

# DECLARATION OF THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF CENTRAL AND WEST AFRICAN STATES ON MARITIME SAFETY AND SECURITY IN THEIR COMMON MARITIME DOMAIN

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## 1. We, the Heads of State and Government of Central and West African States, meeting on June 24-25, 2013 in Yaoundé, Republic of Cameroon, at the Joint Summit on the regional strategy to combat piracy, armed robbery, and other illicit activities committed at sea in the Gulf of Guinea.

- 1.1 **Considering** the United Nations Security Council Declaration of 30 August 2011 and Resolution 2018 of 31 October 2011 on acts of piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea,
- 1.2 **Recalling** the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2039 of 29 February 2012 which urges the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC) to work together to develop a regional strategy to fight against piracy, armed robbery, and other illicit activities committed at sea, in collaboration with the African Union (AU),
- 1.3 **Recognizing** that maritime piracy, armed robbery and other illegal activities at sea have become worrying threats in the maritime area of West and Central Africa and constitute a violation of the International Law of the Sea,
- 1.4 **Concerned** about the serious threats that transnational organised crime, including trafficking in arms and drugs, human trafficking, piracy and armed robbery at sea, pose to international shipping, security, socio-economic development of coastal countries, as well as international peace and stability,
- 1.5 **Recognizing** the fact that the economic development of West and Central African countries depends largely on their ability to create wealth through sustainable governance of their maritime areas and implementation of a green economy,
- 1.6 **Recognizing also** the important role of international Partners in the capacity building of States and Regional Organisations to fight against piracy, armed robbery, and other illegal activities at sea,
- 1.7 **Reaffirming** their commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of ECCAS and ECOWAS Member States,
- 1.8 **Recalling** that the provisions of this Declaration apply to the entire maritime area of West and Central Africa,
- 1.9 **Encouraging** the implementation of a transitional Code of Conduct in view of facilitating the adoption of a binding multilateral agreement aimed at eradicating illegal activities off the coast of West and Central Africa,
- 1.10 **Acknowledging** the possibility for Member States of ECCAS, ECOWAS and GGC to conclude bilateral binding agreements on maritime safety and security,

1.11 **Welcoming** the contribution of representatives of the United Nations, African Union and strategic partners in the fight against piracy, armed robbery, and other illegal activities in the West and Central African maritime area,

1.12 **Welcoming also** the contribution of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and the Maritime Organisation of West and Central Africa (MOWCA) to ensure cooperation in maritime safety and security,

1.13 **Based on the:**

- Relevant Articles of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS);
- Convention on the safety of life at sea (SOLAS), as well as the International ship and port security (ISPS) ;
- Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation and its Protocols (SUA Convention);
- United Nations Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances;
- United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2018(2011) and 2039(2012), which call for the development and implementation of regional, sub-regional and national maritime safety and security strategies;
- 2050 Africa Integrated Maritime Strategy (2050 AIM Strategy) adopted by the AU on December 6, 2012;
- African Charter on Maritime Transport adopted in 1944 and updated in Durban, South Africa in October 2009;
- Decision of African Ministers of Transport on Maritime Security and Protection of the Marine Environment in Africa;
- ECCAS Protocol on the Strategy to Secure Vital Interests at Sea signed October 24, 2008 in Kinshasa;
- Luanda Declaration on Peace and Security in the Gulf of Guinea region adopted on 29 November 2012;
- Relevant provisions of the:
  - 18 October 1983 Treaty establishing ECCAS,
  - Protocol on Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX),
  - Revised ECOWAS Treaty of 23 July 1993,
  - ECOWAS Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security of 10 December 1999,
  - ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) of 16 January 2008,
  - Treaty establishing the GGC dated 3 July 2001,

1.14 **Lauding** the initiatives by the Regional Economic Communities and the GGC, namely:

- Strategy to Secure ECCAS States' Vital Interest at Sea, adopted in Kinshasa on 24 October 2009;
- ongoing development of the ECOWAS integrated maritime strategy;
- ongoing development of the GGC integrated strategy;
- adoption on 6 December 2012 of the 2050 African Integrated Maritime Strategy (2050 AIM Strategy) and its Action Plan;

## 2. Declare to:

2.1 **Fully commit** to work for the promotion of peace, security and stability in the West and Central African maritime area through the mobilisation of adequate operational resources both at the institutional level and in terms of logistics;

2.2 **Support** the initiative of the African Union to develop and implement a 2050 African integrated maritime strategy (2050 AIM Strategy),

2.3 **Request** ECCAS, ECOWAS and GGC to promote activities aimed at cooperation, coordination, pooling together and interoperability of resources between Member States by:

- a) establishing between them an inter-Community framework for cooperation in maritime safety and security;
- b) monitoring the maritime sector by developing joint operational procedures;
- c) facilitating the harmonisation of the legal and institutional frameworks of Member States;
- d) establishing a common mechanism for sharing information and intelligence;
- e) institutionalising a conference on development and maritime security;
- f) putting in place a contribution-based funding mechanism;

2.4 **Request also** each Regional Economic Community and the GGC to:

- a) develop and adopt a regional strategy to fight against piracy, armed robbery, and other illegal activities at sea, consistent with the 2050 AIM Strategy,
- b) continue the implementation and operationalization of coordination mechanisms to enable their Member States to effectively take action against all maritime threats,

2.5 **Commit** the Member States to:

- a) mutually collect and share information between themselves, with regional coordination mechanisms and the support of strategic partners;
- b) build the capacities of persons responsible for enforcing maritime safety and security laws;

- c)** raise awareness on the maritime sector;
  - d)** develop and implement relevant national laws;
  - e)** develop national policies on the fight against piracy, armed robbery, and other illegal activities at sea;
  - f)** establish national agencies to coordinate the activities of the State at sea with sufficient powers to carry out their roles,
  - g)** put in place national mechanisms for financing policies against piracy, armed robbery, and other illegal activities at sea;
  - h)** oversee the acquisition and maintenance of major maritime equipment in their respective maritime areas ;
- 2.6 **Exhort** international strategic partners to support the initiatives relating to the implementation of this regional cooperation,
- 2.7 **Call on** the United Nations' Secretary-General and the President of the AU Commission to support efforts for the mobilisation of the resources required for the implementation of this Declaration,
- 2.8 **Decide** to remain seized of the matter.

**Done at Yaoundé, this 25<sup>th</sup> day of June 2013.**