

PRESENTATION BY GHANA AND NORWAY
Co-Penholders of UNSC Resolution 2634 on
Maritime Security in the GoG

During the 6th online Plenary Meeting of the GoG SHADE Forum

23rd November 2022

Time: 10:00am GMT

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Introduction:

- **Mr. Chair**
- **Distinguished participants**
- **Ladies ad gentlemen,**
- Ghana and Norway are pleased to be invited to participate in this very important meeting.
- The focus of today's meeting which seeks to build upon actions and measures that the Forum has introduced over the last 18months and to strengthen counter piracy cooperation as well as information sharing of the Yaoundé code of conduct is timely and would further enhance efforts in consolidating the gains made in addressing the menace in the region.

Context:

- Before this year, it had been ten years since the Security Council adopted its last resolution on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea(GoG).
- Despite the global nature of the threat, the region remains the global hot spot for maritime piracy. The region recorded 130 maritime kidnappings out of the 135 global incidents in 2020, in addition to all the 40 kidnapped crew recorded globally in the first quarter of 2021.
- Furthermore, indications from the international Maritime Bureau continue to show the Gulf of Guinea as the region with the worst record for piracy, despite the recorded decline in piracy incidents from 123 in 2020, to 45 in 2021 and a further drop to 13 between January and June this year.
- While welcoming the positive developments in the region regarding the decline in piracy incidents in the region challenges persist.

Challenges:

- The challenges include inadequate staffing of the maritime coordination centers under the Yaoundé framework, the lack of appropriate equipment and logistical support by national navies, as well as the sometimes ineffective exchange of information among participating countries.
- We remain concerned about the evolving nature of the pirates and the danger they pose beyond the territorial waters.
- Criminals have become better equipped to attack many kilometres away from the coast. The furthest attack registered in 2021 took place more than 390 kilometres south of Cotonou, the economic centre of Benin, where 15 crew members of a Maltese chemical tanker were abducted.
- There are also concerns about the evolution of a dangerous link between piracy and terrorism in the region, as the tentacles of terrorist groups operating in the Sahel is reaching the Gulf of Guinea.

Ctnd:

- Urgent attention is required in combating the menace since it is detrimental to the development of coastal economies in the region and risks compounding the multifaceted challenges facing the region including a surge in terrorism, a return of coup d'états, a deepening of climate change as well as the worsening impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Steps taken by Ghana and Norway

- It is within this context, that right at the beginning of Ghana's membership of the Council in January 2022, Ghana and Norway jointly initiated a draft resolution on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.
- After several months of negotiation, the 15 member Security Council unanimously adopted resolution S/RES/2634 (2022) on 31st May 2022, which represents in the past decade the first resolution on the Gulf of Guinea following the previous resolution in 2012.

About the Resolution

- The resolution builds on existing frameworks including resolutions 2018 (2011), 2039 (2012), and the existing comprehensive regional framework, notably the Yaoundé Code of Conduct. Its operative core focuses on the need to criminalize and prosecute acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea, as well as on measures to further enhance and support national, regional, and international efforts in dealing with the situation.
- The resolution also reaffirms that international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out.
- The resolution requested the Secretary-General to report on current efforts, including assessing the possible links between piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea and terrorism in West Africa, combined with recommendations for enhanced efforts and support for national and regional responses.

Ctnd

- In addition to the commitment of Member States in combating the menace, we believe that support from the international community is indispensable if we want to consolidate the gains made in tackling piracy and armed robbery at sea in the GoG. The resolution also makes this clear call.
- *****In this regard, Preambular Paragraph(PP) 14 of the resolution recognises the contribution by international organizations in support of ongoing efforts by countries in the region and regional organizations to counter piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea, including through the recently established Gulf of Guinea Maritime Collaboration Forum and its Shared Awareness and Deconfliction (SHADE), the G7++ Friends of the Gulf of Guinea among others*****
- ***NB: emphasis is on relevant initiatives which include SHADE***

Way forward

- The resolution was a **call to action**, which is being responded to. Going forward we believe that there is the need to strengthen the institutional frameworks, tackle the underlying drivers for piracy and armed robbery at sea and enhancing partnerships.
- We share the view that regional and national efforts alone is not enough to adequately deal with the menace. We therefore place emphasis on partnerships and underscore the importance of continuing support of the international community to stakeholders that are making significant input to the regional efforts in addressing the situation.
- Underscoring the role of stakeholders in the region would not be complete without mentioning the invaluable support in realizing a safer maritime space in the region of partners such as the European Union, the Group of Seven Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea (G7 ++ FoGG), and **the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Collaboration Forum and Shared Awareness and De-confliction (GoG-MCF/SHADE)**. This was affirmed by Ghana and other Council members yesterday during the Security Council briefing on Piracy and armed robbery at sea in the GoG following the Secretary-General's report to the Council.

Conclusion

- The positive contribution of the GoG SHADE Forum in the region is there for all to see and Ghana and Norway as well as the regional actors would continue to advocate more support from the international community to its work. Its complementary role to the region's efforts in tackling the menace for gains to be consolidated is essential.
- In this regard, next year's ten-year anniversary (Yaoundé+10) for the Yaoundé architecture provides the perfect opportunity for us all for stepping up joint efforts and partnerships even further.

I thank you.