

Maritime Insecurity in the Gulf Of Guinea (Gog) and the Quest for Security Intelligence Deployment in Combating the Menace

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Abstract

This paper critically examines the various security threats encountered in the course of securing the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) which serves as the economic hub of both West and Central African states as a result of the rich oil and other sea resources present therein. The study in its own objectives, finds the deficiencies concerning the security at sea and also the neglect of security intelligence. The bane of the study is to review the deployment of security intelligence in protecting the avalanche of economic assets present in the Gulf Guinea (GoG). Towards achieving the objective, the study employed a descriptive research method involving the use of structured questionnaire and interviews with significant reliability index. The study later reveals the various dimensions of insecurity besieging the Gulf of Guinea which include; piracy, terrorism, hostage-taking or kidnapping, illegal oil bunkering among others while also stresses the need for adoption of functional security intelligence in combating the menace. To cap it all, the study recommends the need to integrate and effectively coordinate the various security agencies and security intelligence services in the region into a functional system and as well improve on the information and communication technology (ICT) and other allied gadgets to ensure lasting maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) region.

Keywords: Insecurity, Maritime Terrorism, Piracy, Security intelligence, Organized crimes, Gulf of Guinea (GoG)

Introduction

The Gulf of Guinea (GoG) which remains a resource provider and primary conduit for international trade, lying between West and Central Africa; has overtime become a hotbed for multinational syndicates involved in sharp practices including illegal bunkering, piracy, Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, human trafficking, narcotics and firearms smuggling and all sorts of insecurity all aimed at destabilizing the region in recent times. Insecurity is a product of failed or poor leadership and governance in Africa, corruption, deficiency in social and economic developments, unhealthy strive and competition for the control of the marine resources by the states in the Gulf region and super foreign powers, giving room for arms and weapons among other factors (African Union, 2010). This situation is in addition to large scale terrorism, resource theft, economic sabotage, piracy and sea robbery along the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) coastlines that affect shipping and lead to hike in maritime insurance which also negatively affects the economy.

The Gulf of Guinea is endowed with abundant mineral and natural resources. The region comprised of about 472 million people in 26 countries, has an estimated 24 billion barrels crude oil reserves; contributes five million barrels daily to global crude chain, accounts for 40 percent and 29 percent of Europe's and America's petroleum products consumption. The region is described to have extended from Liberia to Gabon and includes the island territories of Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe. Moreover, it is common to add Sierra Leone and the Guineas to the west and Congo Brazzaville to the east, while addressing policy matters (African Union, 2010). The study, therefore, centres on the region but focuses on the states bordering the Atlantic Ocean from Guinea Bissau to Cameroon for two basic reasons: they are connected to the rising insecurity in the Sahel region (a semi-arid geographic band below the Sahara desert and above the southern savannas), and get besieged as a result of the illicit activities in the region. Maritime poaching with killings coexists with all sorts of criminal occurrences at sea, such as; illicit arms trafficking, illegal immigration, and, illicit drug trafficking from South America en route to Europe via Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Ghana, and Nigeria and the situation which has become so disheartening and worrisome (De Souza, 1999).

Going through the year 2013 alone, about fifty-six (56) maritime attacks were recorded against ships in the region, while almost thirty-four (34) attacks were successful, according to the International Maritime Organization (2013). This compares with sixty-four (64) attacks in 2012 and 61 in 2011. In almost half of the attacks in 2014 cases, the ship was alongside or at anchor. No crew members were killed nor wounded in this period, but 93 were taken hostage, and 9 ships were hijacked. Ships and crews were subsequently released. This portrays that eighteen (18) percent of the 298 of the global attacks at sea, a decrease of 12.6 percent over the figures of 2012 (African Union, 2010). In the same vein, numerous incidents have taken place in Niger Delta region of Nigeria, where kidnapping or hostage-taking of expatriates takes place with demands for ransom. The expatriates are usually kidnapped from offshore oil installation, exploration vessels, tankers that are loading, and, in particular, service vessels shuttling to and from the land.

Insecurity at sea that has remained order of the day emanates from poor leadership and governance in the country with other criminal activities, such as drug trafficking, and oil bunkering (Forest and Souza, 2007). In the Niger Delta, these crimes often have a political origin: the revolt of local people against the annihilation of their farm lands and waters; this is taken to mean an unjust distribution of oil profits (Ibid).

There has been a series of security problems bedeviling the maritime sector and Gulf of Guinea (GoG) for a very long time now but it appears that only the piracy problem has got more emphasis at the expense of other forms of insecurity. Aside from the much-emphasized piracy, Africa's offshore domain calls for a more cursory examination of other security threats such as; illegal oil bunkering, drug trafficking, terrorism and others. In this regard, the constituent elements of good order at sea house a more critical line to view security off Africa through safe access to resources (food and minerals), safe sea routes, as well as dominium and jurisdiction (International Maritime Bureau, 2008). In the same vein, many efforts have been made to develop coordinated measures to the threats bedeviling the Gulf of Guinea through common security architecture by West African government leaders. Inordinate power struggles and competition for the control of economic assets usually leads to conflict to arise which spreads like fire in all sense. The second which is, of course, the central issue this paper tends to address is the much attention diverted only defense policies in efforts to provide security and safety along the Gulf of Guinea coastline at the expense of security intelligence and criminal intelligence (Emuedo, 2014). It is, therefore, against this background that this study quests to examine the need for deployment of security and criminal intelligence in a bid to effect securitization of the Gulf of Guinea region.

