architecture specifically, it omits analysis of the contribution of the international community.

Transnational cooperation is necessary for fighting blue crime, because maritime security issues are trans-national in their nature (Till, 2018, p. 283) and cross-jurisdictional (Bueger & Edmunds, 2017), and because the sea is communal (Jacobsen & Larsen, 2019, p. 1038). In other words, an instance of blue crime is seldom limited to a single state. For example, the issue of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is said to originate in Nigeria's Niger Delta region, although the piracy act itself often takes place within and beyond marine spaces under another state's jurisdiction (Ali, 2015; Hasan & Hassan, 2016). Increasing efforts against blue crime in one state led to the relocation of criminal activity to another, as observed in the Gulf of Guinea, where pirates have proved adaptable and flexible. For instance, counter-piracy efforts in Nigeria have increasingly led to a geographical as well as a substantive change in pirates' modus operandi. Geographically, attacks have increasingly taken place further out at sea or along the coast of neighbouring countries. Substantively, when international oil prices dropped, pirates began shifting their focus from stealing oil to hostage-taking (Ali & Benning, 2020; Hassan & Hasan, 2017).

Relative Deprivation Theory

The relative deprivation theory suggests that when people or groups are deprived of something compared to other social groups, they respond to that deprivation in various ways. These forms of deprivation range from economic, political, to social, where access to benefits and resources favour one group more than the other over a long period. Citing Runciman (1966), Verme (2013) presents relative deprivation theory as a theory of social justice "defined as the sense of frustration that people experience when they observe other people having something they desire and within their reach but unattainable." Applied in context, piracy and sea robbery is in part an expression of reaction to a long period of neglect

and deprivation of the economic, political and social ends of sovereign wealth distribution amongst citizens as demonstrated by the leadership of states in the affected regions. The extractive goods from Nigeria's Niger Delta and the attendant fraud that goes with it at all levels as well as the environmental deprivation of the means of livelihood among peasants of the region is partly the cause of militancy agitation that followed in reaction. The same trend has a direct link with the spike in incidences of piracy and sea robbery in the Gulf of Guinea.

Methodology

The work is based on broad spectrum of data/ information accessed via a wide range of agencies or maritime stakeholders including the Inter Regional Coordinating Centre (ICC), The Gulf of Guinea Commission (GCC), the West Africa Regional Maritime Security Centre (CREMAO), Central African Regional Maritime Security Centre (CRESMAC) and the United Nations system as well its Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the Department of Political and Peace building Affairs, the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), the Office of Counter-Terrorism, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), as well as by sub regional and regional organizations, including the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), for the Implementation of the Regional Strategy for Maritime Safety and Security in Central and West Africa.

For the West African sub region, the creation of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct is vital for the coordination of information sharing and operational coordination of response actions by ECOWAS Member States navies to maritime security and safety issues. The merits, accordingly, was to facilitate pooling of maritime domain awareness, maritime security assets, training, Repair/maintenance organizations and expertise, which so far, is well above average. (Interview #2 2023).

The implementation plans upon which the Yaoundé Code of Conduct is anchored, is the African Integrated Maritime Strategy to which the ECOWAS Integrated Maritime Strategy and Central African Maritime Strategy are subsets in the quest for attaining African solutions to African problems.

Before 2013, gaps in information sharing between maritime law enforcement practitioners posed a fundamental problem. Countries had a limited picture of the maritime domain and unaware of activity outside their own exclusive economic zones. The Yaoundé Architecture allows for information flow from each of the five cooperation zones up to regional centres. Individual national maritime operations centers also are connected to the system. The Yaoundé Architecture Regional Information System (YARIS) enhances the capacity for seamless information exchange. YARIS lets members securely share documentation, logs, photos, recordings and other information. YARIS also enables aggregation of data from surveillance systems such as radar and satellites to identify suspicious vessels.

A persistent challenge is waterways' poor monitoring and security. In these conditions, pirates continue to be involved in reconnaissance operations (International Crisis Group, 2012). For example, insufficient security on the West African coast has resulted in its use as a transit point by illicit drug traffickers from South America transporting narcotics to Europe (Osinowo, 2015). In addition to that, illegal bunkering and oil theft have resulted in the loss of oil resources. For example, Nigeria lost 65,700,000 barrels of oil, amounting to 2.3 trillion naira, due to oil theft and pipeline vandalism, and led to the shutdown of the Trans Niger Pipeline from March 2022 to March 2023 (Akintayo, 2023).

