

NIGERIA'S MARITIME RESOURCES PROTECTION: INTEGRATED APPROACH FOR THE ARMED FORCES

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INTRODUCTION

The world is an ocean world¹. The sea is a common heritage to mankind and covers about two-thirds of the earth's surface². Most nations' resources are embedded in the ocean, seas and marine ecosystem. The world populations rely greatly on the vast and abundant resources of the sea as vital means of sustenance, livelihood, sources of food, energy, minerals, mining, scientific research, transportation and recreation amongst others. Hence, Admiral Goshkov posited that the strength of a maritime state is the capacity to place all the resources and possibilities offered by the ocean at the service of mankind and make full use of them to develop the economy, the wealth of which finally determines all facets of life of the country including its defence capability³.

The legal regime for appropriate defence and governance for the exploitation of the sea resources are regulated under United Nations Charter and Conventions on The Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Article 56 of UNCLOS III further empowers littoral states to enact their own laws and regulations for the protection of the maritime resources⁴. The constitution of the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) and the Armed Forces Cap A20 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, entrusted responsibility of securing Nigeria's maritime environment to the Nigerian Navy (NN) as lead agency in collaboration with the Nigerian Army (NA), the Nigerian Air Force (NAF)⁵ and other several supporting maritime agencies. Despite this array of Services and agencies, Nigeria's maritime environment has been characterized with series of nefarious and illegal activities which portend threat to the nation state.

Nigeria as a littoral state has a coast line of about 420 nautical miles (nm) which translates to about 84000 square nautical miles (nm²) maritime area based on a 200nm Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). In line with UNCLOS III, Nigeria lays sovereign claim to 12nm of territorial seas, and 350nm continental shelf

1. Langewieshe, W. in Ibrahim, O.S., 2005. Piracy and Maritime Crime on the Coast of Africa: Trends and Countermeasures, A paper delivered at Sea Power Symposium Africa, South Africa, p.4.
2. Encarta 2008.
3. Admiral Goshkov, quoted in Ibrahim, O.S., 2011, The Nigerian Navy: Challenges and Future Perspectives. Lecture delivered to Participant National Defence College Course 19, p.6.
4. Pugh, M., 1994. *Maritime Security and Peacekeeping: A Framework for United Nations Operations*. New York: Manchester University Press, p.1.
5. *Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*, 1999, p.34.

limit all extending from the baseline⁶. However, Nigeria's maritime area of interest extends beyond her maritime environment. It covers the entire stretch of the Gulf of Guinea.

The environment is endowed with huge deposit of living and non-living resources such as aquatic marine resources, oil and gas, natural resources, amongst others. At the dawn of the new millennium, the rise in the profile of international maritime terrorism, militancy and quest for resource control assumed a new dimension in Nigeria's maritime environment. Given the rising profile, there have been calls in various quarters for improved security arrangement for the protection of Nigeria's maritime environment. Although, the FGN Amnesty Programme initiated for ex-militants has drastically reduced some of the threats, there are still persistent attacks on shipping and other vices unabated. The capacity and effectiveness of the Armed Forces of Nigeria (AFN) and the other agencies saddled with the responsibilities to mitigate the challenges seems doubtful. This necessarily compels the need for a collective approach for synergy towards harnessing and protecting the nation's maritime resources. In this study, therefore, maritime resources protection shall mean, the art of using all available means to, preserve, safeguard or prevent the living and non-living resources, as well as activities that are legally conducted in the waters, seabed and subsoil within the maritime domain of a nation from danger or threat.

Threats to Nigeria's Maritime Resources

Threats to Nigeria's maritime interests represent those acts that are inimical likely to endanger or undermine the exploration and exploitation of the seabed resources. Such threats could be either external or internal.

