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DANISH MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

PRIORITY PAPER FOR THE DANISH EFFORTS TO COMBAT PIRACY AND OTHER TYPES OF MARITIME CRIME 2019-2022



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1. INTRODUCTION

As a nation with strong seafaring traditions, the maritime sector is one of Denmark's largest export industries and holds a key position as a value creator and growth engine to the Danish economy and society.

The nature of shipping is inherently global, and Denmark therefore has a strong interest in an open, free and secure maritime domain. Denmark's strong position in global shipping also means that the lack of maritime security in some regions, resulting in piracy and other types of maritime crime, is a serious threat to both Danish seafarers, shipowners and to Danish interests more generally. Moreover, piracy and other types of maritime crime such as arms trafficking, drug smuggling and illegal fishing often arise from and contribute to regional instability, thereby aggravating the situation for those living in the affected areas, the Blue Economies of states in the region, as well as those sailing the seas around them.

As a nation highly dependent on global maritime trade, Denmark has a significant interest in protecting freedom of navigation and supporting maritime security. Denmark also has a special responsibility to protect Danish-controlled ships and their seafarers. For these reasons, Denmark will continue to contribute to the international efforts in combating piracy and other types of maritime crime.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

International efforts to combat piracy have contributed to significant drops in the number of global piracy and maritime crime incidents. For the year 2017, the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), a specialised division of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), reported 180 incidents worldwide, marking a lower level than any single year going back two decades.

Despite significant improvements, piracy and maritime crime continue to pose serious challenges to the security of seafarers around the world. While maritime security has improved considerably in some regions, other areas continue to cause large problems to seafarers, shipowners and societies.

The Gulf of Guinea has seen a high number of violent incidents, with almost 40% of all globally reported pirate attacks now occurring in this region. The level of pirate activity remains high, and the region still suffers from sporadic spikes in attacks when conditions at land and sea are opportune.

At the Horn of Africa, piracy and armed robbery at sea has declined significantly since its peak in 2011. However, conditions that previously nurtured piracy stemming from Somalia remain, and the region still experiences periodic attacks. Safe and secure navigation in the waters surrounding the Horn of Af-

Piracy can be defined as any illegal act of violence, detention or depredation committed for private ends at high seas against another ship or aircraft.

Maritime crime may include armed robbery at sea, trafficking of humans or smuggling of illicit goods, drugs and weapons, illegal fishing, fuel theft and more.



DANISH SHIPPING IN NUMBERS

- Denmark is a prominent maritime nation and is present all around the world – including at main shipping routes in Asia and Africa.
- The Danish maritime sector is the world's 6th largest by operated tonnage – surpassing 60 million gross tonnage (August 2018).
- *Danish Shipping* estimates that more than 90% of transports made by Danish shipping companies involve foreign ports.
- At any given time, an estimated 70 ships controlled by Danish companies are present in the waters off the coast of Somalia. In the Gulf of Guinea, this number is estimated to be more than 30. Among other things, the importance of the maritime sector has been underpinned by the Danish Government's *Plan for Growth in the Danish Maritime Sector* (January 2018).

rica is important for Denmark considering the magnitude of international trade that goes through the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea.

OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE PRIORITY PAPER

The purpose of this paper is to outline Denmark's strategic priorities for countering piracy and other types of maritime crime from 2019-2022. It replaces previous strategies, including the *Strategy for the Danish Measures against Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea 2015-2018* and the *Strategy for the Danish Counter-Piracy Effort 2011-2014*.

Among the types of maritime crime that pose a particular threat to Danish and international shipping, piracy and armed robbery at sea are considered the most severe. As a result, the focus of this paper will be on Denmark's efforts to combat piracy, armed robbery at sea and related maritime crimes. However, the paper acknowledges that piracy is intricately linked to other types of maritime crime as well as social and economic issues in the affected states. The paper will not cover all dimensions of piracy and other types of maritime crime, nor will it serve to lay out the complete array of engagements that Denmark has been and is committed to.