The effects of piracy and theft are on a large scale ranging from lengthy disruptions to production and the theft of large amounts of oil from pipelines. According to the Security Council report of October 2021, the effects of piracy on trade both directly and indirectly is to the tune of \$ 1.925 billion annually for 12 states in the region (UNSC, 2022). It was also revealed that the opaque cartel of corruption, which feeds the

black-market outlets and financial centres to stolen oil and its proceeds in the region, has bolstered the act of piracy/sea robbery with particular reference to crude oil theft from the Gulf of Guinea waters through piracy/sea robbery which was identified as a significant motivation for piracy and sea robbery. Nigeria and other Gulf of Guinea maritime states should be more proactive in their responsibilities to maritime treaties, notable among which is the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention of 1974.

Interviewee #1, #2 (2023) posits that harmonizing its national legislation with relevant international legal instruments is key to actualizing the vision of the states in the Gulf of Guinea and the Yaoundé Code of Conduct. The Nigerian government has given effect to this requirement through the SPOMO Act (Suppression of Piracy and other Maritime Offences) act of 2019, which aims to suppress piracy, sea robbery, and other unlawful acts in the maritime domain. These crimes are now punishable with life imprisonment and payment of fifty million Naira in addition to restitution to the owner. Although the number of convictions in relation to the frequency of the crime and arrest leaves much to be desired. It is regrettable that convictions remain limited with the first, being that of a private company involved in the transfer of a ransom payment. (Bell, et al 2021). It remains an issue of concern that only few states in the region have enacted national maritime legislation as to key in and implement the international legal instruments such as the United Nations Convention on the Laws of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1982.

The failure by governments to empower individuals and build infrastructure has created a thriving environment for criminality in coastal communities. These failures have prohibited many from having a decent life as the state and other corporations' abuse and disregard their rights. Very common across these cases are failing governance structures and constant poor implementation of policies creating unchanging socioeconomic circumstances. This is why Ralby (2016) posits that addressing illicit maritime activities involves improving governance... by "enhancing human security on land and at sea in tandem." An added dimension of governance is that "the states of the region have failed to manage the industries that partly or fully operate at sea, guarantee the socioeconomic welfare of coastal communities or enforce the law in territorial or international waters" (Crisis Group, 2012:23). The failure by governments to empower individuals and build infrastructure has created an environment for criminality in coastal communities. These failures have prohibited many from having a decent life as the state and other corporations abuse and disregard their rights.

The Gulf of Guinea had the most piracy convictions in decades in 2021, with a record number of 26 pirates convicted in three piracy trials. In the first trial of its kind, Togo convicted nine pirates for hijacking the *G Dona I* in 2019. Nigeria convicted ten pirates for hijacking the FV Hai Lu Feng II in 2020, the first pirates convicted under Sections 3, 10, and 12 of the Suppression of Piracy and other Maritime Offences Act of 2019 (SPOMO) (Bell et al., 2021). Seven pirates were convicted in Nigeria for the Maximus hijacking in 2016, though not under the SPOMO Act.

Togo and Nigeria have passed anti-piracy laws, leading the region in piracy trials and convictions. Though the number of trials and convictions has been low, the groundwork for establishing a solid legal finish for piracy crimes has already been costly to the Gulf of Guinea governments. Members of African governments and public sector employees have drafted legislation, completed law enforcement training and participated in mock trials. The rise of the maritime security agenda aligns with broader security discourses on non-traditional security themes on land. It expands the scope and nature of security at sea in both concept and practice to include issues of development, security and law enforcement, and the relationships between these themes. (Bueger 2015).

Stability in the Gulf of Guinea involves human security as the starting point (International Peace Institute, 2014). Piracy and insurgency in the Gulf of Guinea region reflects Africa's structural and underlying issues. These include unemployment, poverty, poor infrastructure, and slow and uneven

development. The embedded and entrenched structural and socioeconomic gaps and inconsistent efforts to improve the living standards of communities, create jobs, develop infrastructure, and provide services like roads, electricity, water, and healthcare services has contributed to the rise of maritime criminality as manifested in piracy and insurgency. As an example, Nigeria has been described as the “epicentre of maritime violence” as the Niger Delta remains very popular for contributing to piracy due to high levels of poverty, corruption, and criminality (Crisis Group, 2012:23). These persistent and longstanding factors have resulted in high levels of criminality, as seen through piracy, sea robbery. In operationalizing the United Nations’ political and technical support for regional maritime security architecture in the Gulf of Guinea, the Secretary General’s report (United Nations Security Council, 2022) noted the need to address human security challenges by providing livelihood opportunities for the youth. A report by the International Crisis Group (2012:24) on the Gulf of Guinea posits that “creating jobs is the only way to ensure that former militants who have benefited from vocational training in the amnesty scheme do not return to crime.” As another example, human security involves food and job security as well as adequate shelter and sustainable livelihoods; the continued attacks on sea water and sea resources disrupt the fishery industry, thus leading to food insecurity, hunger, loss of livelihoods, and unemployment.