EXTERNAL THREATS

External threats manifest in various forms such as hostile propaganda, territorial contention, threat of force by unfriendly states, sabotage as well as the denial of access to sea for transit or exploitation. External threats to Nigeria in the maritime domain are likely to manifest in the maritime boundaries between countries of the Gulf of Guinea, weak and vulnerable neighbours. Gladly, Nigeria's foreign policy with her maritime neighbours has been consistently characterised by peaceful resolution of conflict situations. The resolution of the Bakassi conflict and the existing Joint Development Zone (JDZ) agreements with Sao Tome and Principe and Equatorial Guinea attest to this fact. Therefore, it may be safe to assert that external threats may not be an imminent challenge in Nigeria's maritime environment.

6. Adenote, S., 2002, Maritime Crimes and Coastal Security: Challenges for the Nigerian Navy, Project submitted to the National War College, Nigeria, p.12.

INTERNAL THREATS

Major internal threats to Nigeria's maritime interests amongst others include:

Poaching. Poaching (illegal fishing) is the act of fishing in a nation's waters without permission or licence⁷. The Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) stated that one-quarter of all fish stocks worldwide are being increasingly overexploited largely due to poaching⁸. Illegal fishing and over exploitation by both own and foreign trawlers in the nations waters are frequent occurrence and the losses are enormous. The fish resources are becoming depleted, unregulated fishing as to species, size and premature harvest of fingerlings/ baby fishes are quite high. In the case of Nigeria, the Nigerian Institute of Oceanography and Marine Research (NIOMR) recently confirmed the increase in incidents of illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing in our EEZ⁹. Inability to check this negative trend has been traced to lack of fishery patrol vessels and inadequate Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) capability. Poaching is depriving the country huge revenue base required for national developments and it is a matter of utmost concern.

Piracy and Sea Robbery. The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) defines piracy as 'any illegal act of violence or detention, or any act of deprivation, committed for private ends by the crews or passengers of a private ship or a private aircraft and directed on the high seas against another ship or against persons or property on board such ship'¹⁰. Sea robbery, on the other hand is 'the commission of these acts in ports or terminal waters'. Although, incidents of piracy are not significant around Nigeria's maritime environment, sea robbery and armed attacks on shipping and fishing vessels have unfortunately been on the increase, particularly around Nigeria's harbour approaches. The International Maritime Bureau (IMB), in 2007, ranked Nigeria's maritime environment as one of the most troubled global waterways due to piracy.¹¹ This development has the potential of giving Nigeria a very negative global image that could impact adversely on the inflow of foreign investment. Attacks on shipping and piracy persist and it remains a matter of concern for Nigeria as depicted in figures below:

7. *Microsoft Encarta 2009*.

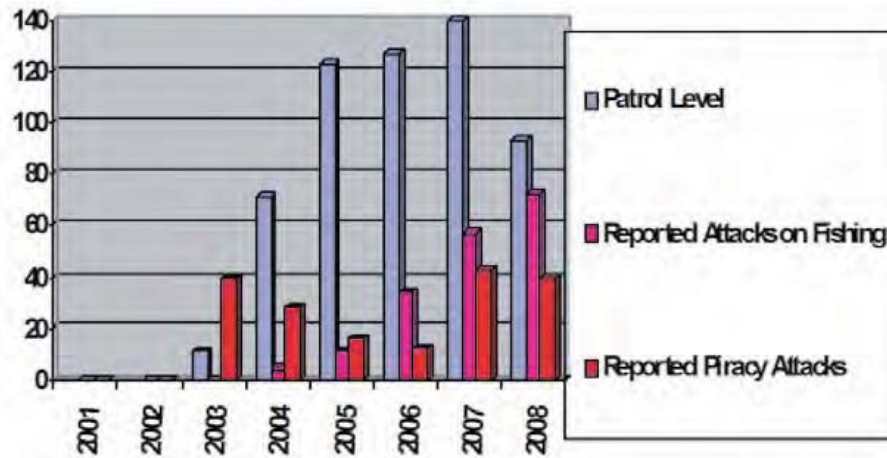
8. FAO cited in Jonah,G.J.,2010. Maritime Dimensions of Nigeria's National Security. Constructive Engagement, *Journal of Alumni Association of National Defence College Nigeria*, vol 1. p.82.

