

PRESS STAKEOUT IN THE MARGINS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL BRIEFING ON MARITIME SECURITY IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

Ghana:

Good afternoon distinguished members of the media,

As you may be aware, the Security Council will hold a briefing on Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea this afternoon. I would like to take this opportunity to express sincere thanks to the UAE Presidency and the members of the Council for agreeing to Ghana's proposal to include Maritime Security on the Program of Work of the Council for June 2023.

This year marks 10 years of the signing of the Code of Conduct Concerning the Prevention and Repression of Piracy, Armed Robbery against Ships, and Illegal Maritime Activities in West and Central Africa, called the Yaoundé Code of Conduct (YCC). On the occasion of this important milestone, it is critical that we focus the attention of the Security Council and the international community on the additional benefits that would accrue from the full operationalization of the complementary interregional maritime security mechanism, referred to as the Yaoundé Architecture. We therefore look forward to the briefing presenting options for the way forward, particularly, how to strengthen and enhance international support towards the implementation of the Yaoundé Architecture.

Let me close by recognizing the participation in this briefing by Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroun, Gabon, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique, Norway, the United Arab Emirate, the EU Delegation, Brazil, Switzerland, Japan, Malta, France, Albania, G7++ Group of Friends, countries in the region and beyond, which testifies to the commitment by all stakeholders to tackle head-on the issue of Maritime insecurity. We also acknowledge Norway's cooperation with countries of the region, in particular Ghana on the subject, which led to the adoption of Security Council resolution 2634 on 31st May 2022.

As the current chair of the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC), Ghana welcomes efforts to give impetus and meaning to the Yaoundé Architecture at the national, regional and international levels towards a fully operational regional framework, including tackling the root causes and leveraging on partnerships.

I will now yield the floor to the Representative of Norway to make some comments

Norway:

Maritime security is a clear priority for Norway and we are pleased to have co-penned with Ghana Security Council Resolution 2634 on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. While acknowledging the recent decline of piracy incidents in the region, we believe it did not happen by chance. It has been the result of deliberate and strong concerted efforts, including cooperation among stakeholders and the swift prosecution and conviction of pirates. Norway commends the countries in the region for their leadership in this respect.

However, piracy and armed robbery at sea continues to plague the region, with incidents becoming more serious and sometimes deadly. This has a detrimental impact on regional growth and stability and represents a direct threat to ships and seafarers operating in the Gulf of Guinea.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, it is important that we follow up on the recommendation of the Secretary-General in his report (S/2022/818) to the Security Council on 31st October 2022, which called for the need to "*undertake a comprehensive review of*

the status of the implementation of the Yaoundé architecture to identify challenges, define the optimal use of resources, and outline a strategic vision for the next decade”.

As today's briefing spotlights leveraging cooperation/partnership, I will give the floor to one coalition that has responded to this call, the G7++ Friends of the Gulf of Guinea, represented by their co-chairs: Côte d'Ivoire and Germany to say a few words.

Côte d'Ivoire and Germany, co-chairs of the G7++ Group of Friends for the Gulf of Guinea

The G7FoGG is pleased to respond to the Security Council's call to action on the issue of maritime security in the region.

As Norway and Ghana have emphasized, the significance of conducting a comprehensive review of the Yaoundé architecture. In this context, Côte d'Ivoire and Germany would like to announce that, as co-chairs of the Friends of the Gulf of Guinea (FoGG), we are planning to convene a meeting in the region in July to achieve precisely that. This gathering will bring together a core group comprising coastal states, regional organizations, UNOWAS, UNOCA, UNITAR, IMO and partner countries. Its principal objective is to set up the terms of the review, the agenda and the resources necessary for the assessment of the Yaoundé Architecture and its Code of Conduct, by identifying existing gaps, and proposing recommendations to enhance the legal framework, coordination mechanisms, and operational capacities in countering maritime insecurity in the region. The ultimate goal is for the Gulf of Guinea region to have a revised version of the Code of Conduct by the end of 2023, and to identify a funding mechanism for its implementation. These efforts will promote maritime security, stability, and inclusive economic development in the region while preserving the maritime environment for future generations, as we commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Yaoundé Summit.

Germany and Côte d'Ivoire are ready to support and accompany this process closely.