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PRESENTATION ON ORGANISED CRIME NETWORKS IN THE GULF OF GUINEA AND MARITIME SAFETY: THE NEXUS OF HUMAN, DRUGS, AND ARMS TRAFFICKING

Presented by

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INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON COUNTERING ORGANIZED CRIME IN
AFRICA ORGANISED BY CENTER FOR FISCAL TRANSPARENCY AND
INTEGRITY WATCH

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INTERPOL

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Purpose Of The Presentation

The presentation aims to give a clear picture on Activities of Organized Crime Network in the Gulf of Guinea and Maritime safety:



SCOPE



1. INTRODUCTION
2. OVERVIEW OF MARITIME ENVIRONMENT IN THE GULF OF GUINEA
3. THREAT IN GULF OF GUINEA MARITIME DOMAIN
4. EFFORTS TO CURB THE PIRACY AND OTHER MARITIME CRIMES IN GULF OF GUINEA
5. INVESTIGATIVE CYCLE IN MARITIME RELATED CASES
6. RESPONSE CAPACITY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY IN THE GULF OF GUINEA
7. STATE OF MARITIME SECURITY
8. CHALLENGES AND WAYFORWARD
9. CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION



- The Gulf of Guinea, situated on the West African coast, stands at the crossroads of multiple continents, creating a geographical and geopolitical nexus of paramount importance. This region encompasses numerous coastal countries, including Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, and Gabon, making it a region of great strategic value.

There are two key significant points to consider when dealing with Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea -

- **Geographical Significance**
- **Geopolitical Significance**

Geographical Significance

- **Strategic Location**
- **Rich Natural Resources**
- **Biodiversity**

Geopolitical Significance

- **Global Energy Production**
- **Maritime Trade**
- **Regional Dynamics**
- **Security Concerns**

ORGANIZED CRIMINAL NETWORK

Organized criminal networks, often referred to as criminal organizations or syndicates, are groups of individuals who engage in systematic, illegal activities with a degree of structure, hierarchy, and coordination. These networks can operate locally, nationally, or internationally and are involved in a wide range of criminal endeavours. Here are some key characteristics and types of organized criminal networks:

- Characteristics of Organized Criminal Networks:

- * Hierarchy**
- * Specialization**
- * Coordinated Activities**
- * Profit Motive**
- * Violence and Intimidation**

- Types of Organized Criminal Networks:

- > Drug Cartels**
- > Mafia**
- > Terrorist Organizations**
- > Human Trafficking Networks**
- > Cybercrime Syndicates**
- > Arms Smuggling Rings**
- > Racketeering Organizations**

MAP SHOWING AREA OF MARITIME ENVIRONMENT IN GULF OF GUINEA



PICTURES OF RESOURCES IN GULF OF GUINEA MARITIME ENVIRONMENT



THREAT TO MARITIME SECURITY IN GULF OF GUINEA

- 1. CRUDE OIL THEFT**
- 2. ILLEGAL OIL BUNKERING /PIPELINE VANDALISM**
- 3. PIRACY AND SEA ROBBERY**
- 4. PROLIFERATION OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS**
- 5. CYBER THREATS DUE TO ATTACK ON SHIPS' NETWORKS,
COMMUNICATION AND NAVIGATION SYSTEMS.**
- 6. ILLEGAL UNREGULATED AND UNREPORTED FISHING**
- 7. SMUGGLING**
- 8. DRUG TRAFFICKING**
- 9. HUMAN TRAFFICKING**



HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- Human trafficking is a grave violation of human rights and involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of individuals by means of threat, use of force, or other forms of coercion for the purpose of exploitation. In the Gulf of Guinea, human trafficking takes on various forms:
 - **Forced Labour**
 - **Sex Trafficking**
 - **Child Trafficking**
 - **Methods, Routes, and Victims**





- # Drug Trafficking

- Drug trafficking in the Gulf of Guinea refers to the illegal trade of narcotics, including cocaine, heroin, and cannabis, which has significant consequences for regional stability. It leads to:
 - **Destabilization:** The drug trade fuels violence and corruption, undermining political stability.
 - **Social Implications:** Drug addiction and drug-related violence have severe social repercussions in the region.



ARMS TRAFFICKING

Arms trafficking involves the illegal trade of firearms, ammunition, and weapons. In the Gulf of Guinea, it has a direct impact on conflict and violence, leading to:

Regional Instability

Proliferation of Armed Groups

Sources and Routes of Illicit Arms

- Illicit arms often originate from poorly secured state stockpiles, arms smuggling, or arms diversion.
- Routes include both land and maritime pathways, with arms frequently coming from countries with unstable security situations.