9. Solarin,B.B.,2012. Head of Department, Fishery Resources Department, Nigerian Institute of Oceanography and Marine Research, Records of Reports – *Operations Room Manual* 16 April. p.3.

10. *The International Chamber of Commerce(ICC)- International Maritime Bureau (IMB) Annual Report-2008*.

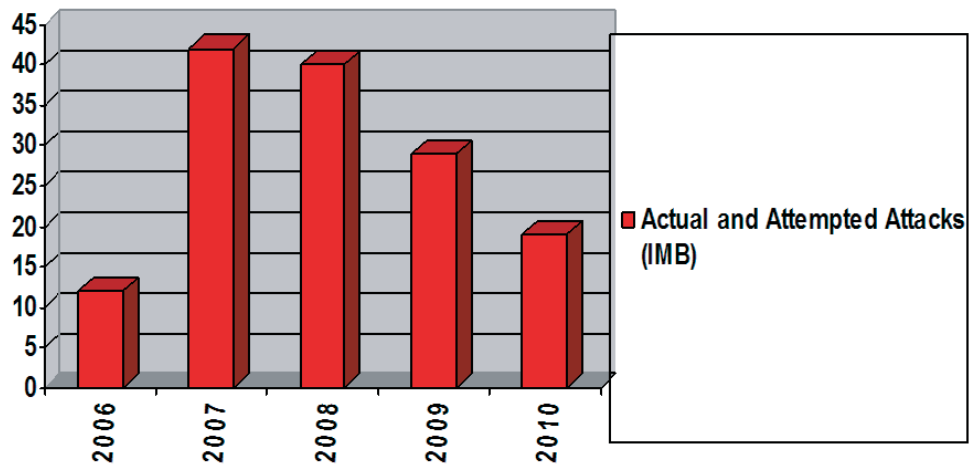
11. *Ibid*.

Figure 1. Profile of Maritime Crimes and Containment Activities in Nigeria (2001 – 2008)



Source: International Maritime Bureau

Figure 2. Profile of Attacks on Shipping in Nigeria (2006-2010).



Source: International Maritime Bureau

The proponent of this statistical argument is that the reduction observed in the trend of attacks is largely due to the level of investment in policing, operational coordination and political initiatives. However, the degrading state and challenges of platforms inadequacies has not ensure the sustenance of these efforts.

Illegal Bunkering, Pipeline Vandalism and Crude Oil Theft. Illegal bunkering is the illegal transfer of fuels and other petroleum products between vessels, from storage facilities to vessels and vice versa. Crude oil theft involves the vandalism of crude product pipes or oil wellheads and the subsequent theft of the products from the wellheads or pipes that leads to the various terminals. The increase in public awareness of the monetary value of oil and gas products coupled with the remote location of most of the facilities associated with them, have ensured a rise in the spate of pipeline vandalism and sabotage. According to Obadina, most of the ex- militant groups during the Niger Delta crisis were involved in this criminal act¹². Illegal bunkering and crude oil theft complicate the security situation in the nation's maritime domain. It remains a major criminal activity that is unabated which amounts to quantum loss of revenue and severe implications for Nigeria's economy since the oil industry accounts for over 90 percent of Nigeria's foreign earnings. It is however gladdening to note that the amnesty programme for the ex-militants has significantly reduced the incidents.

Marine Pollution. Marine pollution occurs mainly due to the discharge or dumping of toxic or hazardous waste from land based sources into the seas. The wastes are mainly from domestic household, agro-chemicals, organic, industrial waste, petro-chemicals, flood and sewage. Oil, ballast discharge/ bilges washings while at sea, noxious/harmful substances from ships and discharges caused by collisions/grounding and blow out of offshore rigs are other sources of pollution at sea. The petroleum industry is the major culprit resulting in the destruction of biomass and the marine ecosystem. Recent assessment by the FAO indicated that water pollution has led to distortion of ecological balance, environmental degradation and depletion of fishery resources¹³. The limited marine pollution control capability has contributed to the noticeable increase of the menace.

