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**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF DENMARK**



Course Report
Developing Maritime Security Culture in the Gulf of Guinea Course
23rd – 27th November, 2020
Cotonou, Benin.



Formation sur le Développement d'une Culture de la Sécurité Maritime dans le Golfe de Guinée
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Acronyms

AU	African Union
ECCAS	Economic Countries of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Countries of West African States
GGC	Gulf of Guinea Commission
GN	Ghana Navy
GoG	Gulf of Guinea
ICC	Inter-Regional Coordination Centre
IMB	International Maritime Bureau
KAIPTC	Kofi Annan International Peace Keeping Training Centre
MMCC	Multinational Maritime Coordination Centre
MOC	Maritime Operation Centres
NN	Nigeria Navy
TN	Togo Navy
UN	United Nations
YCC	Yaoundé Code of Conduct

Introduction and Background to the Course

International efforts to combat piracy have contributed to significant drops in the number of global piracy and maritime crime incidents. In 2019 the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) reported 162 incidents worldwide, a figure lower than the 180 and 201 incidents recorded in 2017 and 2018 respectively. Despite the significant improvements, the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) continues to experience an increasing number of maritime crimes in both international and territorial waters, making the GoG the most dangerous shipping route in the world. Thus piracy and maritime crime activities in the GoG poses significant threat to regional and international shipping. This is demonstrated by instances such as the number of crew kidnappings which increased more than 50% from 78 in 2018 to 121 in 2019. Over 90% of global crew kidnappings reported at sea in 2019 occurred in the GoG. Furthermore, the region accounted for all four vessel hijackings that occurred in 2019. Activities of the pirates and other criminals at sea are having economic impact not only on the local population but shipping companies who have to invest millions of dollars in contracting security personnel and paying extra insurance fees for their vessels and crew.

Against the above background, states along the GoG and regional bodies are developing and implementing initiatives to strengthen the capacity and improve the operational architecture of institutions responsible for maritime security. One of such measures is the establishment of the Inter-Regional Coordination Centre (ICC) tasked with spearheading the implementation of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct. Again, countries along the GoG have been divided into zones to enhance coordination and information sharing which is an important strategy in preventing and combatting piracy and other maritime crimes. These national and regional initiatives are emerging in response to international maritime security-related norms inherent in the set of protocols to which African countries along the GoG have signed up to. However, such regional and national responses are at best incoherent and uncoordinated. Relationship among national structures of the maritime security sector is limited and sometimes non-existent. Furthermore, there is inadequate rapport between the uncoordinated national maritime security agencies on one hand, and the emerging multilateral maritime security bodies. In addition to the above, the agencies also lack the necessary equipment to execute their functions which present challenges to maritime security operations. These and other factors have led to delays in the development and implementation of response initiatives and strategies to counter piracy and other maritime crimes. Thus the slow pace of implementing established national and regional maritime frameworks coupled with structural

problems among agencies poses a challenge to the promotion of maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.

Factors contributing to the weaknesses in national and regional responses to maritime threat include inadequate capacity among the maritime security personnel to support the implementation of national and regional maritime security policies. As part of the measures to strengthen regional and national maritime security initiatives, the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in collaboration with the Government of Denmark is implementing a project titled **“Enhancing Regional Research, Capacity Building and Convening of Stakeholders towards a Safer Maritime Domain in the Gulf of Guinea”**.

One component of the project focuses on the development and implementation of capacity development training courses aimed at enhancing the professional competencies of maritime security actors both at the regional and national level. With the above background, the KAIPTC conducted the Developing Maritime Security Culture in the Gulf of Guinea course from 23rd – 27th November, 2020 in Cotonou, Benin. The training brought together participants from 15 different institutions who play diverse roles in ensuring maritime security in the country. Over the past years, Benin has experience piracy, armed robbery and other maritime crimes which has prompted the implementation of measures to ensure security in the country’s waters. The training therefore contributes to efforts towards strengthening mechanisms that will promote maritime security in Benin waters. It also contributes to the overall implementation of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct by enhancing collaboration and cooperation among maritime security actors. Modules for the training were developed based on findings from field research in some selected countries in the Gulf of Guinea region and as such reflected the current maritime security realities in the region.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the course was to contribute to enhanced collaboration and cooperation among maritime actors in the Gulf of Guinea. The following were the specific objectives of the course:

1. To enhance participants understanding of maritime crimes and the changing dynamics of insecurities in the Gulf of Guinea.
2. To provide participants with knowledge on the legal frameworks on maritime security.
3. To enhance participants’ knowledge on the multiple maritime actors, their role and relevance in promoting a safer maritime domain in the Gulf of Guinea.