Piracy and Maritime Kidnappings

Complex Coastline and Geography:

- The Gulf of Guinea is characterized by a complex coastline with numerous creeks, rivers, and islands. This intricate geography provides numerous hiding places for pirates, making it challenging for law enforcement to monitor and intercept pirate activities effectively.
- Additionally, the region's proximity to multiple countries and porous borders create opportunities for criminals to evade capture. The many coastal states make it challenging to coordinate security efforts across borders effectively.



EFFORTS TO CURB PIRACY AND OTHER MARITIME CRIMES IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

- UNITED NATION CONVENTION ON LAW OF THE SEA (UNCLOS)
- YAONDE CODE OF CONDUCT
- NATIONAL LEGISLATIONS
- MAJORS PUT IN PLACE BY INTERPOL/ UNITED NATION AND WEST AFRICAN REGION TO ADDRESS MARITIME CRIME

SOP ON ARREST DETENTION AND PROSECUTION OF VESSELS AND PERSONS IN NIGERIAN MARITIME ENVIRONMENT



**HARMONIZED STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
ON ARREST, DETENTION AND PROSECUTION
OF VESSELS AND PERSONS IN NIGERIA'S
MARITIME ENVIRONMENT**

2016

- Foster better liaison among MLEA
- Spells out the function of each MLEA on regulations, arrest, detention, prosecution of vessels and suspects and testing of samples from arrested vessels.
- Guides MLEA on their responsibilities in a joint setting
- Outlines procedures to check undue litigation against MLEA arising from the discharge of their duties



–SUPPRESSION OF PIRACY AND OTHER MARITIME OFFENCES ACT 2019

THE SPOMA ACT 2019 IS AN ACT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND LEGAL DOCUMENT FOR PROSECUTION AND PUNISHMENT OF MARITIME OFFENDERS. IT WAS SIGNED INTO LAW ON 24 JUNE 2019. THE ACT SEEKS TO GUIDE PROSECUTION OF MARITIME CRIMES IN NIGERIAN MARITIME DOMAIN





DEEP BLUE PROJECT

Deep
Blue

UNDERSTANDING THE NIMASA DEEP BLUE PROJECT



SEA LAND AND AIR ASSETS

- **C4I ASSETS**
- **UAVS**
- **HELOS**
- **SURVEILANCE MISSION AIRCRAFTS**
- **INTERCEPTOR PATROL BOATS**
- **SPECIAL MISSION VESSELS**
- **FORENSIC EQUIPMENTS**
- **10 AMOURED VEHICLES**
- **NN, NA, NAF, NPF AND DSS PERSONNEL**
- **SPECIAL FORCE UNIT FOR INTERDICTION**



International Response to Combat Organised Crime Networks in the Gulf of Guinea

INTERPOL/ UNITED NATION / REGIONAL INITIATIVES

INTERPOL, the International Criminal Police Organization, plays a significant role in combating organised crime in the Gulf of Guinea. It provides a platform for member countries to share intelligence, coordinate law enforcement efforts, and conduct joint operations.

- INTERPOL's operations in the region include initiatives to combat drug trafficking, human trafficking, and arms smuggling. Its databases and tools facilitate the tracking and apprehension of criminals operating across borders.

The United Nations (UN) is actively engaged in addressing the challenges posed by organised crime networks in the Gulf of Guinea. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is at the forefront of these efforts.

- UNODC assists Gulf of Guinea countries in strengthening their legal frameworks, enhancing law enforcement capacity, and promoting regional and international cooperation. The United Nations also works to raise awareness and mobilize resources for counter-crime initiatives in the region.



INTERPOL/ UNITED NATION / REGIONAL INITIATIVES CONT'D.....

Regional organizations, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), have developed initiatives and strategies to combat organised crime in the Gulf of Guinea.

- These regional bodies collaborate on issues ranging from maritime security to transnational crime prevention. Regional agreements and mechanisms, like the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, aim to enhance coordination among Gulf of Guinea countries.



INTER AGENCY COOPERATION AND CONSULTATION WITH TRADITIONAL RULERS AND OTHER MARITIME STAKEHOLDERS





CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMMES





EQUIPMENT DONATIONS BY INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO LEAS



LIAISON BETWEEN THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT AND INTERPOL