Conceptual Clarifications

Security Intelligence

In spite of the various definitions of intelligence promulgated over the years, the simplest is that of "information with analysis equals intelligence" (Greg, Kevin and Andrew, 2005). It clarifies that the difference between information gathered and the one produced. It further shows that without analysis, intelligence does not exist. Therefore, intelligence is not what is collected or gathered; but it is what is produced after the collected data or information is evaluated and analyzed. From the analysis made above, it is acceptable that intelligence is the security-laden information or data collected for the sole purpose of policy formulation to guarantee national security. According to Richelson (1999), intelligence is a discipline that exploits a number of information collection and analysis approaches towards guidance and direction to commanders in support of their strategic decisions.

According to Ronald (1989), intelligence operations are in three (3) branches which are: strategic intelligence, tactical intelligence and counter-intelligence. The strategic intelligence is involved with the tracking of current events across the globe. It also studies the actions of foreign leaders

and seeks to understand the basics of a particular state, researching into their politics, economy, and military structure and scientific as well as its technological strengths. Tactical intelligence assesses the power structure of a country with sole aim of determining the groups that controls influence. In other words, tactical intelligence analyses foreign policy, public opinion, voting statistics and economic factors such as; trade agreements, gross national products as well as natural emergencies prevalent in the state of target (Richelson, 1999). Counter-terrorism also aims at preventing subversion and sabotage and protection of valuable information away from the adversaries or enemies. In the same vein, intelligence sector is broadly split into two: domestic and foreign intelligence (Richelson, 1999). Domestic intelligence monitors and analyses a myriad of threats that might have internal links such as organized crimes, money laundering and terrorist syndicates. The intelligence provided by domestic intelligence agencies usually informs series of national decision making efforts. On the other hand, foreign intelligence deals with security threats emanating beyond national boundaries of a state. It equally engages other foreign agencies with the aim of securing their aids to protect the state while also assisting such foreign agencies to protect their own state as well (Ibid).

Therefore, security intelligence is defined to mean the process of secret systematic collection, collation, evaluation, analysis, and dissemination of information from a wide number of sources in order to identify security threats within a state and prepare threat assessments before events unfold. De Oliviera (2007) submits that security intelligence can refer to more than an information product, though. It can mean a *process* as well. Although it is easy enough to state the core purpose of intelligence—providing information to policymakers—the challenge of actually gathering, assessing, and delivering useful insights to those who make decisions is an intricate matter. In the same vein, security intelligence refers to the information gathered or collated, analyzed, recorded and disseminated by law enforcement agencies concerning the various security threats, identified in a state (Centre for MASINT Studies, 2007). It is particularly useful when dealing with organized crime. Security intelligence is developed by employing surveillance informants, interrogation, and research, or may be picked from sources by intelligence experts.

In dealing with threats to national security, security intelligence service first collects intelligence and provides intelligence assessments and advises the government. In addition, it works closely with law enforcement institutions in the detection, apprehension and prosecution of those responsible for security-related offences (Richelson, 1999). The mission of intelligence analysis is to evaluate, integrate, and interpret information in order to provide warning, reduce uncertainty, and identify opportunities. Security Intelligence could be defined as information which is compiled, analyzed, or disseminated, in order to improve on endeavours to monitor, circumvent and prevent potential threats to peace and security of a state. This argument informed the significant value attached to security intelligence as it is useful for all security and law

enforcement agencies in forestalling security threats in a state. Intelligence is secret state or group activity to understand or influence foreign or domestic entities. There could be intelligence failure as a result of some errors and inaccuracy of resulting from poor analysis or missing information (Ronald, 1989).

Also, there is an intelligence process is known as the intelligence cycle. The security intelligence process becomes more effective when the results gathered from series of interrelated activities are well coordinated. The intelligence process is a continuous process of collecting and converting information or data into intelligence products which are eventually integrated into operations (Greg et al, 2005). The process involves various several phases with continuous evaluation and feedback at each phase and at the end of the process. The intelligence cycle is the process of converting unrefined data into finished intelligence products for the use by government or policy makers.

According to Ronald (1989), the intelligence cycle consists of five steps as described as follows:

Planning and Direction

This involves coordination of activities beginning from identifying the need for information to disseminating an intelligence product to end-users. It involves implementation plans to satisfy requirements, as well as identifying specific collection requirements based on FIB needs. Planning and direction also is responsive to the end of the cycle, because current and finished intelligence, which supports decision-making, generates new requirements.

Collection

This involves the gathering of raw data or information based on requirements and activities such interviews, technical and physical surveillance, human source operation, searches, liaison relationships all result in the collection of intelligence. It is an act of intelligence in itself. It is an act of gathering or obtaining secret raw information or data using a series of collection techniques.

Processing and Exploitation

This phase indicates converting the avalanche of data already collected into a form to be put into use by intelligence analysts. This is usually executed through a number of techniques such as; decryption, language translations, and data reduction while processing entails the entering of raw data into databases where it would be later employed for usage in the analysis process, defining and analyzing the existing information.

