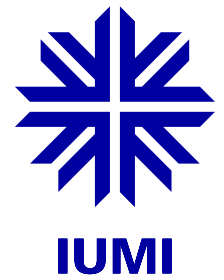


Nigeria links with shipping organizations to fight Gulf of Guinea piracy



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The Government of Nigeria and a coalition of global shipping stakeholders have launched a new strategy to end piracy, armed robbery, and kidnapping in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG). The newly launched strategy was developed by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), BIMCO, Intertanko, Intercargo, Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF), and representatives of the Nigerian Navy and NIMASA, together making up the Nigerian Industry Working Group (NIWG). A mechanism will be established to enable the periodic assessment of the effectiveness of country-piracy initiatives and commitments in the GoG. The intention is for it to identify areas of improvement and reinforcement in order to eliminate piracy, and it is targeted at all stakeholders operating in the region. The plan consists of two mutually supportive sections:



1. actions which can be overseen by the NIWG,
2. actions which require engagement with other regional and international partners.

In May the UN Security Council said that the GoG was the world's piracy hotspot. Despite the International Maritime Bureau's Piracy Reporting Centre tracking an overall drop in global piracy during 2021, threat levels in the region remained high. In 2020, 40% of piracy attacks and 95% of crew kidnappings occurred in the region. However, following the establishment of Deep Blue, the Nigerian Navy and Nigerian Maritime Safety Agency (NIMASA) anti-piracy project, and increased international counter-piracy operations in the GoG, the number of attacks fell dramatically in 2021, NIMASA director-general Bashir Jamoh said that "working collaboratively with state and non-state actors, the maritime industry's various critical players and stakeholders have highlighted key areas where they can make collective improvements. This strategy is an important step in codifying joint efforts to sustain maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. It will be an important tool to monitor our progress." ICS Secretary General Guy Platten said that "the agreement of this strategy demonstrates the strong relationship between the shipping industry and Nigeria, and their shared commitment to eradicating piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. The strategy is already identifying successes and areas in which further improvement will continue to reduce the capability of pirates to attack innocent seafarers in the region."

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