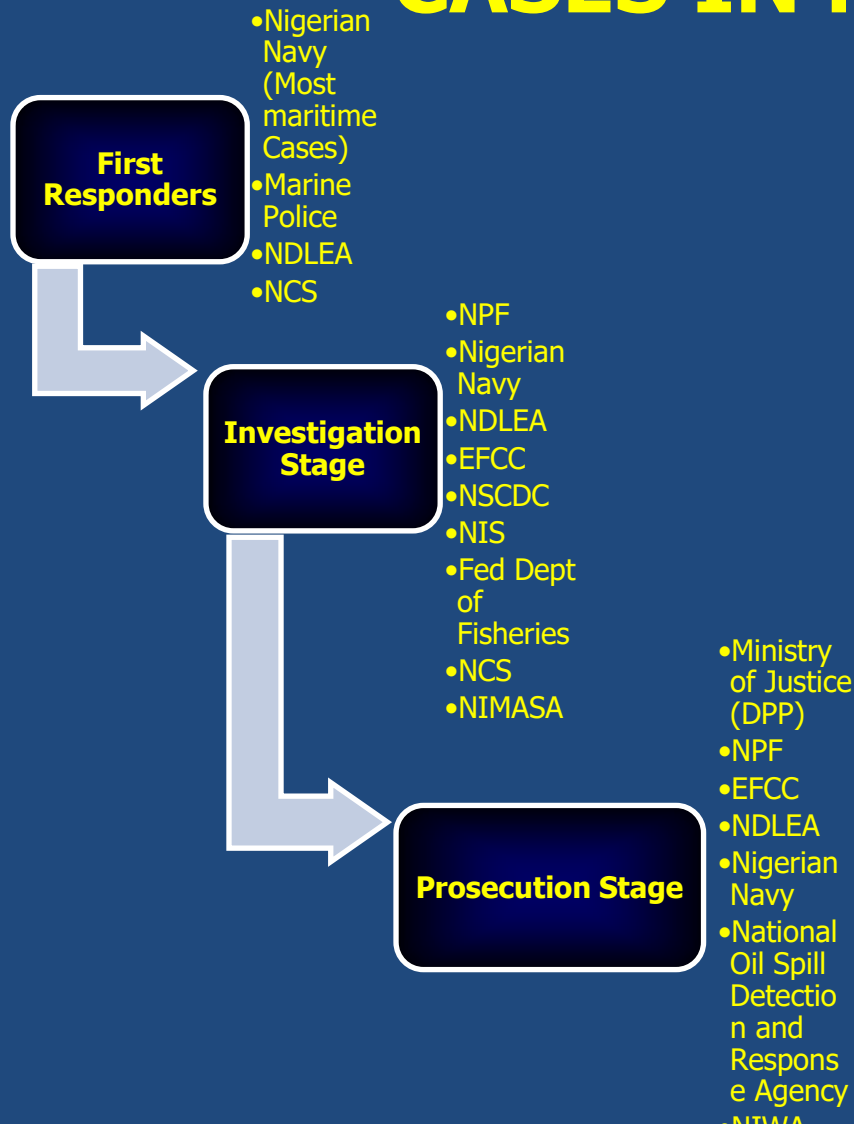
**MOU
BETWEEN
INTERPOL,
NCB ABUJA,
NIGERIAN
NAVY AND
OTHERS LEAs
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CONNECTION
OF INTERPOL
i24/7**



SOURCE: NHQ Ops Room



• INVESTIGATION CYCLE FOR MARITIME RELATED CASES IN NIGERIA





CASE STUDY OF MARITIME CRIMES WITHIN THE GULF OF GUINEA

- ARREST, INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF
13 SUSPECTS FOR HIJACK OF HAILUFENG 11.



DISCOVERY OF 32.9KG OF COCAINE ONBOARD MV CHAYANEE NAREE ON 13 OCTOBER 2021





- **RESPONSE CAPACITY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES IN GULF OF GUINEA**

THE REGIONAL NAVAL FORCES RESPONSE

THE REGIONAL MARINE/GENDER POLICE RESPONSE

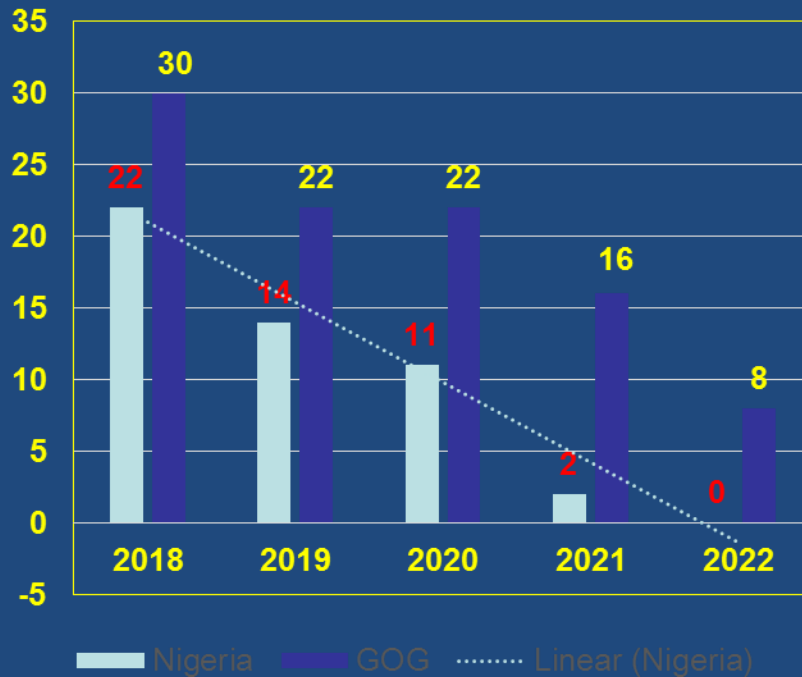
An appropriate response capacity is expedient to adequately tackle piracy and sea robbery, resource theft and other emerging threats to peaceful use of the maritime domain.