Analysis and Production

Analysis and production stage refers to the process of converting the raw data into intelligence. It also includes integrating evaluating, collation, and analyzing all available data, and as well

preparing the actual intelligence products while the data reliability, validity, and relevance is evaluated.

Dissemination

Dissemination which is the last stage of intelligence cycle is the distribution of raw or finished intelligence products to the consumers (policy makers) whose needs brought into fore or actually initiated the intelligence responsibilities. The Head of Intelligence Community therefore disseminates the secret information (intelligence) via three global standard formats that are: Intelligence Information Reports, Intelligence Bulletins, and Intelligence Assessments to the authorities concerned.

The Series of Existing Intelligence Gathering Disciplines

According to Center for MASINT Studies and Research, (2007), the existing intelligence gathering disciplines are as follows:

HUMINT: Human intelligence (HUMINT) refers to the intelligence obtained from the various people that are in the spots or locations in question. Sources can include the following: Advisors or foreign internal defense (FID) personnel working with host nation forces or populations; Diplomatic reporting by accredited diplomats (e.g. military attachés); Espionage clandestine reporting, access agents, couriers; Military attachés; Non-governmental organizations (NGOs); Prisoners of war Prisoners of war (POWs) or detainees; Refugees; Routine patrolling (military police, patrols, etc.); Special reconnaissance; and Traveler debriefing, that is domestic contact service. (e.g. CIA Domestic Contact Service). MI5 and MI6 in the United Kingdom are often thought to use human intelligence to operate in different countries or Britain itself to protect the country from global affairs.

GEOINT: This is called Geospatial intelligence (GEOINT) and products are gathered from satellites and aerial photographs, or mapping/terrain data in a state. An example of this is what is known as Imagery intelligence (IMINT) – gathered from satellite and aerial photography.

MASINT: Measurement and signature intelligence (MASINT) are gathered from an array of signatures (distinctive characteristics) of fixed or dynamic target sources. MASINT is also split into six (6) major categories which are: electro-optical, nuclear, radar, geophysical, materials, and radiofrequency.

- i. Electro-optical MASINT: Electro-optical MASINT examples are: Airborne electro-optical missile tracking MASINT; Tactical counter-artillery sensors; Infrared MASINT; Optical measurement of nuclear explosions; LASER MASINT; Spectroscopic MASINT; Hyperspectral MASINT; and Space-based staring infrared sensors
- ii. Nuclear MASINT: includes Radiation survey and dosimetry; Space-based nuclear energy detection; and Effects of ionizing radiation on materials

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- iii. Geophysical MASINT are: Weather and sea intelligence MASINT; Acoustic MASINT, also known as acoustical intelligence (ACOUSTINT); Seismic MASINT; Magnetic MASINT; and Gravitimetric MASINT
 - iv. Radar MASINT: include Line-of-sight radar MASINT; Synthetic aperture radar (SAR) and inverse synthetic aperture radar (ISAR) MASINT; Non-cooperative target recognition; Multistatic radar MASINT; and Passive covert radar
 - v. Materials MASINT: also include Chemical materials MASINT; Biological materials MASINT; and Nuclear test analysis.
 - vi. Radiofrequency MASINT examples are: Frequency domain MASINT; Electromagnetic pulse MASINT; and Unintentional radiation MASINT.

OSINT: This is known to be Open-Source Intelligence collected from open sources. OSINT is segmented by the various source types which include: Internet, Scientific, and other HUMINT specialties such: trade shows, association meetings, and interviews.

SIGINT: This refers to the Signals intelligence (SIGINT) that is obtained from interception of various signals and they include: Communications intelligence (COMINT); Electronic Intelligence (ELINT); that are collected via electronic signals but these do not contain any speech or text. Also include under SIGINT is Signals intelligence (SIGINT) that are collected and obtained from interception of signals.

FISINT: This refers to Foreign Instrumentation Signals Intelligence (FISINT), as it entails the gathering and analysis of telemetry information from a missile or from aircraft tests.

TECHINT: This includes Technical intelligence (TECHNINT) and it is obtained from analysis of weapons and equipment that are used by the armed forces of foreign states, or environmental conditions.

MEDINT: This is Medical Intelligence collected from analysis of medical records and actual physiological examinations to determine health or particular ailments for attention.

CYBINT/DNINT: This refers to the Cyber or digital network intelligence (CYBINT or DNINT) obtained from cyberspace.

FININT: This involves the Financial intelligence (FININT) collected from analysis of monetary transactions in a state.

Research Methodology

The study employed descriptive research method. The population consisted of selected Naval officers, Shipping/Vessels agents from Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), INTERPOL officers; officers of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Nigerian Police and the Department of State Security Service. Data were sourced from primary (interviews and administration of questionnaire) from International Maritime Organization (IMO); the Mixed Migration Centre (MMC); IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM); IOM'S Missing Migrants Project (MMP); and Knowledge Management Portal on

Migrant Smuggling respectively. Data were also sourced using the secondary sources which include (books on maritime safety, newspapers and bulletins, reports on the security at the Gulf of Guinea). Simple random sampling using convenience technique was employed to select 120 target respondents from the population for the purpose of completing the research questionnaire. A 14-item structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was validated and coefficient reliable while results were content analyzed.