4. To provide students with knowledge in gaps in the Gulf of Guinea maritime security architecture.
5. To enhance participants' knowledge in the steps that can be taken to build trust and confidence in sharing intelligence and managing maritime information towards responding to maritime incidence.
6. To provide participants with knowledge and skills in maritime security incidence reporting mechanisms in the Gulf of Guinea.
7. To provide participants with enhanced knowledge and skills that will contribute to strengthening relationships and collaborations for improved maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.

Participants and facilitators selection

In a bid to reach out to multiple maritime actors and in line with the course aim of promoting collaboration and cooperation among maritime players, the office of the maritime prefect of Benin sent invitation letters to selected institutions engaged in maritime activities to nominate participants. The invitation letters spelt out the criteria for nominees of the course. Participants were made up both state and non-state maritime security actors from institutions including the Navy, Ports and Harbors Authority, Marine Police, Customs, Immigration, Civil Society, Fisheries Commission and the Multinational Maritime Coordination Centre (MMCC) Zone E among others. Facilitators for the course involved academics with expertise in maritime security, navy personnel from the office of the maritime prefect and the MMCC Zone E as well as the Benin Ministry of Justice.

Opening Ceremony



The opening ceremony of the course took place on 23rd November, 2020 at 9:30 am at the Benin Royale Hotel in Cotonou. Present at the high table were the Chief of Staff of Beninese Armed Forces, Major General Jean-Baptiste Aho, Commandant of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre, Major General Francis Ofori and Capt (N) Maxime Ahoyo, Maritime Prefect of Benin. In his opening remarks, Major General Aho expressed his delight with the organization of the training and mentioned that the training has come at an opportune time. He stated “it provides an ideal framework to examine relevant thematic issues in order to foster the

exchange of experiences and best practices to develop innovative ways to meet regional maritime security challenges and explore initiatives aimed at promoting maritime security along the Gulf of Guinea”. The maritime prefect of Benin, Capt. Maxime Ahoyo also welcomed the initiative by the KAIPTC and the Government of Denmark. In his speech, Capt. Ahoyo mentioned that since the Gulf of Guinea is an important strategic route for international maritime transport, it is imperative to implement initiatives that will ensure maritime security in the region. In his opening remarks, Major General Francis Ofori, talked about the increasing number of piracy and maritime crimes in the Gulf of Guinea despite significant drop in the number of maritime crime incidents around the world. Continuing with his speech, Maj. Gen. Ofori highlighted implications of piracy and maritime crimes on the security and development of the Gulf of Guinea littoral states and underscored the importance of ensuring maritime security in the region. He encouraged the participants to share experiences and use the knowledge they will gain from the training to support the implementation of initiatives that promote maritime security in their respective agencies.

Course Proceedings

Course Overview

Mr. Benjamin Serebour, the course coordinator gave an overview of the course by highlighting the growing complexities of maritime threats in the Gulf of Guinea and its tendency to overwhelm the prevention response capacities in the region if authorities do not implement the needed initiatives and strengthen the existing strategies. He talked about the need to establish a regional security complex to prevent the increasing piracy and maritime crime incidents in the region and detailed the role of the course in contributing to regional and national maritime security strategies. He followed up with the course aim and objectives and took participants through the course modules and respective facilitators for each of the modules.

Module 1 – Understanding Insecurities in the Gulf of Guinea

The training commenced with the module on understanding insecurities in the Gulf of Guinea which was delivered by Dr. Kwaku Danso. Beginning with the module, Dr. Danso highlighted the concept of collective-based security and explained that states in the Gulf of Guinea generally lack sufficient military and civilian assets to secure their individual maritime domains which underscores the importance and the need for national, regional and international collaboration and cooperation in fighting piracy and other maritime crimes in the Gulf of Guinea. He then gave detailed background to the Gulf of Guinea and the myriad of current and emerging maritime crimes which have engulfed the region. He provided detailed explanation to some of the maritime crimes in the Gulf of Guinea, specifically stressing on piracy and armed robbery at sea and the modus operandi of the maritime criminals in carrying out their activities. Dr. Danso explained the difference between piracy and armed robbery at sea and drew attention of participants to how the terms are sometimes used interchangeably. The impact of maritime crimes on the Gulf of Guinea littoral states, the coastal communities and the shipping industry was highlighted during the first module of the training.