So far, a number of milestones have been attained by MOCs/states/Zones in their implementation of the Yaoundé Architecture plan since 2013 on. There is now.

- ✓ Active participation in the development of MOUs for joint maritime operations/patrols in Zones E, F & G,
- ✓ Participation in the validation of Manual of Procedures and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for ECOWAS Maritime Centers,
- ✓ Tracking, localization & facilitating arrest of VOIs,
- ✓ Participation in annual regional exercises OBANGAME EXPRESS & GANO as well as zonal NEMO exercises,
- ✓ Participation in the workshop for review of ECOWAS Integrated Maritime Strategy Action Plan,
- ✓ Participation in Expert Technical Committee on creation of Combine Maritime Task Force for the GoG (CMTF-GOG).

In addition, the UNODC Global Maritime Crime Program is working with States to examine laws, identify required upgrades and support changes that allow for the entrenchment of legal framework toward successful prosecution of piracy and other transnational crime. Cabo Verde, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo now have maritime laws to prosecute piracy, a crime that often has gone unpunished due to non-existent laws. Other countries such as Benin, Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana are enacting reforms.

In December 2022, Cameroon signed its maritime security law, which targets piracy and maritime terrorism. Other countries such as Angola, the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Gabon are trying to upscale maritime legal reforms. Another milestone reform is the ECOWAS Supplementary Act for the transfer of piracy suspects, which would facilitate multinational maritime security operations information exchange. (Ngada 2023).

Before 2013, gaps in information sharing between maritime law enforcement practitioners posed a fundamental challenge. Countries had a limited picture of the maritime domain and unaware of activity outside their own exclusive economic zones. Yaoundé Architecture lets information flow from each of the five cooperation zones up to regional centres. Individual national maritime operations center also are connected to the system. The YARIS, enhances the capacity for seamless information exchange. YARIS lets members securely share documentation, logs, photos, recordings and other information. YARIS also

enables aggregation of data from surveillance systems such as radar and satellites to identify suspicious vessels Capacity Building Centres of excellence have accelerated training and education and supported exercises by delivering courses tailored to meet needs. (Ngada 2023).

Ngada notes that in 2022, for example, the Yaoundé Architecture Training Organization delivered more than 520 cumulative days of capacity-building packages across the gulf, covering topics such as maritime domain awareness (25 per cent of training days), maritime governance (12 per cent), maritime law enforcement (35 per cent) and maritime interdiction operations (28 per cent). Capacity-building initiatives is transforming beneficiaries' attitudes and job performance. UNODC is supporting the Interregional Coordination Centre with an integrated database management system. Geared toward guaranteeing data availability, accessibility, accuracy, consistency and clarity combined operations. Combined operations at sea, which once were infrequent, have been increasing with the support of Yaoundé Architecture centers.

Combined patrols were conducted in Zone E in late 2021 and 2023. Cameroon, São Tomé and Príncipe, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon conducted other surveillance patrols in Zone D. Combined fisheries patrol with the sub-regional fisheries commission of Cabo Verde, The Gambia, Guinea and Senegal conducted biannually. Interoperability is improving with the help of multinational exercises such as Obangame Express and Grand African NEMO and Regional events such as the International Maritime Conference and the Regional Maritime Exercise, organized by Nigerian in 2022. (Ngada 2023).

The reach of the Nigerian Navy in the waters of the Gulf of Guinea prior to 2013 was very minimal However the narrative has positively changed today. Some identified challenges and obstacles to implementation from the field include non-enactment/domestication of legal regimes to tackle maritime crimes. Non harmonization of maritime governance laws across the region. Some ECOWAS member states are yet to build adequate maritime security and safety capacity/capability to cover their individual maritime space. No Provision for sustainable funding mechanism for ECOWAS maritime security architecture to operate optimally. (Interview #1 2023).

Also, the MOCs/states/Zones are not at par comparatively among themselves in relation to their stated goals and aspirations as stipulated in the Yaoundé Code of Conduct. Not all the Yaoundé Architecture centres have operated optimally. Some factors like human and material resourcing have impaired some from being effective in implementing maritime governance in their country. (Interview #3, 2023)

The Yaoundé Architecture was created based on the need to strengthen multinational maritime law enforcement in the Gulf of Guinea through well-articulated maritime governance policies and strategies. It was predicated on the requirements for a comprehensive response to the need for unified approaches to combat maritime security challenges and transnational organized crime in the region. Its merit was to amongst other things, to achieve the following objectives.

a) Legal Reforms - The Yaoundé Architecture was intended to support countries as they put in place legal reforms to tackle maritime transnational organized crimes.

b) Information Exchange - The Yaoundé Architecture has strengthened the channels of multinational communication seamlessly through well-established networks supporting maritime law enforcement.

c) Capacity building - The Yaoundé Architecture calls for developing and improving the skills, knowledge and abilities of maritime law enforcement practitioners. Centres of excellence are being patronized for diverse training schedules covering the unique skill requirements in the maritime domain.

d) Combined Operations - The Yaoundé Architecture, through its multinational coordination centres has created platforms for combined maritime law enforcement operations between countries. Its implementation plans were to be achieved through

e) Establishment of Regional Coordination Centres - CRESMAO (West Africa) + CRESMAC (Central Africa). (Interview # 3 (2023)).

