

## **Peacebuilding Commission**

### **Ambassadorial-level meeting on Strengthening Peacebuilding and the Implementation of the Regional Maritime Security Framework in the Gulf of Guinea**

**19 May 2023**

On 19 May 2023, the Peacebuilding Commission convened a meeting on Strengthening Peacebuilding and the Implementation of the Regional Maritime Security Framework in the Gulf of Guinea. The meeting focused on the key achievements and remaining challenges of regional efforts in implementing the Framework, exchanged lessons learned on the national, regional, and multilateral efforts and explored

3. **Colonel Bell Emmanuel, Head of Information Sharing and Communications of the Interregional Coordination Center (ICC)**, underlined the need for national legislation reforms, noting that the Gulf of Guinea States do not have sufficient legal instruments to address maritime insecurity in the region. He noted that the required structures are in place, but the lack of financial and human resources create an obstacle for the implementation of the Framework. In that regard, he encouraged the UN to continue advocating with the States of the Gulf of Guinea and regional organizations for sustained financing to facilitate the implementation of the Yaoundé Architecture. He clarified that ICC was appointed as coordinator for the evaluation of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, which could be an opportunity to transform it to a legally binding document.
4. **Ms. Jacqueline Seck, Officer-in-Charge, Western Africa Division of DPPA-DPO**, reiterated the importance of addressing the root causes of piracy and the need for preventative and long-term approaches to address structural challenges such as poverty, the impact of climate change on livelihoods, and youth unemployment. She underlined the importance of sustained efforts and partnerships as an imperative to reinforce efforts to enable the full operationalization of the Yaoundé Architecture by addressing operational, technical, and financial issues that hamper its effective functioning. She informed that the UN, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and GGC are developing an interregional project to support the ICC in a revision of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, and to assess the status of the operationalization of the Yaoundé Architecture. She called on partners to provide support for the development of a strategic outlook and roadmap for the Yaoundé architecture.  
and harmonized support to strengthening maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.
5. **Ms. Delphine Schantz, Director of the New York Office, United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**, informed of UNODC activities supporting maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, including the drafting of a handover agreement on piracy for the ECCAS region and addressing the root causes of piracy, violence, and conflict through an innovative community-based crime prevention project in the Niger Delta. She noted the Secretary  
of the Yaoundé Architecture to identify challenges, define the most optimal use of available resources, and outline a strategic vision for the next decade with recommendations for key institutions and Member States. She clarified that the cost of losses of maritime piracy is an estimated USD \$1.9 billion annually in the region. Further, she noted an increase in riverine crimes connected to acts of piracy and underscored the importance of effectively implementing international instruments and leveraging mechanisms of the UN Conventions on transitional organized crime and corruption. She recommended continued support for the capacity-building of security actors and the strengthening of synergies to enhance agile response.
6. **Dr. Emmanuel Budu Addo, Director of Administration and Regional Coordination, Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC)**,  
security, and safety in the Gulf of Guinea region. He informed of the appointment of a new leadership of the GGC. The new leadership will focus on developing a strategic framework with appropriate interventions to implement the mandate of the GGC, expanding the membership of the GGC to include all the countries within the Gulf of Guinea region, and

outlining measures and developing systems to ensure synergies between the GGC, ECOWAS and ECCAS. At the outset of developing a strategic framework, extensive consultations of all stakeholders as well as a review of the current systems and structures is required. He underlined capacity-building as essential to ensure efficient utilization of resources and effective implementation of programmes for optimal impact.

7. **Dr. Kamal-Deen Ali, Executive Director, Center for Maritime Law and Security Africa (CEMLAWS)**, reiterated the need for legal reforms to enhance maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. He informed of the work of CEMLAWS on research, information-sharing and advocacy on maritime security and governance, including providing support to develop maritime frameworks and establishing a platform for various stakeholders, including civil society organizations, minority groups, and women, to discuss maritime security related issues. To counter piracy in the region, he underlined the need for a broader concept and understanding of maritime insecurity, including on the root causes. In this regard, he acknowledged the importance of addressing the

They stressed the need to address the political, socio-economic and environmental root causes and acknowledged the effects of poverty, unemployment, climate change, environmental degradation, and cross-border transnational organized crime on maritime insecurity in the region.

They called for comprehensive legal frameworks and the greater enforcement of the rule of law and anti-corruption measures in line with applicable international laws, including international human rights law. They also reaffirmed the importance of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and the African Charter on Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa as essential legal frameworks.

They stressed the need for enhanced partnerships, in particular for capacity-building, with international partners such as the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA).

They advocated for adequate, sustainable, and predictable financing for the full operationalization of the Yaoundé Architecture.

They underlined that women are disproportionately affected by the underlying causes and effects of maritime insecurity and highlighted the important role of women in maritime security, criminal justice, and community-based prevention efforts. They called for the full, equal, and meaningful inclusion and participation of women to ensure sustainable peace and security.

They noted the lack of inclusion of youth in political and economic spheres and stressed the importance of providing adequate socio-economic and decision-making opportunities for youth to building and sustaining peace.

10. In her concluding remarks, **Ms. Awa Dabo, Director and Deputy Head, UN Peacebuilding Support Office (DPPA)**, reiterated the importance of providing adequate socio-economic and decision-making opportunities for youth to building and sustaining peace.