Module 2 - Maritime Intelligence, Information Sharing and Management



The module on maritime intelligence, information sharing and management was aimed at enhancing participants' knowledge in the steps that can be taken to build trust and confidence in sharing intelligence and

managing maritime information towards responding to maritime threats in the Gulf of Guinea. The facilitator, Lt Cdr. Wenceslas Gbaguidi started the module by giving a brief background to intelligence, particularly in the maritime domain and detailed the sources of maritime intelligence in the Gulf of Guinea. Lt. Cdr Gbaguidi explained intelligence cycle to the participants and used practical examples from the MMCC Zone E to elucidate his points. He mentioned some of the challenges with intelligence and information sharing which include lack of trust among agencies responsible for maritime security. He highlighted the challenges associated with limited intelligence and information sharing among maritime actors and how it affects the efforts to combat piracy and maritime crimes in the region. Lt. Cdr. Gbaguidi concluded by recommending some actions which can enhance information and intelligence sharing such as building of a regional information system.

Module 3 – Legal and Policy Framework on Maritime Security

Mr Séidou Boni Kpegounou delivered the module on legal and policy framework on maritime security. In his introduction, he talked about the piracy and armed robbery in Benin waters and how the persistence of these activities highlighted the weakness of the national and regional maritime safety and security systems. He stated that The Republic of Benin has ratified most of the regional and international legal instruments related to piracy, the prevention and repression of unlawful acts against maritime safety, transnational organized crime, navigation safety, illegal

fishing, marine pollution, protection of fishery resources and maritime terrorism. He mentioned the regional (AU and ECOWAS) and international (UN) conventions which Benin has ratified to promote security in its waters. He further talked about the institutions which play role in the maritime security efforts in Benin, including the Ministry of Justice which is responsible for prosecuting maritime crimes.

Module 4 – Legal and Institutional Framework of Maritime Security Sectors in Benin



Next on the agenda was the module on legal and institutional framework of the maritime sector in Benin which was facilitated by Capt. (N) Maxime Ahoyo. Capt.(N) Ahoyo highlighted the evolving and

lucrative nature of piracy and maritime crimes, and how the maritime criminals have become well-equipped and informed which has resulted in successful attacks over the years. He elaborated on the steps which led to the development of the national strategy for maritime protection, safety and security as well as the establishment of the office of the maritime prefect. He explained the role of the national council for marine protection, safety and security and highlighted the international conventions which Benin has ratified. He concluded by emphasizing on the continuous efforts Benin has made over the years to strengthen security in its maritime sector. He however stressed that much remains to be done to enhance the knowledge of actors on maritime security domain and the opportunities offered by the maritime environment. Capt. (NN) Ahoyo also stressed on the increasing and decisive role of CSOs alongside public authorities in achieving maritime security and the protection of marine resources.

Module 5 – Mapping Maritime Security Actors in the Gulf of Guinea



Next was the module on mapping maritime security actors in the Gulf of Guinea which was delivered by Mrs. Serwaa Allotey-Pappoe. The objective of the module was to deepen

participants' understanding of the multiple maritime actors, their mandates and relevance in promoting a safer maritime domain in the Gulf of Guinea. During the module, Ms. Allotey Pappoe explained the difference between actors and stakeholders and expounded the importance of stakeholder mapping in the maritime domain. She provided details on the level of actors in the Gulf of Guinea maritime space and highlighted the three main actors which are state actors, intergovernmental actors and non-state actors. In conclusion, the facilitator talked about the relationship among the actors and challenges such as lack of coordination which leads to duplication of efforts.

Module 6- Diverse Maritime Security Threat Response in the Gulf of Guinea

Delivering the module on diverse maritime security threats in the Gulf of Guinea, Mr. John Pokoo highlighted the concept of security culture and how it plays out in the maritime domain. Mr. Pokoo gave a detailed brief on maritime governance which he said includes the need to enforce international laws and comply with United Nations Security Council Resolutions related to maritime crimes. He took the participants through some of the maritime governance sub functional areas including maritime mission, maritime agency organization, maritime law and policy, maritime programmes and professionals among others. He further highlighted the maritime governance arrangements in the Gulf of Guinea and explained the roles being played by regional bodies such as ECOWAS, ECCAS and the GGC in the implementation of regional cooperative

efforts to combat threats within the Gulf of Guinea maritime domain. In the final stages of the module, Mr. Pokoo talked about some of the gaps in regional and national maritime security arrangements. He explicated these gaps which include financing and personnel arrangements at all levels and communication at agency levels (both national and regional).