- f) Establishment of Multinational Maritime Coordination Centres – Zone A (Angola – yet to be operationalised) Zone D (Cameroon); Zone E (Benin); Zone F (Ghana); Zone G (Cabo Verde).
- g) Establishment of National Maritime Operations Centres.

The Yaoundé Architecture / Yaoundé Code of Conduct has strengthened regional cooperation and ocean governance in the Gulf of Guinea by creating the enabling MOUs and protocols for bilateral and multilateral corporation between members' states in the fight against maritime crimes in the GoG. It has enhanced regional cooperation and ocean governance in the Gulf of Guinea through improved communication and information sharing. The Yaoundé Architecture / Yaoundé Code of Conduct has facilitated the coordination of responses, increased standardisation of operating procedures and harmonisation of legal and regulatory frameworks.

Since its launch in 2013 therefore, the Yaoundé Architecture / Yaoundé Code of Conduct has strengthened regional cooperation and ocean governance in the Gulf of Guinea. It has facilitated the harmonization of some legislations to curb maritime crimes. It has also boost maritime surveillance and information sharing and coordination of response actions to curb maritime crimes.

Piracy/sea robbery incidents; IUU; Trafficking in drugs/arms/persons; unstable cost of shipping; unstable tariff; decline volume of maritime commerce; decline in port calls among others are important components of maritime security. First, the region is reported to have witnessed a drop in piracy/sea robbery related incidents within the ECOWAS region from a record high of 68 in 2020 to a record low of 15 in 2022. As at 4 Dec 23, only 14 piracy/sea robbery related incidents have occurred within the ECOWAS region. (Interview #2 2023). Member states have commenced coordination of states to curb IUU Fishing activities in ECOWAS maritime domain. A proactive anti trafficking campaign has resulted in the arrest and seizure of about 25,065.65 kg of cocaine within ECOWAS maritime domain and 14,356 kg within adjoining international waters to the ECOWAS maritime area. (Interview #2 2023). Also, 8 major coordinated Search and Rescue (SAR) operations have been successfully conducted within the ECOWAS maritime domain between Oct 22 and Dec 23. Several stowaway and illegal migration incidents have been curbed within ECOWAS maritime domain. (Interview #2 2023).

From the onset, Key Performance Indicators (KPI) by which success was going to be measured were pre-determined to include (piracy/sea robbery incidents; IUU; Trafficking in drugs/arms/persons; volume and cost of shipping; cost of tariff at ports; volume of maritime commerce; number of port calls, oil theft, kidnapping for ransom; illegal dumping and marine pollution amongst others. The spike in piracy/sea robbery incidents and the consequential effect on volume of maritime commerce; cost of shipping; decline in port calls, unstable tariff among others) were tending towards complex emergency. The changing trend which saw to reduced rates of piracy/sea robbery incidents, increase in volume of shipping, increase in the volume of port calls especially through the EU coordinated Maritime Presence in the GoG, has begun to appreciate since 2021. According to the Head of ECOWAS Regional Maritime Security Centre (CRESMAO), prior to the Yaoundé Architecture (before 2013), the state of maritime crimes in the region was alarming and it attracted international attention and inhibited maritime shipping activities within the region. (Interview #3, #1 2023).

The envisaged outcomes of the Yaoundé Architecture were the general reduction in maritime transnational organised crimes that had hitherto been significant challenges in the GoG maritime domain. Crimes like piracy/sea robbery and IUU amongst others were the most primary and perhaps urgent to be tackled, some other forms of crime have not been resolved in more impactful terms. Crimes like IUU, drug trafficking and smuggling of migrants have become increasingly problematic in the extenuating circumstances. (Interview #3 2023). This implies that other forms of crime in the region have not received

as much attention like piracy and sea robbery. Yet the overriding effect of these other crimes have the potency of undermining the overall progress made on maritime security in general and the gains so far attained on piracy/sea robbery mitigation, this is so due to the close links among the spectrum of vices that are inter-related with mutually reinforcing relationships. For example, the thriving in drugs and narcotics or money laundering could trigger a resurgence in piracy and sea robbery just as state fragility and political instability could aid all forms of maritime crime. (Interview #3, 2023).