Overview of Maritime Security Threats Bedeviling the Gulf of Guinea (GoG)

Maritime Terrorism

Terrorism at sea has only manifested itself in recent times with the Achille Lauro hijacking in 1985, thereby serving as a wake-up call in the war against maritime security. It is no more news that terrorist activities have taken over large proportions of African domains (Davis and Stanley, 2006). There is growing rate of terrorist attacks and killings at sea in the region. Therefore, maritime terrorism on African soils has made possible seizures and targets at sea thereby giving room for economic instability in all ramifications. In recent times, several maritime terrorist/insurgent groups have emerged and they have sometimes made quite extensive use of the sea, simply because they operate in local areas that are closely linked to the sea. Among the various maritime terrorists groups are: Tigers of Tamil Eelan (LTTE), popularly known as the “Tamil Tigers” and a naval wing of the group named “Sea Tigers” got established in the year 1984 (DIIS Report, 2009). The Wing used speedboats, larger ship with armed scuba divers to launch attacks on vessels belonging to the Sri Lankan Navy and passengers. It is established that the group has about 200 suicide bombers named “Black Sea Tigers”. Also existing is the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) also designated as “the Palestinian Arab Navy” which directed attacks some against Israeli ships in 1973; but without any casualty recorded (Ibid).

Also the Free Aceh Movement and popularly called (GAM: Gerakam Aceh Merdeka) in Indonesia, which has targeted and launched attacks on off-shore installations such as oil-rigs, tankers among others. And lastly, there are established claims that Al Qaeda has assembled its own small fleet in the form of hijacked ships to begin maritime terrorist operations (DIIS Report, 2009). Maritime terrorism is, likewise, a problem of very limited proportions and it is often conflated with problem of piracy. In the process, Governments worldwide have taken measures to better secure and protect ports and maritime transport against terrorism; this actually began immediately after the attacks on the US World Trade Towers and Pentagon in September 11, 2001 (Field Research Report, 2020).

Piracy at Sea

Piracy is defined as armed robbery at sea by private actors acting for selfish purposes, especially economic gain. Piracy is regarded to be one of the oldest of all engagements. In ancient Greece, piracy is known to have been widespread and widely regarded as an honourable way of making a

living, and also in Roman times, parts of the Mediterranean were lured into piracy, provoking several naval strategies to suppress the menace. The average danger of falling prey to pirates in this part of the world seems not higher than what happens elsewhere. Southeast Asia has accounted for a lion's share of all piratical attacks in the global system while same occurs on the eastern or western coasts of the African continent. In the period covered by the above data, most attacks took place against anchored ships, and most of them took the form of boarding while at times, only knives and firearms were used (DIIS Report, 2009).

The phenomenon of sea piracy has again got the global media attention as a result of the surge of pirate attacks off the various coaster lines. The international naval protection of merchant shipping holds out some prospects of containing the menace; but to no avail. It is evident that maritime terrorists have gradually transformed themselves into pirates on the Gulf of Guinea (GoG). A number of developments promote the escalation in sea piracy as experienced by Africa. The anchorage attacks, robberies against ships out at sea and theft of ships and cargo aimed towards converting them to their personal cargoes and belongings (IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix Report, 2019).

Illegal Oil Bunkering at Sea

Oil bunkering is most prevalent in Nigerian waters and holds national and international repercussions. Much of the states' oil wealth is lost to illegal oil bunkering and it has remained an entrenched business as a result of the authorities' kid-glove treatments of the menace. With the downturn in the oil sector at present, following tumbling prices in the global market, governments in Africa should act fast to block further revenue losses from the illicit act by improving the maritime security at all cost (Eklof, 2006). In the year 2019, about 3, 423 metric tons of crude oil was illegally stolen on Nigerian waters by five (5) Filipinos and four (4) Bangladeshi (Geregu, 2019). Also, there exist some networks showing a criminal-rebel-government triad that plagues the Nigerian oil industry. The maritime connection plays out at sea through pirate tankers, receiving the stolen crude from criminal groups and further transferring the vessel to other places. It is established that a land-maritime syndicate operates between armed groups in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, as well the maritime tanker groups together with some corrupt public officers and naval officials respectively (Ibid).

Drug Trafficking by Sea

Drug trafficking at sea is seriously devastating the various island states and harming both the environment and human rights in all ramifications. It is observed that West Africa is now a haven for drug trafficking from the various countries of South America into Europe. It is an act of transporting illicit drugs produced in a particular region to global markets. Cocaine is the primary illegal drug smuggled through maritime routes because all of its cultivation and production is settled in the Andean region of South America (Field Research Report, 2020). The smuggling of

drugs though the sea poses a security threats to all the states of the Gulf of Guinea region. The various drug trafficking cartels have developed complex systems for the transportation and distribution of illicit drugs (Ellis, 2009). The Atlantic Ocean serves as one transit route with little impediment from West African policing authorities. On the western edge of the Gulf of Guinea, Guinea's Conakry offers a weakly policed maritime space, allowing drug syndicates, moving freely from the sea into West African sub-regions. It is established that West Africa serves as a transit route for cocaine from the continent of South America into Europe and at the same time heroin from the Middle East to the United States while the Guinea Bissau naval officers are accomplices in the saga. That is why on April 5 2013, a former Chief of the Navy of Guinea Bissau, Rear Admiral J.A. Bubo, was arrested at sea in a drug sting operation and transferred to the United States to stand trial (BBC News, 2013).