EXISTING MEASURES FOR COMBATING THE THREATS TO MARITIME RESOURCES PROTECTION IN NIGERIA

The current approach to the security of Nigeria's maritime resources is a multi-agency approach involving the Armed Forces (NN, NA and NAF) and other supporting agencies.

12. Interview with Obadina, S.O, on 16 April 2012 at NNS DELTA, Warri, Nigeria.

13. Barkindo, M.S., Op cit. p.7.

NIGERIAN NAVY

The NN is principally charged with the Maritime Defence of Nigeria by sea¹⁴. The NN conducts sea, air and land patrols by utilizing a mix of platforms, sensors and the physical presence of armed security personnel to sustain adequate deterrent posture and presence within the maritime environment. The NN fleet of ships includes Frigates, Covettes, Fast Attack Crafts, Mine Sweepers, Landing Ship Tanks, Survey Ship, River Town Class, Buoy Tenders, several boats/ interceptors and helicopters in the 3 Operational Commands. The NN Trident Strategy conceptualized the Navy's maritime mission as defence-in-depth within three overlapping perimeters¹⁵. Level One, the highest priority, is coastal defence and inshore operations involving surveillance, early warning, anti-smuggling and piracy operations; protecting offshore oil installations; search and rescue; and policing Nigeria's waters out to 100nm. Level two encompasses the maintenance of credible naval presence in the EEZ for monitoring, policing, and sea control; and for coordinating regional efforts, such as prevention of poaching, dumping of hazardous materials or toxic waste, and marine research up to 200nm. Level three, the outer ring, involves surveillance, intelligence-gathering, training and flag-showing cruises; independent and joint exercises; and allied operations. The patrols in this environment involve the protection of critical nodes and offshore maritime resources and activities. In view of emerging security challenges which are far removed from NN traditional areas of expertise, the NN has developed a special force known as the NN Special Boat Service (NNSBS) for maritime terrorism. Also, the NN has acquired and installed Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) sensors under the Regional Maritime Awareness Capability (RMAC) Project. This facility which comprises AIS, radar and camera sensors, has effectively assisted the Nigerian Navy in the remote monitoring of coastal shipping movements and activities.

The operational effectiveness of the NN is inherently linked to the level of synergy with both the sister Armed Services, inter-navy co-operation and MoU with the other relevant national maritime agencies. These cordial relationships is being maintained and sustained by the NN.

The NN is adequately organized to carry out its role in securing Nigeria's maritime resources. However, it is obvious that the present degraded platforms holding of the NN cannot adequately meet the emerging threats for the effective maritime defence of Nigeria's maritime domain.

14. *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. p.12.*

15. *NN Standing Operating Procedure Manual*

NIGERIAN AIR FORCE

The NAF Air Maritime Group (81 AMG) is tasked with air maritime operations in conjunction with the NN and other maritime agencies for surveillance, search and rescue and other combat air support operations¹⁶. The unit has ATR – 42 MPA for maritime patrol. In its surveillance role, the ATR– 42 can fly for patrol well beyond the Nigerian EEZ. The Automatic Identification System (AIS) and the Elect Optical Surveillance and Tracking System (EOST) of the aircraft can detect and track any target within 200nm radius of its position. Identified and acquired information's are relayed live to the Air Maritime Coordinating Centre (AMCC) and are shared with other agencies for informed actions. The NAF is poised to work in synergy with the other maritime agencies within an established integrated framework to protect Nigeria's maritime assets and guarantee Nigeria's national security.

NIGERIAN ARMY

The 82 Division of the Nigerian Army (NA) is a composite division charged with the responsibilities of providing static security for oil installations and terminal in the Niger Delta area¹⁷. The units are equipped with few small size craft and patrol boats to support their operations. The activities of these units have been co-opted into the duties of the Joint Task Force (JTF)- OP PULO SHIELD with an expanded role. The main role of the JTF is to secure the water ways and curtail the spate of militancy, illegal oil bunkering, armed attack, vandalism of pipe lines and other criminal acts in the Niger Delta region. The JTF comprises of personnel drawn from the 3 services, state security service and civil defence corps with the NA as majority/ lead agency. The maritime and air assets of the organic bases of the NN and NAF support the activities of the JTF . OP PULO SHIELD is still in its formative stage and inter-agency engagements with other maritime agencies are yet to be properly enshrined for cooperation. The activity of the JTF are still confined to the creeks, river entrances and anchorages and still rely on the NN and NAF to project capabilities to the sea for the protection of Nigeria's maritime resources.