Due to the large Danish presence and interests in both the Gulf of Guinea and the Horn of Africa, these regions are likely to remain at the centre of Denmark's attention for the period covered in this priority paper. However, piracy and other types of maritime crime are not limited to these regions. Southeast Asia, linking the sea routes between large parts of Asia and Europe, still faces challenges in terms of the number of incidents. As the largest shipping export region outside Europe, Asia constitutes a maritime interest for Denmark. For this reason, Denmark has been a party to the *Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against ships in Asia* (ReCAAP) since 2010, and Denmark will continue to prioritize the engagement in ReCAAP.

The main victims of piracy and maritime crime are the seafarers. Therefore, Danish authorities will continue to safeguard the rights of seafarers on board Danish ships both during a possible piracy event and after release, in close cooperation with relevant interest groups and businesses.

2. STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

The overall objective of Denmark's efforts to combat piracy and maritime crime is to reduce the threat stemming from these issues in order to protect Danish interests and seafarers as well as international shipping. Various Danish private and public initiatives are employed to meet this objective. At the same time, it is acknowledged that there is a need to tackle the root causes of piracy and maritime crime.

This requires a comprehensive approach that not only engages with problems at sea, but also addresses root causes on land. These issues may include conflict, terrorism, instability, organised crime (e.g. arms smuggling and drug trafficking), weak state structures, unemployment and poverty. Addressing the root causes on land calls for the ability to provide corresponding and flexible countermeasures that match the complex and dynamic nature of maritime crime. Efforts to deter maritime crime should thus target the full maritime crime complex from sea to shore to land. This requires broadly-based and integrated stabilisation and development efforts, which must be implemented in parallel with other initiatives described in this strategy.

In working towards the overall goal, Denmark makes use of a broad range of tools, both military and civilian, in a concerted and integrated way.

On the military side, Denmark's toolbox consists of the deployment of military contributions, which partly have a preventive effect and provide the opportunity to stop and apprehend pirates, and partly a capacity-building effect providing educational support to governmental authorities and structures. Given the nature of piracy and affiliated criminal activities, options involving military responses may range from being preventive and/or defensive to being offensive in nature. Preventive activities may include capacity-building and mentoring tasks, and the possible capabilities conducting these tasks may vary from single military staff officers to a larger troop contingent. As an example, Danish Special Operations Forces have contributed to capacity-building in the framework of *African Partnership Station* programmes in the Gulf of Guinea. Military capabilities for other military response options could likely be maritime or airborne assets such as surface ships and/or surveillance aircraft.

On the civilian side, one part of the Danish effort consists of establishing the necessary frameworks for prosecution of pirates. In addition, Denmark's efforts in the Gulf of Guinea and the Horn of Africa are focused on building local and regional capacities both at sea and on land, so that the affected countries are better equipped to handle and prevent piracy and maritime crime on their own. Finally, it is crucial to acknowledge that an effective Danish effort requires local, regional and international engagements, as well as a whole-of-government approach. Therefore, well-coordinated international cooperation is required to handle the transnational threat of piracy.

The overall objective of Denmark's efforts to combat piracy and maritime crime is to reduce the threat stemming from these issues in order to protect Danish interests and seafarers as well as international shipping.



In other words, Denmark draws on a broad range of tools – both military, civilian, judicial, political and financial. The strategic considerations behind the Danish efforts to combat piracy and maritime crime can be summed up as follows:

Denmark's objectives in combatting piracy and maritime crime are:

- Protecting free navigation and strengthening maritime security,
- Protecting Danish interests, Danish-controlled ships, international shipping and seafarers
- Reducing the risks and threat level of piracy and maritime crime, with a particular focus on the Gulf of Guinea and the Horn of Africa.

Denmark's measures to combat piracy and maritime crime include:

- Building local and regional capacities to better tackle piracy and maritime crime
- Promoting international and regional cooperation on combating piracy and maritime crime
- Utilising a broad range of tools in a concerted way – both military, civilian, judicial, political and financial.

In the sections below, these measures are explained in the particular contexts of the Danish efforts in the Gulf of Guinea and the Horn of Africa.

3. GULF OF GUINEA

The Gulf of Guinea, in particular inside and around Nigerian waters, is one of the international waters affected the hardest by piracy and armed robbery at sea. In addition, other forms of maritime crime such as the trafficking of drugs, weapons and people as well as illegal fishing and fuel theft pose significant threats to the region's stability and the livelihood of its citizens.

