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FORUM: Disarmament and International Security Committee

QUESTION OF: Maritime Piracy Actions in the African Region

INTRODUCTION

Maritime piracy actions in the African region refers to illegal and violent actions of pirates like attacking ships at sea often for theft or ransom. Their attacks wreaked havoc on world shipping markets and today continues to threaten development within the industry especially in Africa's certain regions: the Gulf of Aden, the coast of Somalia, and the waters



around the Gulf of Guinea. The treaty not only disturbs international trade but also weakens security and destabilizes the economy within the regions. The issue requires the attention of stakeholders and comprehensive regional/international cooperation to be effectively combated. Piracy also poses significant risks to the safety of seafarers, with crews often subjected to violence, kidnapping, and extortion, further exacerbating

the threat. To tackle this complex issue, coordinated efforts involving both regional actors and global partners are essential

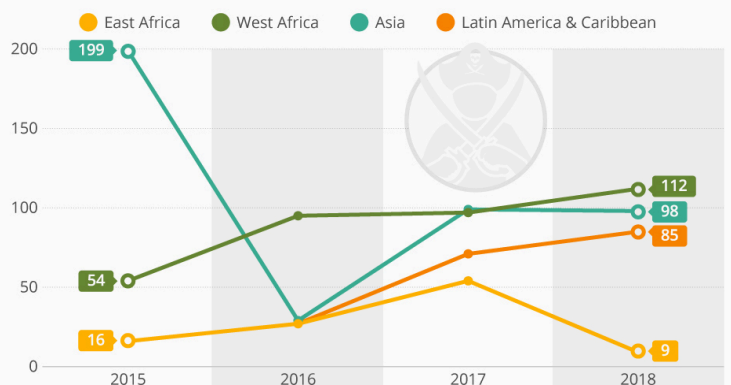
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Marine piracy has a long history dating back to 200 years ago, just when the United States was developing as a nation. They faced the attacks of Barbarian corsair priests and challenged the US's ability to continue operating international trades. After the Barbarian threat was defeated, piracy continued and spread all around the world.

Piracy in the African region has long roots too. Going back to historical instances of privatization and coastal raids, they now appear in two main areas: the Gulf of Guinea and the waters off

West Africa Is Becoming The World's New Piracy Hotspot

Total incidents of piracy and robbery recorded by region



* Latin America & Caribbean data unavailable for 2015
Source: One Earth Future - The State of Maritime Piracy 2018





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Somalia. The Gulf of Guinea has the highest number of hijacking crews worldwide. This makes it an extremely dangerous region for sailors. Somali piracy, although decreasing from its peak in the early 2010s, remains a hidden threat due to political instability and the lack of a centralized government in Somalia.

The threat of piracy negatively affects the economy as a whole. For instance, shipping companies are incurring astronomical expenditures with regard to making alterations to routes, purchasing insurance and ensuring safety. There is also the negative impact of piracy on trade. Block foreign investment and trade. Piracy is also detrimental to the economic growth of the countries in that region.

Causes of poverty, unemployment, politicization, and weak policing at sea are all contributory factors. International naval patrols and agreements, such as the Yaoundé Djibouti Codes of Conduct, have significantly cut down on piracy; their ability to control the problem in the long-term is constrained by lack of sustained funding and regional collaboration. These root causes have to be dealt with holistically, which involves providing security measures.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Piracy: The act of attacking and robbing ships at sea, often involving violence or the threat of violence. Piracy disrupts international trade and endangers the safety of seafarers and goods.

Gulf of Guinea: A region in West Africa that is a global hotspot for piracy, accounting for a significant percentage of maritime attacks.

Maritime Security: Strategies, laws, and operations implemented to protect maritime environments and ensure the safe passage of vessels, addressing threats like piracy and smuggling.

International Cooperation: Joint efforts by nations and organizations to address transnational challenges, pooling resources, knowledge, and policies to combat piracy effectively.

Stakeholders: Groups or individuals with a vested interest in maritime security, including governments, shipping companies, local communities, and international bodies.

Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ): A sea zone prescribed by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, within which a state has special rights regarding the exploration and use of marine resources.

Private Maritime Security Companies (PMSCs): Firms providing onboard armed security



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personnel, technology, and consultation to shipping companies to protect against piracy and maritime crimes.

Ransom: A sum of money demanded by pirates in exchange for the safe release of captured crew members or hijacked vessels. Ransoms are a common form of payment in piracy incidents, particularly off the coast of Somalia.

Maritime Piracy Hotspot: A region identified as having a high frequency of pirate attacks. In Africa, the Gulf of Aden, the coast of Somalia, and the Gulf of Guinea are considered major piracy hotspots due to the frequency and severity of maritime crime in these areas.

Hijacking: A form of piracy where pirates seize control of a ship, often with the intention of stealing cargo, demanding ransom, or using the vessel for illegal activities.

Counter-Piracy Operations: Military or security operations conducted to disrupt piracy activities, often involving naval forces, coast guards, and international coalitions aimed at protecting shipping lanes and prosecuting pirates.