Summary

The study has attempted an assessment of the Yaoundé Architecture as a mitigation framework in addressing the tides of piracy and sea robbery situation in the Gulf of Guinea and impact on the blue economies of states in the region. The article has examined the political, legal and operational activities that have been undertaken by member states, regional and sub-regional organizations, the United Nations system and its partners, to combat piracy and sea robbery in the Gulf of Guinea. It was found that there has been a decrease, since June 2021, in the incidents of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the region. The article underscores the importance of concerted global action to ensure the full and meaningful operationalization of the Yaoundé Architecture and its code of conduct. It points to the marked difference brought about by the Yaoundé Architecture/Yaoundé Code of Conduct. The paper concludes with some observations and recommendations on ways to further enhance national efforts and regional and international cooperation by deepening and further entrenching the Yaoundé Code of Conduct in consolidating on the gains so far made.

Conclusion

The Yaoundé Architecture and its associated code of conduct have proven to be effective in stemming the tide of piracy and sea robbery in the Gulf of Guinea. Deepening and consolidating on its gains by improving on the initial framework is key to actualizing its objectives. The urgent need to bring states up to speed that are relatively lagging behind in the progress of operationalizing the code of conduct is critical to stabilizing the maritime region. As demonstrated, a continues response to the multiplicity of factors that created a breeding ground for piracy and sea robbery in the study area in a multifaceted approach is crucial for tackling the problem. The concerted effort already garnered by the Yaoundé Architecture expressed through National, regional and international efforts must be sustained taking into account the underlying social, political, economic and environmental challenges that underpin the recruitment of individuals especially the youth, into organized crime in general and piracy/sea robbery in particular. This requires a holistic approach, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainability. There is the urgent need therefore, to address the vulnerability of coastal regions and their populations, as well as addressing the root causes of that vulnerability, including youth unemployment and lack of alternative means of livelihoods which is further exacerbated by the effects of climate change, and other governance and security challenges.

The Code of Conduct reached in Yaoundé in 2013 has since kept pace in serving as vehicle for supporting and enhancing national efforts and regional and international cooperation towards combating piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea. The MOC have performed above average however there is room for improvement in the area of information sharing which is being inhibited by sovereignty issues. The methodology appears to be more efficient in ECOWAS due to the adaptation of the ECOWAS Integrated Maritime Strategy (EIMS) which is all encompassing and creates the enabling environment for greater synergy between its member states. The need to streamline the marked differences between ECOWAS and ECCAS for the smooth implementation/actualization of the Yaoundé Architecture, ECCAS

could adopt the EIMS in their region. (Interview #1 2023). Prior to the Yaoundé Architecture (before 2013) the state of maritime crimes in the region was alarming and attracted international attention. The trend inhibited maritime shipping activities within the region. Compared to current records (Dec. 2023) everything points to marked improvement with drop in the level of piracy and sea robbery incidents. (Interview #2 2023).

Pockets of challenges to the full implementation of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, include language barrier, maritime boundary issues, lack of the right mix of maritime security assets by countries in the region, lack of right mix of maritime security assets by most ECOWAS Member States to police their waters. In the ECOWAS region, Zone E and F states have to a large extent, contributed the right mix of personnel to man the MMCCs while several MOC are Navy MOCs rather than combine MOCs bringing together the right mix of maritime security and safety stakeholder agencies for collection, and dissemination of information for timely response to maritime security and safety incidents. (Interview #2 2023). The importance of interagency cooperation and civil-military cooperation in countering maritime security challenges in the region cannot be overemphasised. Only Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal had capacities to police beyond their territorial waters prior to the launch of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct. (Interview #2 2023). The notable governance framework in place for contending with piracy and sea robbery in the Gulf of Guinea includes the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, UNSC Resolutions 2018, 2039 and 2634, the Lome Charter, Regional and international strategies.

Deepening the implementation of the architecture will require domesticating the Yaoundé Code of Conduct in all Gulf of Guinea states and making it legally binding across board. (Interview #3, #1 2023). The lessons learnt for consolidation of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct include the need to draw up an action plan for the implementation of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct and streamlining the functions of the Interregional Coordination Centre (ICC) to prevent its use to undermine the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and states entities, due to the observed trend of indiscriminately signing of unproductive MoUs for implementation by the Yaoundé Architecture without recourse to the RECs and states entities. The ICC presumes to be a pseudo-interregional economic community rather than maintaining its status as a mere coordination channel between centres of the Architecture in West and Central Africa. (Interview # 1 2023)

The zonal MMCCs and national MOCs have performed well above average. The challenge that still remains is the non-fluidity of information sharing on maritime crimes from MOCs due to sovereignty concerns. The ECCAS region needs to streamline their operations with the requisite pace for implementation of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct. Zone A countries need to fully establish MCC Zone A. Only six (6) Gulf of Guinea states have been able to domesticate the Suppression of Unlawful Acts and Suppression of Piracy and other Illicit Maritime Activities (SUA) Convention of 1988. ECOWAS passed a protocol on boost domestication in the ECOWAS region.