Kidnapping or Hostage Taking

This incident has become order of the day and another dimension of insecurity in Africa particularly in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG). In total, 73 percent of all kidnappings at sea, and 92 percent of hostage –taking, have taken place in the Gulf of Guinea. The number of crew kidnappings jumped from 78 in 2018 to 121 in the year 2019 (International Maritime Bureau Report, 2019). In addition, the number of sailors kidnapped off West Africa surged by more than 50 percent in 2019 (Aljazeera News, 2019). This type of crime is most prevalent in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria whereby criminal groups abduct high network individuals who are mainly expatriate staff of oil and gas industries, wealthy Nigerians or their beloved relatives while they demand payment of huge ransoms for their release. At the same time, these criminal groups kill and gang-rape the female victims in situations of non-payment of the ransoms that may have been demanded in the first instance (Field Research Report, 2020).

Migrant and Weapons Smuggling

Migrant smuggling refers to the movement of persons across international borders for financial reasons or benefits. According to the United Nations Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air (2000), migrant smuggling is defined as the procurement in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of person into a State party of which the person is not a national or permanent resident. Data on migrant smuggling allow policymakers to better understand the phenomena as well as to develop policies that promote safe and orderly migration. Several nationals who decide to leave Africa at all cost or who are forced to do so by criminal syndicates, usually embark on such movement by sea; it could be across the Mediterranean or Red Sea (also known as Gulf of Aden). The nationals who are seriously desperate to leave the continent get themselves involved criminal syndicates in West Africa, North Africa and East Africa. Weapon smuggling takes places as well and often serves to contribute to all sorts of violent and armed conflicts in the continent (Field Research Report, 2020).

Sea Pollution

Unfortunately, the increasing pollution index off the Western and Southern African coast lines portends heinous and dangerous threats to human security. Whenever the terrorists launch and carry out their attacks on the moving vessels, most especially on the sea, there used to be much oil spills into other seas or water bodies, constituting dangerous threats to human security in all ramifications. It is therefore, established that this pollution threatens the African seas which as a source of good environment, economy and food to humanity and the continent (Field Research Report, 2020).

Efforts taken by the Nigerian Security Agencies (Nigerian Navy and others) in Combating the Menace

Following the increase in maritime insecurity, the Nigerian Navy (NN) in March, 2020 deployed its security prowess to the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) region to nip in the bud, activities of the various maritime terrorists, pirates and sea robbers towards ensuring that all threats to the state's (Nigeria with other countries) economic and security wellbeing in the maritime domain. In advancing the feat, naval operatives, maritime new reporters (journalists) and other relevant stakeholders sustained patrols up to about 50 nautical miles from Lagos berth with participating vessels carrying out joint and other independent strategic controls on the sea. The operation was codenamed "TREASURE GUARD II", had attached the deployment of four (4) capital ships including NNS THUNDER, NNS NGURU, NNS DORINA, NNS ANDONI; two tugboat (TUG DOLPHIN RIMA) and (TUG Commander UGWU); two maritime patrol helicopters and other two (2) detachment of the navy's elite force known as the Special Boats Services (SBS) (Field Research Report, 2020).

Successfully, the strategic exercise was held within the Western Naval Command's area of responsibility (AOR), as warships were deployed from the Eastern and Central Naval Commands to ensure wide coverage, just as the state's coasts were adequately monitored in order to prevent vandals from gaining access to oil pipelines, just as representatives of the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS), Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, (NDLEA) and Ministry of Justice present to ensure interagency collaboration. While at sea, the exercise did not only serve the purpose of improving personnel's professionalism and capabilities through various simulations enacted but also served real time deterrence purposes as the naval men's presence on the high seas within the period definitely kept the criminals away in all ramifications (Field Research Report, 2020).

Examining the Need or Quest for Security Intelligence in Combating Maritime Insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG)

More than 85 percent of the world's goods or products are transported by sea; and a secure maritime environment remains highly essential for the free flow of global trade – that is why adoption of security intelligence is highly required. The security intelligence responsibility in the

continent of Africa is believed to have been put in the care of the Police and Departments of State Intelligence Services. This point is more reinforced with the situations in Nigeria and other states in Africa whereby the responsibility is vested with the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and Department of State Service (DSS). Fundamentally, these security intelligence units are expected to be larger than the two units mentioned above (DIIS Report, 2009).

It is expected to include that of the Police, DSS, Naval Intelligence Unit, INTERPOL, Army, Air Force and others to jointly and regularly share intelligence reports among themselves and through such system, the security agencies existing in the Gulf of Guinea come together for the common purpose of waging wars against the spread of transnational organized crimes (TOCs) in the region. And in order to ensure there is effective war against insecurity at sea, the critical strategy to be employed in that prevention process is security intelligence system that complies with global standards. The security intelligence system must have a process of systematic collection, collation, evaluation, analysis and dissemination of information from a wide variety of sources in order to identify potential threats to maritime endeavours and prepare threat assessments before events unfold (Ibid).