Module 7 – Incident Reporting Mechanisms in the Gulf of Guinea

Capt. (TN) Aleda Soukoume of the MMCC Zone E delivered the next module which focused on incidence reporting mechanisms in the Gulf of Guinea. Beginning with the module, Capt. (TN) Soukoume explained the concept of incident, the causes and the consequences of incidence as it pertains to the maritime domain. He explained how reporting incident at the early stages, followed by the remedial action can prevent accident that lead to maritime pollution, injury and loss of life of crew members and other maritime professionals. Dwelling on examples from Benin and the MMCC Zone E, Capt. (TN) Soukoume highlighted some of the benefits of maritime incident reporting such as the identification of issues, patterns and trends. He further elaborated on how it provides platforms to respond to concerns, enables information sharing among maritime industry players and provides an opportunity to learn and improve on maritime safety. He expounded on the position of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct (YCC) on incident reporting and highlighted the articles of the YCC which talks about incident reporting. Capt. (TN) Soukoume continued by indicating the 4 main classes of maritime incidence which are the Human related incidents, Vessel related incidents, Environmental related incidents and Security and Safety related incidents. The module also touched on the sources of information and gave specific source where the MMCC Zone E receive information which include Maritime Operation Centres, SEAVISION and Portuguese navy shipping Centre among others. In concluding, he showed a sample incident report from the MMCC Zone E and highlighted some incident reporting challenges which include doctrinal differences, lack of clarity on applicable Standard Operating Procedures, mistrust and institutional rivalry among maritime actors and agencies.

Module 8 – Managing Relationship and Inter-Agency Collaboration



Next on the agenda was the module on managing relationship and Inter-Agency Collaboration which was aimed at providing participants with enhanced knowledge and skills that will contribute strengthened collaboration and cooperation for improved maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. In his introduction, Capt. (GN) Asiedu-Larbi gave a brief background to maritime security situation in the Gulf of Guinea and explained why it is crucial for agencies to work together to prevent piracy and other maritime crimes in the Gulf of Guinea. He highlighted the elements of institutional and bureaucratic

collaboration and detailed the role of the international community, regional bodies and individual states in promoting maritime security. Capt. (GN) Asiedu-Larbi also briefed students on the importance of intelligence in inter-agency collaboration and engaging non-state actors in the maritime domain. The facilitator continued by giving a detailed classification of the various non-state actors which he grouped into green and red based on their role and interest in the region. He explained that the green group are usually placed in the neutral category whilst the red refers to those actors who act in opposition to the state. The green actors include the private sector, coastal communities, non-governmental organizations and journalist whilst the red actors involve sea robbers, pirates, illegal fishing syndicates and narcotic syndicates.

Panel Discussion



The course included a session for panel discussion which was presented and opportunity to share experiences on maritime security issues including opportunities and challenges in interagency collaboration and cooperation among

maritime actors and agencies in Benin. Panelist for the discussion were drawn from the Beninese Navy, Marine Police Unit and a representative from the Civil Society Organizations. During the discussions, the panel members highlighted some of the initiatives being implemented by their respective institutions to promote maritime security. The panelist also talked about the some of the current challenges faced by their institutions in the fight against maritime crimes. The representative from the Navy for instance mentioned that their personnel are now required to provide security for all vessels at the anchorage, an exercise which stretches already limited number of naval personnel to its limit. Members of the panel also made recommendations on measures which can contribute to enhancing maritime security in Benin.

Visit to Multinational Maritime Coordinating Centre Zone E

With the practical session of the course, participants visited the operation room of the Multinational Maritime Coordinating Centre (MMCC) zone E where they were given a detailed brief on the activities of the Zone. During the introduction, the officer in charge explained the mission of the Zone to the participants and listed the number of countries which constitute the Zone. He further provided details on some of the measures which have been put in place to ensure effective functioning of the Zone. Participants were showed the equipment which are used to monitor the Zone E maritime space and briefed on collaboration between the MMCC and the Maritime Operation Centres (MOC) of Zone E countries, particularly with regards to information sharing to ensure security within the Zone.

and introduced to the measures put in place to monitor the waters within the zone