The major limitation of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct / Yaoundé Architecture is the lack of sustainable funding mechanism for the Yaoundé Architecture. Issues of language barriers sometimes requiring interpreters/translators to intervene. Lack of qualified personnel to man some of the Centers at zonal and regional levels etc. (Interview #2 2023). In a bid to attain the full and smooth implementation/actualization of the Yaoundé Architecture, there is the need to streamline the ECCAS and ECOWAS strategies. Continuous harmonisation through dialogues is encouraged. For instance, a review of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct should be fast tracked, and all observed differences should be incorporated accordingly. (Interview # 3 2023).

References

- Akintayo, O. (2023). Nigeria lost N2.3tn revenue to oil theft in 12 months – IOC. Available from:
- Ali, K.D. (2015) The Anatomy of Gulf of Guinea Piracy. *Naval War College Review*, 68(1), 93–118. <http://search.proquest.com/openview/f0b98e5688d45bd0185614601f823967/1?pq-origsite=gscholar>
- Ali, K.D., & Benning, Y. (2020). Gulf of Guinea Piracy: The Old, the New, and the Dark Shades. *CEMLAWS Governance Brief*, 2(1).
- Ali, K.-D., & Benning, Y. (2020). Gulf of Guinea Piracy: The Old, the New and the Dark Shades. *CEMLAWS Governance Brief*, 2(1). BBC News. (2019, June 18). Piracy in West Africa: The world's most dangerous seas? BBC.com. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-48581197>
- Available at:
- Bell, C., Huggins J., Benson J., Joubert L., Okafor-Yarwood I. and Ebiede T.M. (2021) "Pirates of the Gulf of Guinea: A Cost Analysis for Coastal States." A report of the Stable Seas, a Transnational Maritime Security Research Organization with members in the United States and South Africa. Coordinated by The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's Global Maritime Crime Program (UNODC GMCP) with support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Bueger, C. (2015). What is Maritime Security? *Marine Policy*. 53, 159-164.
- Bueger, C., & Edmunds, T. (2017). Beyond sea blindness: A new agenda for maritime security studies. *International Affairs*, 93(6), 1293–1311. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iix174>
- Dryad Global. (2020, August 5). Dryad Global. Retrieved August 2022 from Yaounde Code of Conduct taking shape in the Gulf of Guinea: <https://channel16.dryadglobal.com/yaounde-code-of-conduct-taking-shape-in-the-gulf-of-guinea>
- ECOWAS. (2013, June 25). Code of conduct Concerning the Repression of Piracy, Armed Robbery Against Ships, and Ilicit Maritime Activity in West and Central Africa. The Yaounde Code of Conduct. Yaounde, Cameroon.
- GOGIN Watch. (2019, 1 September). Chiefs of Naval of Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Gendarmerie of Burkina Faso Sign MoU on Maritime Security. Retrieved June 2022 from EU- Gulf of Guinea Interregional Network: <https://www.gogin.eu/en/2019/09/01/chiefs-of-naval-of-cote-divoire-ghana-guinealiberia-sierra-leone-and-gendarmerie-of-burkina-faso-sign-mou-on-maritime-security>
- Hasan, S., & Hassan, D. (2016). Current Arrangements to Combat Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea: An Evaluation. *Journal of Maritime Law and Commerce*, 47(2), 171–217. 156 Yücel: Sovereignty and Transnational Cooperation in the Gulf of Guinea
- Hassan, D., & Hasan, S. (2017). Effectiveness of the current regimes to combat piracy in the Gulf of Guinea: An evaluation. *African Journal of Legal Studies*, 10(1), 35–65. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1163/17087384-12340014>
- Herrhausen, A. (2007). Coordination in United Nations peacebuilding: A theory-guided approach (SP IV 2007-301). <http://hdl.handle.net/10419/49744>
- ICC Commercial Crime Services. (2021, 13 January). Gulf of Guinea records highest ever number of crew kidnapped in 2020, according to IMB's annual piracy report. [icc-ccs.org. https://www.icc-ccs.org/index.php/1301-gulf-of-guinea-records-highest-ever-number-of-crew-kidnapped-in-2020-according-to-imb-s-annual-piracy-report](https://www.icc-ccs.org/index.php/1301-gulf-of-guinea-records-highest-ever-number-of-crew-kidnapped-in-2020-according-to-imb-s-annual-piracy-report) [accessed 04 03 2021].
- ICC Commercial Crime Services. (2021, January 13). Gulf of Guinea records highest ever number of crew kidnapped in 2020, according to IMB's annual piracy report. [icc-ccs.org](https://www.icc-ccs.org). accessed at
- IMB. (2022). ICC- IMB Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships Report- First Quarter 2022. Statistical report, ICC International Maritime Bureau, Piracy Reporting Centre, London.
- International Crisis Group (2012). The Gulf of Guinea: The New Danger Zone. Report No. 195.
- International Maritime Bureau (2022) CC- IMB Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships Report – January - June 2022
- International Maritime Bureau (IMB) 2019 "Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships." Report for the Period 1 January- 30 September 2019. ICC IMB London.
- International Maritime Bureau IMB (2018) Accessed at [https://www.icc-ccs.org/reports/2018 Annual IMB Piracy Report.pdf](https://www.icc-ccs.org/reports/2018%20Annual%20IMB%20Piracy%20Report.pdf)
- International Maritime Bureau. (2008). Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships Report: Report for the Period 1 January – 31 March 2008.