Moreover, collecting intelligence on transnational organized crime (TOC) groups and members could involve police, military and national intelligence structures. Nonetheless, these three entities have different modus operandi and the collection together with subsequent analysis requires a great deal of joint work and sharing (Raidt and Smith, 2010). Also, the systematic techniques of acquiring warrants for telecommunication for interception remains highly valued in waging war against crimes at sea. Therefore in making application for telecommunication warrants in a criminal investigation, the naval police officers globally are required to seek authority through judicial bodies in their respective states or territorial spaces. Unfortunately, the field of security intelligence in fighting crime at sea has not been clearly understood even among local and foreign police agencies. Therefore, it has not received the attention and resources by police managers and leaders that it probably should have had because, in times of tight budgets and limited human resources, it was seen as expensive luxury, the benefits of which were not clearly understood (Sarte, 2014). Essentially, the intelligence process is no different from basic research whereby, the problem is defined, data collected, assessed and thereafter organized. It is later analyzed and then disseminated to the appropriate quarters or agencies for implementation. Yet, despite the simple logic of applying this model as the main ingredient in action plans against organized crime (Field Research Report, 2020).

Security intelligence mitigates global maritime crimes. It is of good note that INTERPOL work together with other security agencies to mitigate the crimes at sea and improve maritime governance in three ways: by facilitating the exchange of information, strengthening first responder and law enforcement capabilities, and building international and cross-sector

coalitions. Security intelligence gives room for facilitating data exchange activities. This is true in the sense that a single crime at sea, such as piracy, typically affects several different nation states. In achieving this, vessels may be flagged, owned and operated by different countries and manned by multinational crews. Concerning the arrested suspects, the Navy officers that intercept them and the states willing to investigate and prosecute them are also likely to be diverse. This makes it crucial to share information between military, law enforcement and judicial bodies in multiple countries. Also, it easily allows the existing Global Maritime Security Database to be used and it would be serving as integral system in maintaining information on incidents of maritime piracy and other crimes at sea (Field Research Report, 2020). In the same vein, this database assists to: collect and store piracy and other maritime crime information; analyze information related to maritime crime; produce intelligence products; and develop relationships. It also helps in sharing data and arrest of suspected sea robbers.

Also, the first responder and law enforcement capabilities become more strengthened. It is noted that investigating incidents and collecting evidence is complicated in the maritime domain given the multiple jurisdictions that is usually involved in an individual incident. The joint system of security agencies in providing intelligence at sea would assist in providing training, equipment and mentoring to member countries worldwide in order to improve their investigative capabilities, the quality and quantity of data collected, and ensuring that potential evidence is properly preserved and analyzed. At the same time, close cooperation between law enforcement and judicial services is essential in order to increase the likelihood of successful prosecutions (Field Research, 2020).

The help of security intelligence services can help forge links between police and prosecutors – within the same country and across jurisdictions – supporting them in all stages of an investigation, from evidence collection through to trial. With the support of INTERPOL Intelligence Service in waging war against crimes at sea, several actions are usually carried out to support the various security objectives in the key geographical areas of Western, Eastern and Southern Africa, and Southeast Asia. These include: the Maritime Security Programme (MASE), sponsored by the European Union; Project Age, sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL); and Project Mast, sponsored by the Counter Terrorism Capacity Building Program (CTCBP) of Global Affairs Canada (GAC) (Field Research Report, 2020).

Security intelligence also assists in building coalitions. This is evident in the sense that it gives room to international and cross-sector partnerships on crimes at sea which is highly imperative in preventing, investigating and prosecuting the crimes. It enables synergy with strategically identified international organizations and other partners on national, regional and international levels to build coalitions and enhance cooperation to combat surges of maritime crimes. It also aids strengthening border controls, port security in strategic locations. It allows law enforcement

agencies to work together in locating and arresting the maritime criminals. This scenario is observed in Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia where the security agencies worked together to locate and intercept individuals and groups responsible for cross-border crimes: smuggling, human trafficking, and robberies at sea, hijacking and kidnap for ransom, firearms trafficking and the smuggling of illicit goods (DIIS Report, 2009).

Strategic security intelligence collaborations among the security agencies helps in waging war against insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) and usually leads to timely seizures, arrests of criminals and rescues of victims and vessels on the sea. As we all know that Southeast Asia is a major hub for seaborne trade, with a large number of shipping companies that are vulnerable to maritime crimes in the region; and against this backdrop, Operation Anchor carried out sea patrols, inspected vessels, goods and crews, and screened passengers and their passports (Ellis, 2009). Pursuant to the strong collaboration among the Police, Navy, Coast Guards, Immigration, Customs and other maritime units in all the four participating states actually resulted in a number of arrests and seizures with: 3 tons of listed marine species seized; 14 vessels engaged in illegal fishing seized; suspects in 3 drug trafficking attempts arrested; 2 cases of smuggling contraband discovered; 18 suspects arrested for various transnational cases; and the operation also paved the way for the rescue of five victims of human trafficking onboard a vessel in Taganak Island, in Philippines (Ellis, 2009).

Security intelligence by assists in depriving pirates of lucrative targets and it also works as a viable preventative measure. One way of executing is by devising, with the aid of forewarning, alternative shipping routes which would stay clear of narrow and congested waterways such as the Southeast Asian or the Gulf of Aden, but in most cases economic logic militates strongly against this, especially in view of the low risk of substantial losses due to pirate attacks. While few of the above preventative measures involve any use of force, there is also a need for forceful measures (Ibid). At the strategic and grand strategic levels, offensive measures might, in principle, involve naval operations tasked with sinking pirate fleets and land/air operations to destroy pirate lairs ashore as frequently happened in the past.