Promoting free trade and sustainable growth, and assisting in diminishing the economic and social impact of maritime crime in the Gulf of Guinea region, is an important priority for Denmark.

In the first half of 2018, over 40% of all reported pirate attacks in the world occurred in the Gulf of Guinea, with attacks in Nigerian waters amounting to 29% of the global total (although it should be noted that the number of attacks in the region may be even higher due to underreporting of incidents, according to the IMB). About 5 percent of Danish shipping's exports – at an approximate annual value of DKK 9.5 billion– goes to West Africa, with Nigeria, Ghana, and the Ivory Coast as the main markets. Denmark also has significant investments in several ports in the region, including Lagos in Nigeria, Tema in Ghana, and Abidjan in Ivory Coast. There is also a growing Danish footprint in the region's offshore sector. These figures underline the need for Denmark to be concerned with maritime security in the region.

'Kidnap for ransom'-attacks are still the main type of incidents occurring in the region, adversely affecting seafarers and other users of the maritime domain. The registered number of kidnappings of seafarers has increased in recent years, although the exact number of violent incidents and attempted attacks is unknown due to a lack of reliable statistics and underreporting - but it is likely to be higher than official counts. A key development has been a concentration of violent incidents around Nigeria, where 70 percent of the reported actual and attempted attacks took place in 2017.

In the first part of 2018, a number of violent and organised attacks also occurred in the territorial waters of neighbouring countries, including Benin and Ghana. Some of these recent attacks have reportedly been sophisticated and transnational with origin in one country, crossing the waters of other countries before hijacking a ship with the purpose of stealing the cargo and/or securing a ransom for the crew, and returning to the point of departure. Such a development is alarming and could mark the beginning of an even more serious threat against the shipping industry and for seafarers in the Gulf of Guinea.

The Gulf of Guinea spans several thousand kilometres of coastline from Liberia in the north to Gabon in the south and is a key economic resource for the region's coastal countries. The vast majority of the region's international trade

MARITIME DOMAIN AWARENESS (MDA)

Maritime Domain Awareness or MDA is defined by the *International Maritime Organization* as the effective understanding of anything associated with the maritime domain that could impact the security, safety, economy, or environment. MDA involves the potential for early identification of any threat at sea, which is important for a state's ability to take action proactively. Consequently, MDA plays an important role in combatting piracy and armed robbery at sea, and Denmark therefore supports efforts to enhance MDA in piracy-affected areas.

Promoting free trade and sustainable growth, and assisting in diminishing the economic and social impact of maritime crime in the Gulf of Guinea region, is an important priority for Denmark.

is moving by sea, while the offshore oil sector holds an estimated 4.5 percent of the world's total reserves, and fishery provides the livelihood for millions of people in coastal regions. Safe and secure navigation in and out of the region is critical in the efforts to bring growth and employment to the citizens and communities of the region. Failure to handle the challenges could lead to increased instability as well as irregular migration from the region.



To a large extent, increased Danish trade to the region depends upon a secure and cost-effective maritime supply chain. Maritime security in the region must therefore be strengthened by improving regional coordination, building national and regional governance capabilities and implementing strategies to enhance the sustainable protection and utilisation of the region's blue economy. Denmark will contribute to strengthening regional capabilities and capacities in the short and medium term through support of *Maritime Domain Awareness* (MDA) and response as well as a longer-term institutional strengthening of maritime governance and law enforcement. Denmark furthermore supports local authorities in building naval capacities to prevent and deter pirates and to ensure that piracy and other maritime criminal acts are met with sufficient punitive responses.

Danish priorities in the Gulf of Guinea will be to strengthen regional maritime security through:

- Strengthening maritime governance in Nigeria and Ghana, including by assisting these countries in improving their legal framework and their ability to investigate and prosecute maritime crime
- Promoting regional cooperation and coordination that is essential for an effective response to reduce adverse effects from maritime threats in the region, including by retaining combating of piracy and other types of maritime crime on the agenda of the organisations and countries in the Gulf of Guinea
- Strengthening the ability of national and regional authorities to monitor the maritime domain and respond to emerging threats.