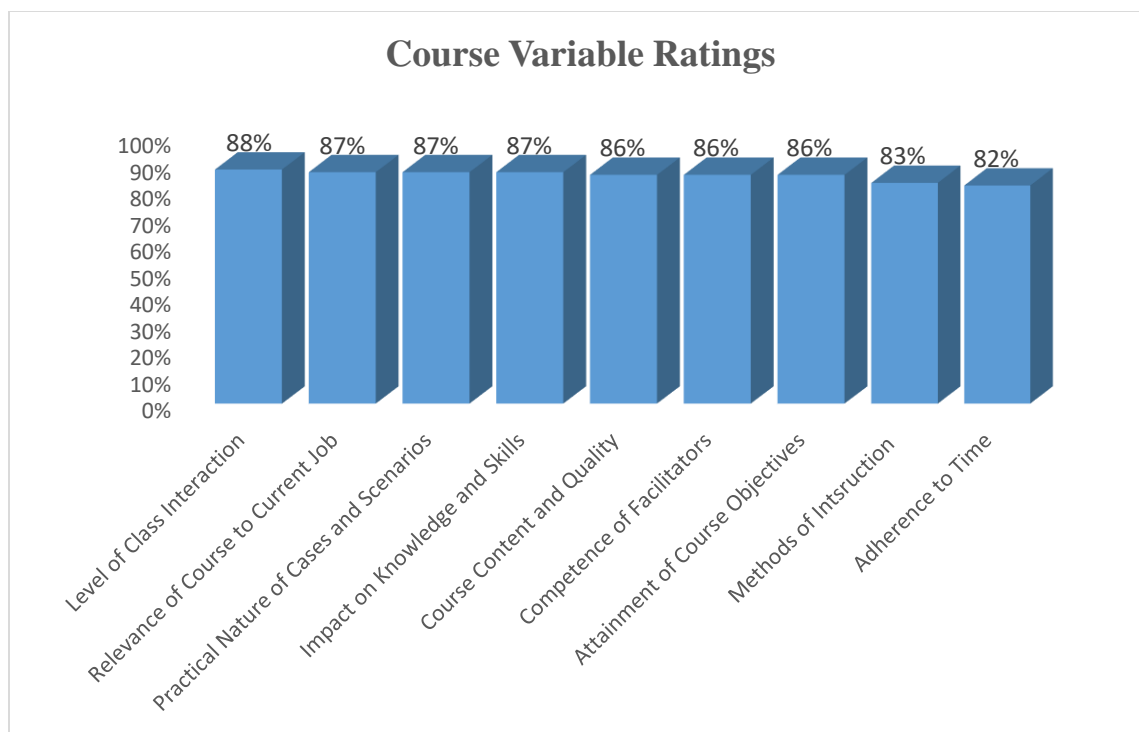
Participants Feedback

Feedback from the participants indicates that the course enhanced their knowledge on insecurities in the Gulf of Guinea and how actions within their respective agencies can contribute to maritime security both at the national and regional level. Commenting on the relevance of the training, the Maritime Prefect of Benin who participated in the training stated “when you look at the course topics, I don’t know the approach and discussion you had before developing them but I must say they are very interesting. I have been working for the navy for 35 years but with this course I noticed that I am still learning new things. I learned a lot through the training especially with the legal aspect of maritime security. It was an opportunity to invite people who are engaged in maritime security issues especially as Benin is concerned. I discovered that these kind of meetings,



workshops, seminars where we invite judges, legal experts and other maritime actors are very important because all of them are now interested in the maritime domain. They are bringing knowledge to us and we are giving them back knowledge. This kind of win-win meetings are very good for what we are doing in the sub region and as far as Benin is concerned. I wish this kind of workshop will be repeated from country to country so that relationship among actors can be enhanced. By discussing and talking about these challenges we can have idea on how to address them”.

In the post course evaluation, questionnaires were used to collect data to measure participants’ satisfaction with some key aspects of the course. The variables which were measured include the relevance of the course to the current job of participants, the quality of the course content, impact of the course on participants’ knowledge and skills and the methods of instruction. Below is a graph which shows the ratings of the variables by the participants.



Closing Ceremony

The one-week course came to an end on Friday, 27th November 2020. The closing ceremony started with the presentation of certificates after which the Head of Conflict Management Programme, Mr. John Pokoo delivered his remarks. Mr. Pokoo thanked the students for their active participation in the course and stressed on the need for the participants to implement the knowledge



gained to support activities that will contribute to maritime security in Benin and the Gulf of Guinea region as a whole. In his closing remarks, the Maritime Prefect thanked the Government of Denmark and the KAIPTC for bringing such an important course to Benin, especially at a time when the country is intensifying its efforts to enhance maritime security. He urged all the

participants to apply the knowledge gained from the training to support initiatives that promote maritime security in their respective agencies.

Conclusion

The Developing Maritime Security Culture in the Gulf of Guinea course which was carried out in Benin was very successful in terms of the organization and processes. In providing their feedback, participants noted the high quality of the course content and expressed their satisfaction with the delivery methodology and the other activities that were included in the course. The introduction of the panel discussion enriched the course by exposing participants to real industry examples. It also brought the practical experiences to bear on some of the theoretical issues which were discussed during the course. Overall, the feedback on the course demonstrate its relevance in addressing capacity gaps and challenges in the Gulf of Guinea maritime domain.