CURRENT SITUATION

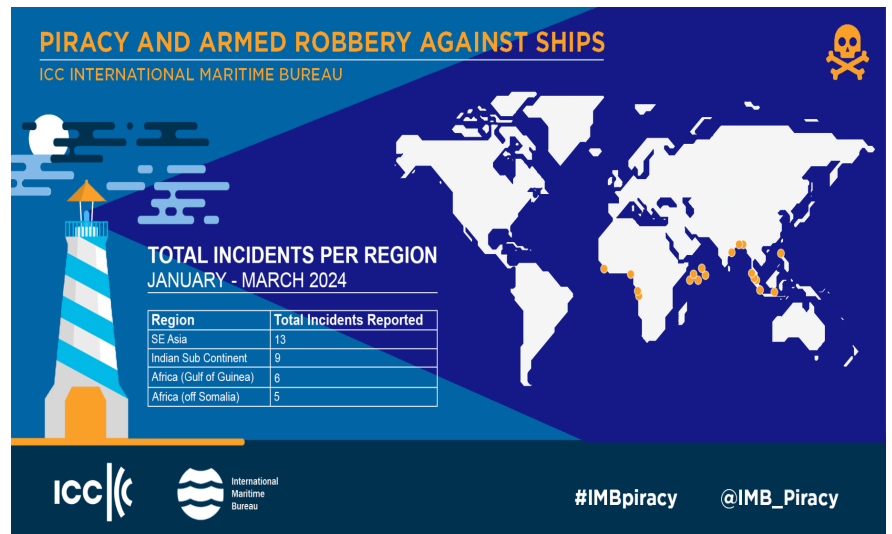
Piracy remains as a major problem in African waters. This is especially true in the Gulf of Guinea and the Somali coastline. Incidents have decreased in some areas in recent years. Mainly due to international naval patrols. Improving ship safety and regional agreements but the Gulf of Guinea continues to report numerous hijackings and attacks. It's main cause is economic differences in coastal countries...

The equipment, training, and resources required to efficiently police large maritime areas are lacking in coastal states. Therefore, some people resort to piracy as a source of money because of the economic issues in these areas. International organizations and navies play an important role in reducing piracy. Their efforts require sustained funding and long-term regional commitment.



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Promising measures include joint naval exercises, establishment of a marine information sharing center and initiatives targeting poverty and unemployment. But finding lasting solutions requires addressing underlying causes like economic instability. and promote greater cooperation between regional and international stakeholders.



MAJOR PARTIES INVOLVED

African Union (AU): The AU plays a central role in fostering collaboration among African states. It coordinates anti-piracy initiatives, provides technical support, and advocates for the integration of maritime security policies at a continental level.

Coastal States: Nations such as Nigeria, Ghana, Somalia, and Kenya bear the primary responsibility for addressing piracy within their jurisdictions. They implement maritime security laws, strengthen their naval forces, and work with international partners to safeguard their waters.

International Organizations: The United Nations (UN), particularly through its specialized agencies like the International Maritime Organization (IMO), supports anti-piracy efforts by offering guidance, funding, and capacity-building programs. These organizations also facilitate international cooperation.

Private Maritime Security Companies (PMSCs): PMSCs provide armed security personnel, training, and technological solutions to shipping companies to protect vessels from piracy. These companies are hired to safeguard ships in high-risk areas like the Gulf of Aden and the Gulf of Guinea.

RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS): Establishes the legal framework



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for addressing maritime crimes, including piracy. It provides jurisdictional guidance for coastal and flag states in prosecuting piracy.

Djibouti Code of Conduct: A regional initiative that enhances cooperation among East African and Western Indian Ocean states to address piracy and armed robbery. It emphasizes information sharing, capacity building, and legal frameworks.

IMO Resolutions on Maritime Security: Offer comprehensive guidelines and strategies to strengthen global maritime security, including measures to prevent piracy and protect ships and crews. These resolutions promote the adoption of security protocols, such as the ISPS Code, and encourage member states to enhance their legal and operational frameworks to counter piracy.

The African Union Convention on Maritime Safety and Security: Establishes the legal framework promoting maritime security and safety in African waters. It calls for enhanced cooperation among African states, the development of legal and institutional frameworks, and measures to address the root causes of piracy, including poverty and lack of governance.

SOLUTION ALTERNATIVES

Strengthening Regional Cooperation:

Encourage African nations to collaborate on maritime security initiatives and share resources, because it is essential to effectively address maritime security challenges related with the use of weapons. By pooling resources for joint patrols, sharing intelligence, and building maritime security capacity, countries can enhance their ability to monitor and respond to piracy.

Capacity Building:

Provide training and funding for regional coastguards and navies to effectively combat piracy. This can be done by jointly pooling resources for patrols, intelligence sharing to enhance capacity for maritime security, jurisdictional complications can be addressed under unified legal frameworks and coordination in prosecution. Also, addressing the root causes of piracy recruitment-poverty and weak governance. Such international partnerships ensure that more effective and longer-term strategies can be devised to ensure improvement in maritime security and boost economic stability.

Enhanced Legal Frameworks:

Enhanced legal frameworks are crucial for effectively prosecuting piracy and ensuring accountability. By harmonizing national and regional laws, countries can establish clear protocols for prosecuting pirates and facilitating extradition.

Public-Private Partnerships:

Engage shipping companies and private sectors to invest in security measures and support regional efforts. Jointly pooling resources for patrols and sharing intelligence can significantly enhance



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maritime security capacity. Unified legal frameworks and coordinated prosecution efforts help address jurisdictional challenges, while tackling the root causes of piracy, such as poverty and weak governance, is essential for reducing recruitment.



USEFUL LINKS

https://www.unodc.org/documents/toc/Reports/TOCTAWestAfrica/West_Africa_TOC_PIRACY.pdf

<https://gard.no/insights/is-the-decline-in-global-piracy-over/>

<https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/2440019>

<https://www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/piracy-back-horn-africa-whats-behind-its-return>

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<https://www.rand.org/topics/maritime-piracy.html>

<https://www.imo.org/>

https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_agreements.htm

<https://icc-ccs.org/>