Strategic instruments that will underpin the comprehensive approach include:

- *A new Peace and Stabilisation Programme for the Gulf of Guinea 2019-2021.* Denmark will contribute to improving regional maritime governance, strengthening regional cooperation and coordination and enhancing capacities of national and regional naval authorities through training and capacity-building programmes. Denmark will be concentrating its efforts on Nigeria and Ghana as well as regional institutions and organisations.
- *An active Danish role in international cooperation.* Denmark will work actively with international partners and in international organisations to address the threats to maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, including in the EU, in the G7++ Friends of Gulf of Guinea forum, the IMO and UNODC and in dialogue with regional organisations such as ECOWAS and ICC.
- *A whole-of-Government approach to maritime security in the region.* Denmark has extended to 2021 the postings of a Maritime Growth Counsellor in

DENMARK IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

Denmark has been actively engaged in strengthening maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea since 2016 through capacity-building of Nigerian and Cameroonian maritime forces to enhance their ability to carry out maritime interventions safely and effectively; through port security improvement in four major West African ports; and through support to the operationalisation of the regional maritime security architecture. The latter includes capacity-building of *Maritime Operation Centres* in a number of West African countries as well as national and multinational interagency crises response exercises.



Accra, Ghana, and a Maritime Military Advisor in Abuja, Nigeria, and will continue the close dialogue and cooperation with the maritime administration in the two countries and relevant knowledge institutions.

- *A flexible and risk-tolerant military approach* to address developments in piracy and maritime crime and to build up strong maritime security capacities in the region. This will ensure that countries in the region are better equipped to handle the challenges of piracy and other types of maritime crime in the long term. Danish efforts will be carried out in close coordination with likeminded countries as well as national and regional authorities. This includes but is not limited to contributing to training and support to naval and coast guard entities to better respond to emerging threats and trends in the region. The overall aim is to strengthen the operational capacity of Gulf of Guinea countries to monitor and mitigate threats in the maritime domain and contribute to enhanced maritime governance.

4. HORN OF AFRICA

Safe and secure navigation in the waters surrounding the Horn of Africa is important for Denmark considering the magnitude of international trade that goes through the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. At any given time, approx. 70 ships controlled by Danish companies are present in the waters off the coast of Somalia. As a result, for several years Denmark has applied a comprehensive and targeted counter-piracy effort in the region.

Since its peak in 2011, piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of the Horn of Africa has declined significantly. However, conditions that previously nurtured piracy emanating from Somalia remain, including poverty and lack of employment opportunities, lack of law enforcement, corruption, illegal and unregulated over-fishing, and organised criminal networks that take part in the smuggling of e.g. charcoal, drugs and arms. As a result, the region still experiences sporadic spikes in attacks against both local and international shipping when conditions at land and sea are opportune.

In parallel with addressing the root causes of piracy, it is important to ensure the continuous application of the security measures that led to the decline of pirate attacks. These measures include Best Management Practices (recognised procedures developed by the industry itself for the protection of shipping), the possibility to have armed guards on board ships, and the international naval and patrolling efforts in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden.

Since 2008, Denmark has actively participated in the international naval efforts to protect the shipping industry and combat piracy off the Horn of Africa. While NATO's successful naval *Operation Ocean Shield*, which Denmark had been heavily engaged in, ended in December 2016, EU's Naval Force ATALANTA and the Coalition under the American-led *Combined Maritime Forces*, the latter also supported by Denmark, (under which *Task Force 151* focuses on combating piracy and *Task Force 150* focuses on combating international terror and drug trafficking) have continued to operate.

An important lesson from Denmark's engagement has been that piracy and other types of maritime crime such as trafficking of humans and illicit goods, weapons and drugs form part of a broader complex of organised criminal networks both at sea and on land. In addition, the proliferation of small arms in the region contributes to piracy. The organisers behind piracy carefully evaluate potential gains against risks in the broader context of other criminal endeavours – and benefit from a fragile institutional context. Criminal networks previously engaged in piracy are now active in trafficking migrants and weapons between e.g. Yemen and Somalia. Another maritime crime cluster is the sugar and charcoal smuggling networks that constitute an important source of terrorism financing.