16. Iya,A.A.,2011, Brief on Operational Readiness of the Nigerian Air Force. Lecture delivered to Senior Course 34 , Armed Forces Command and Staff College, Nigeria, 12 March, p.4.

17. Ochoga,J.A.O.,2011. Brief for the Chief of Army Staff on the Activities of OP-PULO SHIELD, Yenegoa: Nigeria on 7March, p.3.

OTHER AGENCIES

The Fisheries Department of the Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for the regulation of fishery activities and oceanographic research in the country. The department collaborates with other relevant agencies in the enforcement of fisheries laws in order to prevent illegal fishing and over exploitation within the restricted and prohibited zones. The agency is poorly equipped and lack boats, craft and adequate vessels to perform the task¹⁸.

The Nigeria Ports Authority (NPA) is vested with statutory power under the Port acts of 1954 and 1999 to operate and regulate ports facilities and activities in Nigeria. She is expected to comply with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and ensure compliance with the Safety of Lives at Sea (SOLAS) and International Ship and Port Facility Safety (ISPS) code. The marine police (NPF) and Nigerian Custom Service (NCS) marine section are equipped with few boats to enforce security against economic crimes within the inland waters, terminals and ports in support of the NPA. The NPA is fairly equipped with boats, craft, tugboats and few vessels across the various ports in Nigeria for its task¹⁹.

NIMASA is responsible for regulating Nigerian shipping, maritime safety administration, maritime labour, allocate export cargoes and implementation of cabotage, registration of ships and sea farers²⁰. NIMASA is equipped with few vessels and helicopters. The platforms holdings are inadequate given the expanded roles of the agency. The agency has MDA initiative tagged "Maritime Electronic Highway" comprise of a synergy of Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) and Automatic Identification System (AIS). NIMASA has MoU supported by 4 pillars activity lines on response, training, information sharing and hydrography with other agencies. A jointly manned Maritime Guard Command (MGC) between the NN and NIMASA has been established to aid the law enforcement roles of NIMASA²¹.

The Presidential Implementation Committee on Maritime Safety and Security (PICOMMS), an ad-hoc committee was primarily established in 2004 to ensure that Nigeria meet with the internationally mandated implementation of the ISPS) code²². PICOMSS has Integrated Coastal Maritime Radar Surveillance System (COMARASS) project to facilitate MDA within Nigeria's coastal areas. The

18. Solarin,B.,2012, Director Fishery Department, Nigerian Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research, Lagos, Nigeria, Interview granted Researcher on 16 April.

19. Adewusi,A.B.,2012. Operations Manager, Container Terminal , Nigerian Ports Authority, Apapa, Lagos, Nigeria, Interview granted Researcher on 16 April.

20. Nimasa. Available at <http://nimasa.gov.ng>. [Accessed 25 May 2012]

21. Akpobolokemi,Z.P., Op. cit.p3.

22. http://www.nigeriafirst.org/objspeeches/2004/maritime_safety.html. [Accessed 25 May2012]

outfit also operates MPA aircraft and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) that can be launched for real time data compilation and link for patrol of Nigeria's coastal areas.

CHALLENGES AGAINST THE EXISTING MEASURES AT PROTECTING NIGERIA'S MARITIME RESOURCES AND STRATEGIES FOR EFFICIENCIES

CHALLENGES

The key challenges that are common to all the agencies are:

Platforms Inadequacy. The lack of adequate platforms for effective patrol and monitoring of the Nigeria's maritime domain is a common challenge amongst all the agencies saddled with the protection of the maritime resources. Adequacy refers to increase in number and ideal platforms type (appropriateness and correct mix) for a given maritime task. The numbers, balanced and correct mix of ships, aircraft, coastal radars, equipment, UAVs amongst others for the Armed Forces and other agencies are grossly insufficient to jointly secure the large expanse of Nigeria's waters.