At the tactical level, security intelligence would deter attacks on the sea and aid offensive operations against pirates' attacks, but this significantly requires strong intelligence of an impending attack. Meanwhile, boarding a ship controlled by pirates on the sea highly is problematic as it endangers the safety of crew and passengers on board, who are usually not in any grave danger in the hands of pirates who are in it for the money and have no particular urge to kill anybody—as opposed to terrorists. Therefore, all shipping organisations are strongly advised against any use of weapons against pirates onboard. Once the pirates have left the ship with their loot, it is rather tactical to pursue them with a view to recovering the loot and

punishing the culprits apprehended, in order to deter future attacks (Field Research Report, 2020).

As far as defensive measures are concerned, the most effective one seems to be maintaining high alert in pirate-infested waters through the aid of security intelligence, but the fact that crew sizes have shrunk considerably makes this difficult to uphold, especially at night, when most attacks occur. Improved warning systems and ‘dummy watchmen’ may also be of some use in a ‘scarecrow capacity,’ while various technical measures are available such as electrical ‘pirate fences,’ and the use of the fire hoses ships carry anyway for other purposes. That none of these inexpensive measures are in universal use probably testifies to the modest severity of the problem of piracy. Individual ships may also arm themselves for protection against piratical attacks, either by carrying weapons for the crew and training crew members in their use, or by soliciting the services of armed guards. If deployed on guard to prevent boarding this is fairly unproblematic, but taking up arms against armed pirates on board may result in otherwise avoidable bloodshed (Field Research Report, 2020).

Calls for security intelligence become necessitated to deterring and discouraging maritime crimes. This is evident in especially heavily pirate-infested waters, dispatching coastguard ships or naval ships of the line may sometimes be useful, both to deter piracy as such and to provide protective escorts for convoys of civilian ships with the help of intelligence. However, such deployments are in most cases prohibitively costly and therefore surely only feasible for carefully selected pirate hotspots for short periods of time. Moreover, in waterways that are not very narrow, convoys with insufficient warships to escort them may even be counter-productive, as it forces merchant ships to sail in a pre-defined pattern, usually within a narrow sea lane, thus ‘gathering the prey’ for the pirates and depriving civilian ships of the protection that dispersal makes available (Field Research Report, 2020). Because of the transnational character of most piracy—at least in the legal sense of the term—regional collaboration is usually very important, but it has often run up against concerns over sovereignty.

Security intelligence, one of the strategic initiatives undertaken by the United States security agencies in the wake of 9/11 attacks’ effect on both the state’s maritime terrorism and piracy, and ostensibly the motivated proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In addition, the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), launched by the United States in May 2003, remains really a cluster of bilateral agreements enabling signatory states to search into each other’s ships and aircrafts on suspicion that they might be carrying cargo related to weapons of mass destruction. What makes it relevant for the struggle against piracy and maritime terrorism is the provision for the search and seizure of ships and the term it ‘non-state actors of proliferation.’ As of November 2008, a total of 93 states had so far keyed in to the initiative, but only nine (9) states out of them,

such as: China, India, Indonesia among others, have actually signed the envisaged bilateral ship-boarding agreements (Sarte, 2014).

The efficacy and effectiveness of security intelligence also comes into play when the United States “Container Security Initiative” was spurred by the fear that explosive devices such as radiological “dirty bombs” might be concealed in ordinary containers and detonated upon arrival in a US port, or even transported inland to more significant targets for detonation. The security initiative helps in various checks to be performed at the port of departure abroad rather than that of destination in the global system.

For more of these merits for maritime to be recorded, however, there is need for advancement of the strategy of global container shipping, giving room to more random security checks of vessel (Mugridge, 2009).

Nevertheless, some funding is required, and as most sources of external funding have dried up since the end of the Cold War, most rebels and terrorist groups rely for the bulk of their funding on indigenous sources. To the extent that partly terrorist rebel movements are unable to live off the land, they may resort to various forms of legal or illegal means of generating funds. Some, including *Hizbollah* and Al Qaeda, seem to have turned to the illicit diamond trade, whereas others, including FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*) and now the Taliban, are deeply involved in the drugs trade. It is entirely conceivable that certain groups might also turn to piracy as a source of funds for their terrorist activities, even though it is unknown to what extent this is the case (DIIS Report, 2009). In this case, security intelligence remains a very useful strategy in curbing all sorts of terrorists and pirates’ attacks and robberies on the sea. It is highly significant in all ramifications.

Furthermore, Police and other security agencies – DSS, INTERPOL, Army, Navy, Air Force, and National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency amongst others in the global system are currently aware of the need to coordinate and integrate their efforts towards waging a war against maritime insecurity. Presently, it is notable that the current international system is now a global village whereby most parts of the world have been linked together in all ramifications. Pursuant to this, it is advisable that all the security agencies are to operate in the new world of rapid communication, sophisticated computers, databases, and faxes. The 1993 Canadian Report of Electronic Surveillance provides much insight into the use of electronic and ICT gadgets for intelligence operations in the global system. As well, police and other security agencies have extensions abroad such as Interpol which provide a clearing house for information concerning the movement of criminals and others. Therefore, it is highly imperative to adopt the use of security intelligence in their operations (Field Research Report, 2020).