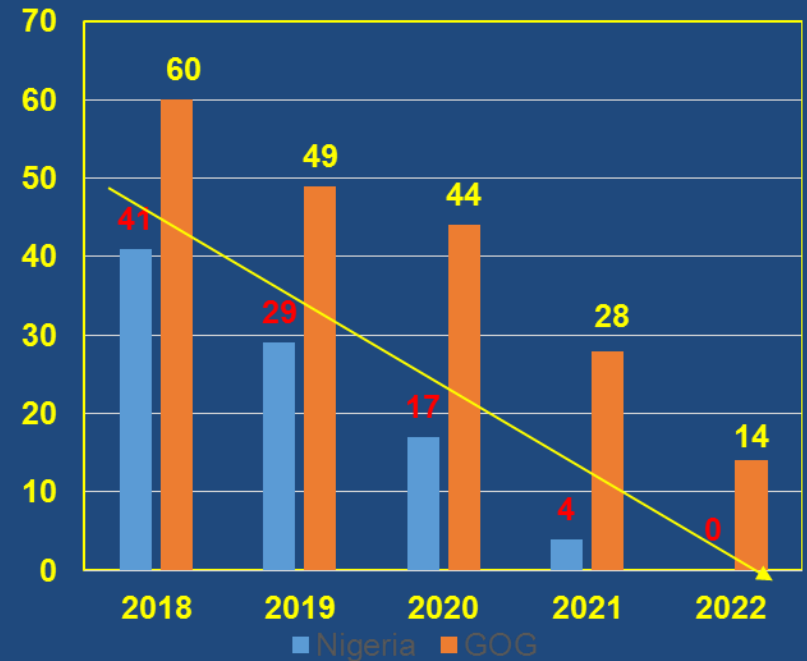


OVERVIEW OF IMB PIRACY REPORT 2022 FOR THE GULF OF GUINEA

FIRST QUARTER 2022



THIRD QUARTER 2022



SOURCE: IMB REPORT FOR THIRD QUARTER 2022



• CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD

- **THE INABILITY OF THE REGIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES TO SHARE CRIMINAL INFORMATION WITH INTERPOL/ OTHER INTERNATIONAL DATABASE**
- **RECENT OBSERVATIONS HAVE REVEALED A MIGRATORY TREND, AS MANY PIRACY/KIDNAPPINGS ARE NOW BEING PERPETRATED IN THE GULF OF GUINEA**
- **IT IS THEREFORE NECESSARY TO SUSTAIN REGIONAL OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF ANTI-PIRACY EFFORT TO REGIONAL WATERWAYS.**
- **MORE SHIPS AND LOGISTICS ARE REQUIRED FOR EXTENSION OF THESE PATROLS.**
- **ADEQUATE FUNDING TO MARITIME LAW ENFORCEMENT STAKEHOLDERS**
- **LACK OF EFFECTIVE MARITIME LEGISLATION BY SOME COUNTRIES WITHIN THE GULF OF GUINEA**



WAY FORWARD

- ENHANCED COOPERATION AMONG RELEVANT LEAs AT NATIONAL LEVEL
- REGIONAL COOPERATION
- STRONG ANTI-PIRACY LEGISLATION
- INFORMATION SHARING
- SPECIAL TRIBUNAL FOR SPEEDY PROSECUTION OF MARITIME CRIMES
- CAPACITY BUILDING/TRAININGS FOR MARITIME LEAs FROM FIRST RESPONDERS TO THE PROSECUTORS
- ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT MARITIME CRIME INVESTIGATION TEAM
- MAINTAIN PROPER CHAIN OF CUSTODY
- INVOLVING THE PROSECUTORS IN THE INVESTIGATION PROCESS
- THE NEED FOR THE INVESTIGATION TO TRACE ASSETS ACQUIRED BY THE ORGANIZED CRIMINAL NETWORK FOR POSSIBLE FORFEITURE



- CONCLUSION

- In conclusion, the Gulf of Guinea stands at a critical crossroads. The region's potential for economic growth and development is immense, but it is threatened by the rise of organised crime networks. Efforts to combat this issue should not only focus on suppressing criminal activities but also on addressing the root causes, fostering stability, and enhancing regional and international collaboration. The safety and security of the Gulf of Guinea are not only a regional concern but a global imperative, and concerted efforts are needed to ensure a brighter and more secure future for this vital region.



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