Inadequate Funding. Funding for the Armed Forces and the other agencies has been a challenge to the establishment of appropriate structure for the maritime security of Nigeria. The Federal Government spends 0.9% of the GDP on defence. This is well below the United Nations recommendation of 3%. As shown in Table 1, on defence expenditure as a percentage of the GDP there has been a decline in Nigeria's expenditure for defence and quite low when compared with some major developing countries like Brazil, India, Egypt and South Africa.

Table 1: Defence Expenditure as Percentage of Gross Domestic Product				
Serial No	Country	Year 2004	Year 2005	Year 2006
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
1.	Brazil	1.5	1.6	1.6
2.	India	2.6	2.8	2.9
3.	Egypt	3.0	2.8	2.9
4.	South Africa	1.5	1.5	1.5
5.	Nigeria	0.8	0.7	0.7
Source: Nigerian Naval Headquarters.				

There is no agency that can embark on new platform acquisition without special funding from the government. The underlining fact in the prevailing situation is that the current practice of annual budget appropriation is not sufficient to meet platforms acquisition requirements.

Inadequate MDA Infrastructure. Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) is the effective understanding of anything associated with the global maritime domain that could impact on the security, safety, economy or environment of a country. This is attainable through coastal defence radars and surveillance systems which are almost absent along the 420nm coastline of Nigeria. Overview of the few that exist include the followings; PICOMSS has Integrated Coastal Maritime Radar Surveillance System (COMARASS), the NIMASA MDA initiative tagged “Maritime Electronic Highway” and the NN MDA facility RMAC located in Lagos, Badagry, Bonny and Ibaka. Currently, besides these efforts, the nation practically lacks adequate MDA capacity to cover the coastline. This observation therefore calls for provisions of more MDA infrastructure and a better coordinated approach for national MDA architecture.

Limited Inter-Agency Cooperation. There exist near absence or at best limited inter-agency engagement and cooperation in the maritime sector. The duplication and assignment of agencies statutory roles backed with appropriate legislation to Committees and Task Forces by subsequent Government has continued to breed mistrust, animosity and inter-agency rivalry. For instance, NPA Act 1954 empowers the agency to monitor maritime environment while MARPOL73/78 empowers NIMASA to do the same task. PICOMMS is agitating to take over the duties of the NN and NIMASA with the MASECA bill if enacted without organic platforms in place. OP PULO SHIELD has virtually arrogated powers to itself and almost wanting all the organic NN and NAF asset ceded to its operations in the Niger Delta. This unhealthy conflict often results in hoarding of timely information sharing in the protection of Nigeria's maritime resources. The agencies operate independently and only interact when compelled by circumstances and their interaction lacks genuine trust and continuity. Appropriate policy guidelines and coordination infrastructure could be enshrined for cooperation with other agency.

Lack of Institutional Policy Framework and Doctrinal Capacity. There is absence of institutional policy framework and doctrinal capacity for coordinating activities in Nigeria's maritime domain. Although there are several maritime agencies, each does so independently under their various institutional organs. For instance, fisheries control is under the Federal Ministry of Agriculture; NIMASA is under the Ministry of Transport while the Armed Forces is under the Ministry

of Defence. There is no central body to coordinate all maritime stakeholders for better effectiveness. In addition, there is no policy and emplacement of appropriate common procedures, particularly on joint operations, training and information sharing to address the efficient management of the environment. There are no established Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs) on maritime policing operations. Where there are guidelines for individual agency, there is no unified doctrinal document that contains all existing policies on activities in Nigeria's maritime environment. Hence, there is no clear procedure for coordination. This inadequate institutional and policy framework adversely impacts effective protection of Nigeria's maritime resources and needs proper attention.