This suggests that there might be a need for transnational, and regionally financed organized crime departments, rather than municipal ones. In conclusion, it has been argued in this section

that the need for modern security intelligence activities is of vital importance in the concerted efforts aimed at providing maritime security and safety in the Gulf of Guinea. It may not be sufficient enough to leave this vital importance only to the law enforcement and intelligence bodies to debate and act on that suggestion. Thus the existing security intelligence process that operates in the Gulf of Guinea no doubt deserves the scrutiny or critical eye that security intelligence has so far been given by academics, politicians, research journalists and other commentators.

Recommendations

Myriads of studies have been conducted on various threats to the security of the Gulf of Guinea, and many proposals for tackling them. The fact is that much of such research endeavours are on how to fight piracy or issues concerning criminal intelligence at the expense of security intelligence. Pursuant to the above, the study arrived at the following recommendations:

- (i) Managers of security agencies: the Navy, Police, INTERPOL and other security agencies in the Gulf of Guinea should make efforts to ensure that the efficacy of intelligence gathered or collected is meaningfully usually advanced and dynamic in compliance with global standards. These feats could only be realized when the intelligence officers that are highly educated, innovative, skillful and dedicated persons are recruited into their respective agencies.
- (ii) The officers saddled with security intelligence in the agencies should be regularly trained and re-trained most especially on intelligence analysis or strategic intelligence.
- (iii) There should be an existing database on migrant smuggling in order allow the policymakers to better understand the phenomena as well as to develop workable policies that would promote safe and orderly migration in the Gulf of Guinea region.
- (iv) The study recommends that there must be an armada of drones that should be launched and deployed so as to monitor the movement of oil vessels as this will be a game-changer, if effectively implemented.
- (v) Countries in the region with the support of regional organizations like the ECOWAS, ECCAS, ICC and relevant international organisations should continue to ratify and fully domesticate the provisions of the relevant international conventions including UNCLOS 1982, SUA and Port States Measures Agreement.
- (vi) Efforts should be intensified towards locating and blocking all the sources of maritime terrorists' funding should as this action would definitely allow their activities to cease on the sea.
- (vii) International Ship and Port Facility Security Codes (ISPS Codes) should be put in place by the joint team of security agencies aiming at detecting piracy, terrorism

threats and preventing crimes at ports and on the sea. The said ISPS Code would clearly define the three (3) security levels which are: normal, heightened risk; and incident imminent attacks on vessels.

- (viii) In the same vein, there required, calls for unification and collaboration of the various intelligence agencies operating in the Gulf of Guinea into a single security system, for transnational cooperation. To achieve this, all the sub-regional organizations in the Gulf of Guinea are enjoined to speak and act with one voice as far as security of the continent is concerned.
- (ix) The study recommends the need for extending access to INTERPOL's secure global police communications system in order to add shape to maritime industry and seaports; and as well sharing more information on terrorists, robbers and pirates and all sorts of criminal activities in the region; and even involving prosecution services for legal advice.
- (x) Collection of intelligence on transnational organized crime (TOC) groups and members could involve police, military and national intelligence structures as these entities have different modus operandi of collection and subsequent analysis that requires a great deal of joint work and information sharing.
- (xi) There is need to integrate all the West African security sectors through a system of political and economic cooperation that fosters mutual support/assistance most especially in the area of security intelligence.
- (xii) It is recommended that Navies, Coast Guards and maritime law enforcement agencies in the Gulf of Guinea states should engage in regular joint maritime operations, including with international partners, to harmonize operational procedures, training standards and foster interoperability.
- (xiii) The GoG states should explore the possibility of designated maritime courts to handle cases of sea robbery, piracy and other maritime offences to ensure quick dispensation of cases in addition to capacity building and sensitization of judiciary on crucial relevant legislation.
- (xiv) It is also recommended that all the security intelligence agencies should develop systems for joint procurement, maintenance operational planning, and deployment of the following types of equipment: armed helicopters, tactical transport helicopters; and units able to operate them according to a common policy defined by the sub-regional organization; aerial surveillance platforms (both drones and manned aircraft) and their operators, including maritime surveillance assets, according to a common policy defined by the various states.
- (xv) Lastly, security intelligence agencies in the region should intensify their efforts to completely automate their intelligence processes with the computer-based electronic and ICT equipment and gadgets. At the same time, wide leverage be made put in place

an integrated single security system for the region and as well a large computer-based database or information centre with electronic surveillance, in order to ensure faster, straight, and easy access to intelligence information from the region at all times.

Conclusion

Towards ensuring lasting peace and stability in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG), priority should be placed on regional security architecture that is highly effective whereby each national security and intelligence systems operating the Gulf of Guinea collaborate with counterparts in other states. It is also expected that security intelligence analytical prowess of personnel involved get enhanced, advanced and in tandem with global standards in all ramifications to wage war against terrorism, sea robbery, piracy and other forms of insecurity at sea. In the same vein, it is high time intelligence agencies spring up actions on the adoption of effective and sophisticated information and communication technologies (ICTs) or electronic components to carry out security intelligence with ease in the region.

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IOM'S Missing Migrants Project (MMP)
Knowledge Management Portal on Migrant Smuggling.