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MARITIME SECURITY MANAGEMENT IN GHANA

A. Introduction

In this [Briefing Paper](#) we shine light on maritime security issues in Ghana. As will be recalled, on February 18, 2016 the Government of Ghana and the United States Government executed the Security Governance Initiative (SGI) which identified maritime security was one of the areas for strategic cooperation areas under the Joint Country Action Plan (JCAP).

Maritime Security is concerned with the prevention of intentional damage through sabotage, subversion, or terrorism. Maritime Security is basically involved in three main activities. These are; Port Security, Vessel Security and Facility Security. There are 2 main ports in Ghana- the Tema Harbor/ Port and the Takoradi Port/ Harbor. Act 675 implements the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code. The ISPS Code was developed by the International maritime community to provide a system for securing maritime terminals. Maritime Security is a collaborative effort involving many agencies and other countries since there is no physical boundary at sea.

Maritime Security is a major issue for countries in the Gulf of Guinea in their quest for social and economic development.

- Illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing activities
- Piracy
- Bunkering
- Maritime boundary disputes
- Inadequate training personnel and expertise
- Smuggling

B. Key Agencies

In the area of maritime security the following as some of the key government agencies around whom issues of maritime security management will develop over the foreseeable future:

- Ministry of Transport
- Ghana Port & Harbors Authority

- Ghana Shippers Authority
- Volta Lake Transport
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Ghana Institute of Freight Forwarders
- Ghana Association of Marine Surveyors
- Ghana Navy
- Fisheries Commission
- Regional Maritime University

The main Agency which overlooks Maritime Security issues in Ghana is the Ghana Maritime Authority (GMA).

C. Laws and Policies on Border Security Management

We identify a number of existing laws and policies which attempt to govern the cyber space as follows:

- Ghana Maritime Authority Act, 2002 (Act 630)
- Ghana Maritime Authority (Amendment) Act 2011, (Act 825)
- Ghana Shipping Act, 2003 (Act 645)
- Ghana Shipping Amendment Act, 2011 (Act 826)
- Ghana Maritime Security Act, 2004 (Act 675)
- Ghana Maritime Security (Amendment) Act, 201 (Act 824)
- Ghana Shipping (Protection of Offshore Operations and Assets) Regulations, 2011
- Ghana Maritime Authority (Maritime Safety Fees and Charges) Regulations 2012 (L.I. 2009)

Some relevant international laws:

- The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS), 1982
- The Maritime Labor Convention (MLC), 2006

D. Strategies for Mitigating Maritime Security Threats in Ghana

- Preparedness and Capacity. Strengthening maritime security in Ghana goes beyond relying on the benevolence of partner/ donor countries. In pursuit of this, the Ghana Maritime Authority (GMA) has launched a modern Vessel Traffic Management Information System (VTMIS). This is an integrated system meant for continuous electronic surveillance of Ghana's maritime space with remote sensors built with the capacity to detect and identify ships and boats on the high seas.
- Enhancing inter- agency cooperation
- The Adoption of an Automatic Identification System (AIS) for vessels/ crafts operating on the shores of Ghana. This strategy also involves the adoption of a Long Range Identification and Tracking system (LRIT)
- The adoption of a deliberate and comprehensive security architecture that involves the Navy, Marine Police, Maritime Authority, the Army, the Interior Ministry and other allied institutions.

- Strengthening the capability of the security forces to increase patrols and surveillance on regular basis using the right equipment and tools in the right measure
- The adoption of a Master Security Plan containing onboard defensive measures; which includes a compulsory presence of armed security aboard vessels, mandatory modern technology tracking and monitoring devices
- Discipline within the forces and a resolve to stamp out corruption

E. Conclusion

Again we hope you found this issue helpful. The Center aims to empower readers to understand and navigate a continuously changing and complex global security environment

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