STRATEGIES

There is need for synergy in coordinating the activities of the several agencies for effective policing into a common security framework. To this end, an integrated approach for security of Nigeria's maritime resources in which the NN plays the lead agency role is hereby proposed to ensure cost effectiveness, joint usage of resources, sharing of information and burden as follows:

Establishment of an Integrated Maritime Security Command

The lack of unified synergy and defining a key agency to be held responsible for the success or failure in the protection of the maritime resources has continued to create room for lapses amongst the agencies saddled with the task. For instance, the Royal Norwegian Navy has command specifically dedicated to the protection of strategic installations within her territorial waters. Similarly, the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) empowers a section of its naval force known as the Patrol Boat Force to carry out the policing of her maritime environment. Nigeria could adopt the model, whereby an organ specifically the newly established Central Naval Command (CNC) of the NN under the proposed integrated approach could function as an Integrated Maritime Security Command (IMSC) dedicated for maritime resources protection with appropriate assets.

Platforms Recapitalisation

The AFN and the other maritime agencies must be capable of sustaining continuous patrol by sea and air over the EEZ and along the coast and adjoining waters. This capability requires the provision of adequate ideal and appropriate mix of platforms and infrastructure for the agencies by Government. The asset recapitalisation would include a combination of Inshore Patrol Craft

(IPCs), Seaward Defence Boats (SDBs), Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs), Fast Attack Craft (FAC), Speed boats, Tug boats, Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPAs) and helicopters. This would provide a long – term solution as having a virile and strong integrated maritime force with effective deterrence posture for the protection of Nigeria's maritime resources.

Establishment of National Maritime Security Trust Fund

The enormous funds generated from the maritime sector demands that adequate provision of funds be made available to protect and secure the resources. It has become apparent that budgetary allocation alone would not meet the needs of security agencies in the protection of the maritime environment. There is the need for the establishment of a National Maritime Security Trust Fund (NMSTF) for sustainable process of equipping and funding of the maritime safety and security activities in Nigeria. The relevant stakeholders could consider adopting a collaborative funding through contributions derived from 0.5% of the agencies annual appropriation, 1%-1.5% contributions from the major stakeholders involved in exploration and exploitation annual net profits as well as levies on commercial activities in the maritime environment. To this end, a legislation to establish the NMSTF and the modality for the contributions and execution would be appropriate. The fund could be used mainly to implement approved platforms acquisition and capacity building programmes for the agencies. The mechanism could be jointly managed by an inter-agency committee under the Presidency.

Development of National MDA Cooperation Plan

The Maritime Operations Coordinating Board Act CAP. M4 of 1992 No. 74, which was established to formulate policies for the effective control of all maritime operations in Nigeria's waters could be leveraged upon to develop a National MDA Cooperation Capacity Development Plan for Nigeria. The existing networks of the various agencies MDA efforts could be integrated into a common harmonised and interfaced sensor system for the maritime domain. The COMARASS of PICOMSS, Maritime Electronic Highway of the NIMASA and RMAC project of the NN could be merged and expanded to develop a unified National MDA plan to conserve resources and ensure a common effective capability. The developed National MDA Plan could also be interfaced with the Total Radar Coverage of Nigeria (TRACON) project to give a total air picture of Nigeria for both civil and military uses.

Development of Adequate Institutional Policy Framework and Cooperative Engagement

It is imperative that Nigeria articulates all her policies on various aspects of maritime operations covering economic, political, military and scientific activities into a single unified doctrinal policy document. Joint training programmes on maritime policing, SOPs and other cooperative engagement frame work well spelt out for guidance. This would enable all stakeholders operate from a common framework for mutual cooperation and interest in the security of the domain devoid of rivalry. Establishing an integrated maritime operations coordination network including communication, information generation and distribution network is therefore necessary. Towards achieving this, it is suggested that inter-agency Maritime Operations Coordination Centre (MOCC) could be initiated and established at Lagos, Warri, Port-Harcourt, and Calabar to support the proposed Integrated Maritime Security Command (IMSC) operations.