- International Maritime Bureau. (2010). Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships: Annual Report.
- International Maritime Bureau. (2015). International Maritime Bureau. Retrieved from <https://icc-ccs.org/icc/imb>
- International Maritime Bureau. (2016). Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships.
- International Maritime Bureau. (2022). ICC- IMB Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships Report- First Quarter 2022. Statistical report, ICC International Maritime Bureau, Piracy
- International Maritime Organization (2021) "Long Range Identification and Tracking." Accessed
- International Maritime Organization IMO (2012) Reports on Acts of Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships. MSC.4/Circ.193 2 April 2013 Annual Reports 2012. Accessed 25 December 2022 at <https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/imb-piracy-and-armed-robbery>
- International Maritime Organization IMO (2014) Reports on Acts of Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships. MSC.4/Circ.219/Rev.1 28 April 2015 Annual Reports 2014. Accessed 25 December 2022 at <https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Security/Pages/Piracy-Reports-Default.aspx>
- International Maritime Organization IMO (2019) Reports on Acts of Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships. MSC.4/Circ.264 27 April 2020 Annual Reports 2019. Accessed 25 December 2022 at <https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Security/Pages/Piracy-Reports-Default.aspx>
- International Peace Institute (2014) Insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea: Assessing the Threats, International Peace Keeping Centre Jaji, Kaduna, Nigeria
- Interview #1 (2023) Nigerian Navy Commodore on Secondment to ECOWAS) as Head of ECOWAS Regional Maritime Security Centre (CREMAO) age 53 with 31 years in service. (Interviewed on 12 Dec. 2023)
- Interview #2 (2023) Navy Capt. 45 years old personnel of the Nigerian Navy a Defence Attachee with the ECOWAS Regional Maritime Security Centre in Abidjan. (Interviewed 13 Nov. 2023).
- Interview #3 (2023) Capt. (Nig. Navy) Secondment to Interregional Coordination Centre (ICC), Yaoundé age range (45-49) with 23 years in service. (Interviewed on 14 Dec. 2023)
- Johnson S.E., Baxter C. Bartis J.T. and Long D. (2012) "Promoting International Energy Security: Volume 4, The Gulf of Guinea". Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2012. Accessed at https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical_reports/2012/
- Kamal-Deen Ali, (2015). The Anatomy of Gulf of Guinea Piracy. Naval War College Review, 68,
- Krieger, T and Meierrieks, D. (2016). Does Income Inequality Lead to Terrorism? CESIFO Working Paper 5821. Available from: https://www.ifo.de/DocDL/cesifo1_wp5821.pdf. Accessed 17 July 2023. London March 2021.
- Maritime Executive. (2021, 12 February). Crew of Boxship Mozart Freed by Pirates Weeks After Brutal Attack. <https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/crew-of-boxship-mozart-freed-by-pirates-weeks-after-brutal-attack> [accessed 24 02 2021].
- Mbiriri, R. (2009) "Nigeria's Deep Water Oil Fields: Cause for Contestation," Consultancy Africa Intelligence, 1 November 2009. As of 27 February 2010: Accessed at http://www.consultancyafrica.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=284&Itemid=190
- Mboob M. (2022) Evaluation of the Yaoundé Architecture. A Report of the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Institute.
- Mélanie, M. (2022 a, May 18). The maritime agencies of Guinea are connected to the YARIS platform. Retrieved June 2022 from EU- GOGIN: <https://www.gogin.eu/en/2022/05/18/the-maritime-administrations-of-guinea-are-connected-to-the-yaris-platform/>
- Mélanie, M. (2022 c, April 26). The Nigerian Navy operational centres connected to YARIS. Retrieved June, 2022 from EU-GOGIN: <https://www.gogin.eu/en/2022/04/26/thenigerian-navy-operational-centres-connected-to-yaris/>
- Ngada T. (2023) "The Yaoundé Architecture for Maritime Security: Roles Responsibilities and Results" Training and Practice Division, Interregional Coordination Centre (ICC) Yaoundé
- Okafor-Yarwood, I., Pigeon, M., Amling, A., Ridgway, C., Adewumi, I., & Joubert, L. (2020). Stable Seas: Gulf of Guinea. https://download-files.wixmp.com/ugd/1e2140_8b22ced00894739a91a4d.pdf [accessed 25 05 2021].
- Okafor-Yarwood, I., Walker, T., & Reva, D. (2021, 7 February). Gulf of Guinea piracy: a symptom, not a cause, of insecurity. ISS Today. <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/gulf-of-guinea-piracy-a-symptom-not-a-cause-of-insecurity> [accessed 04 03 2021].