Political Commitment

Finally, strong political will and national ownership are vital parts of an effective strategy. Government and the leaders of the various agencies must demonstrate an unwavering commitment to ensure the comprehensive implementation of the strategies. An unwavering political will (which is central to any successful strategy) is therefore required for the success of the proposed strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the FGN should:

- a. Designate the CNC as an Integrated Maritime Security Command.
- b. Embark on platforms recapitalisation.
- c. Establish a National Maritime Security Trust Fund.
- d. Develop a common National MDA Cooperation Plan.
- e. Develop an adequate Maritime Policy Framework.
- f. Demonstrate political commitment.

CONCLUSION

The sea is a common heritage to mankind and embedded therein lies huge resources for exploration and exploitation for survival of littoral states. Nigeria is a littoral state with total sea room of about 84,000sqnm. The maritime environment is endowed with abundant deposit of living and non- living resources such as aquatic marine lives, oil and gas, minerals amongst others. The maritime resources constitute the main revenue base for the development and well being of the country. The geo- strategic importance is appreciated as a huge maritime estate and gateway for trade (shipping) and source of oil and gas producer and exporter for the world economy. The oil and gas account for about 70% of the total GDP, 90% foreign exchange earnings and 80% of total revenue.

The maritime resources are undermined in diverse ways by external and internal threats. The domestic threats include illegal bunkering/crude oil theft, smuggling, poaching and piracy amongst others. These formidable threats have continued to impact negatively on the economy and have led to loss of revenue, unemployment and depletion of marine resources. Thus, the over- riding goal is to develop, protect, sustain and secure the entire maritime environment safe for viable economic activities to thrive. The regulatory legal regime for appropriate defence and protection of the maritime resources is enshrined in the Constitution of Nigeria and Armed Forces Cap A20 Laws of the Federation. The responsibility lies with the AFN and the other supporting maritime stakeholders with the NN as lead agency.

The study assessed the AFN and the other maritime agency efforts and capability in the protection of maritime resources. The parameters used for the assessment included adequacies of structure, instruments for inter-agency cooperation and availability of platforms for surveillance and enforcement. The survey reveals that Nigeria is rich in living and non- living resources. The environment is characterised with rising threats profile, series of nefarious and unabated illegal activities, abused exploration and exploitation and unattended security gaps which calls for concerns. Consequently, there is the need to forge a robust mechanism in fighting the scourge.

The assessment of the current security capability to protect the maritime resources established that the AFN and the other agencies are adequately organised to perform their roles. However, their approach and delivery effectiveness is adjudged low and inadequate to curb the menace. This was found to be due to contemporary challenges identified mainly as inadequate platforms, limited inter-agency cooperation, inadequate funding, lack of common MDA capabilities, lack of joint maritime security frame work and limited political will. To mitigate these

challenges, the strategies proffered include the establishment of an Integrated Maritime Security Command, platforms recapitalisation and establishment of National Maritime Security Trust Fund to pull resources and efforts together into a common pool for cost effectiveness and synergy. Others are the merging of the MDAs efforts and task to develop a common National MDA Cooperation Plan for picture compilation and information sharing, development of adequate Joint Maritime Policy Framework/ Cooperative engagement for unified actions and demonstrable political commitment to enforcement.

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Author

Captain Williams Onovuhe Kayoda is a Course Member of NDC 2012. He was born on 10 Feb 1966 in Kokori, Delta State, Nigeria. The Senior Officer was a member of 36 Regular Course, Nigerian Defence Academy and graduated in 1988. He had served in various professional capacity, both ashore and afloat.

His working experiences amongst others include, Watchkeeping duties onboard several NN ships, Navigating Officer; NNS AYAM, NSS EKPE and NNS EKUN, Commanding Officer NNS MAKURDI, Staff Officer grade 1 Training (AFRC) and Command Administrative Officer WNC. He was also the First Lieutenant NNS PATHFINDER, Senior Instructor NDA (Naval Wing) and Opposing Force Commander, AFSC, Jaji. Furthermore, he was the Deputy Director Plans and the Deputy Director Training at the Naval Headquarters.

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Capt Kayoda is happily married with 4 children, a boy and 3 girls. His hobbies include travelling, reading, Playing football and listening to gospel music.