- Osagie, E. (2022, March 22). Collaboration Responsible for Decline in Piracy on Nigerian waters – NIMASA DG. Retrieved June 2022 from NIMASA: <https://nimasa.gov.ng/collaboration-responsible-for-decline-in-piracy-onnigerian-waters-nimasa-dg/>
- Osinowo A.A. (2015) Combatting Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. African Centre for Strategic Studies. No. 30 Feb. 2015. Preparing the Response. Meeting Note. Available from: <https://www.ipinst.org/wp->
- Ralby, I.M. (2016). A Human Security Approach to Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea. 31 August. Available from: <https://comparativejurist.org/2016/08/31/a-human-security-approach-to-maritime-security-in-the-gulf-of-guinea/Reporting-Centre, London>.
- Runciman, W. G. (1966) "Relative Deprivation and Social Justice," Routledge and Kegan Paul,
- Schulze, M., and Krättschmer-Hahn, R. (2014). Relative Deprivation Theory. In: Michalos, A.C.
- Till, G. (2018). Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century (4th ed.). Routledge. DOI: <https://doi.org/>
- Ukeje, C., & Ela, M. (2013). African Approaches to Maritime Security – The Gulf of Guinea. In Friedrich Ebert Stiftung: Peace and Security Series (Issue 11). Available from: <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/nigeria/10398>. Accessed 05 12 2019
- UN (1994) The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea was opened for signature on 10 Dec. 1982 in Montego Bay, Jamaica, and came into legal force on 16 Nov. 1994.
- United Nations (2008) Secretary General Report on Oceans and the Laws of the Sea. New York.
- United Nations (2019) "Oceans and the Laws of the Sea" Accessed at www.un.org
- United Nations (2022) Situation of Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea in the Gulf of Guinea and its Underlying Causes. United Nations' S/2022/818 Report of the Secretary-General. 1 November 2022. Accessed at <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf>
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (n.d.). Available from: Terrorism and Transport. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/terrorism/expertise/terrorism-and-transport.html>. Accessed: 17 July 2023.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, (2021, 8 December). The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) operationalizes an MOU on Implementation of Joint Maritime patrols in Zone E. Retrieved June 2022 from UNODC West and Central Africa: <https://www.unodc.org/westandcentralafrica/en/08-12-2021-the-economiccommunity-of-west-african-states-ecowas-operationalizes-an-mou-onimplementation-of-joint-maritime-patrols-in-zone-e.htm>
- United Nations Security Council (2022). Situation of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2634 (2022).
- UNODC. (2019). The UNODC Supports Countries in the Gulf of Guinea to Combat Global Maritime Crime. UNODC West and Central Africa.
- UNODC. (2021, December 8). The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) operationalizes an MOU on Implementation of Joint Maritime patrols in Zone E. Retrieved June 2022 from UNODC West and Central Africa: <https://www.unodc.org/westandcentralafrica/en/08-12-2021-the-economiccommunity-of-west-african-states-ecowas-operationalizes-an-mou-onimplementation-of-joint-maritime-patrols-in-zone-e.htm>
- Verme, P. (2013). Relative Deprivation, Discontent, and Revolutions. World Bank Blogs. Available from: <https://blogs.worldbank.org/developmenttalk/relative-deprivation-discontent-and-revolutions>. Accessed, 13 May 2023.
- Yücel, H. (2021). Sovereignty and Transnational Cooperation in the Gulf of Guinea: How a Network Approach can Strengthen the Yaoundé Architecture. Scandinavian Journal of Military Studies, 4(1), pp. 146–157. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31374/sjms.90>