ADDRESSING ROOT CAUSES – A CASE EXAMPLE FROM THE HORN OF AFRICA

The Somalia Stability Fund's activities in Hobyo, which includes rehabilitation of the airstrip and district administration block, have given the local District Commissioner a platform through which to rally the Hobyo community behind his administration.

This has reduced support for a notorious pirate kingpin, who has since abandoned Hobyo, and boosted local livelihoods through direct access by air to the fish markets of Mogadishu. Denmark contributes to the Somalia Stability Fund.

At any given time, approx. 70 ships controlled by Danish companies are present in the waters off the coast of Somalia.

In addition, recent years' maritime security incidents related to the conflict in Yemen are of growing concern. The Yemen conflict potentially constitutes a new security threat both in terms of maritime terrorism as well as by being a potential bedrock for the origin of new piracy, and thus needs to be monitored closely. At the same time, the Horn of Africa is experiencing growing military presence through the establishment of naval bases in the region. This may deter piracy and, in some





The Danish approach to countering piracy in and around the Horn of Africa will remain comprehensive, multi-faceted and flexible depending on the actual trends and developments in maritime security.

aspects, contribute to increased maritime security, but in other aspects, the militarisation of the region by foreign powers may also constitute a potential risk to the regional security situation.

The Danish approach to countering piracy in and around the Horn of Africa will remain comprehensive, multi-faceted and flexible depending on the actual trends and developments in maritime security. First, Denmark will seek to maintain and strengthen specific local and regional capacities on maritime law enforcement, maritime domain awareness, and transnational organised crime as well as to monitor prison capacity to enable transfer of convicted pirates. Second, Denmark will promote a conducive institutional development in Somalia, including governance and rule of law, which is the basis for a durable solution to piracy. Third, Denmark will focus on broader efforts to address root causes of piracy such as initiatives aimed at improving the socio-economic situation and livelihoods of marginalized coastal communities. Fourth, Denmark will, if needed, consider the possibility of providing military support to international efforts to maintain secure waters in the region. Finally, Denmark will promote international coordination in combating piracy.

Strategic instruments that will underpin the comprehensive approach include:

- A four year, DKK 219 million *Peace and Stabilisation Programme for the Horn of Africa 2018-2022*. The financial support under the Programme will be reinforced by advisor and trainer support.
- The *Peace and Stabilisation Response's* deployment of advisors to the EU Capacity Building Mission for Somalia (EUCAP) to strengthen maritime security and establish links to Danish maritime training institutions.
- Engagements under the bilateral *Country Programme for Somalia* and the regional *Peace and Stabilisation Programme* to address root causes of piracy.
- Potential deployment of *military capacities* as needed in light of the developments in the threat from piracy and other types of maritime crime and the overall situation in the region. This includes contributions to the US-led Combined Maritime Forces, to which Denmark has contributed staff officers for several years. A broader military approach may also encompass the fight against international terrorism and organised crime such as trafficking of drugs and arms that causes instability in the region.
- Continued active participation in the *International Contact Group for Piracy off the Coast of Somalia* (CGPCS) and continued pressure to address piracy appropriately and maintain it on the agenda in other relevant international fora, including UN, EU, IMO and NATO.

5. STOCKTAKING

This paper outlines Denmark's strategic priorities for countering piracy and related maritime crime covering the years 2019 – 2022. During this period, the Danish authorities will, in consultation with relevant national stakeholders, including the private sector and relevant academics, regularly take stock of any major emerging trends and patterns of piracy and maritime crime globally. This aims to ensure that the concerted Danish efforts are continuously responding to the needs for protecting Danish interests and seafarers.

Finally, the Danish authorities will continuously work together to ensure efficient cooperation in handling any future incidents of piracy or related maritime crime involving Danish ships and seafarers.

For further information, please visit:

- [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark: Counter-Piracy](#)
- [Danish Ministry of Defence: Danish Contributions to Counter-Piracy missions](#)
- [Danish Maritime Authority: Piracy](#)
- [Danish Maritime Authority: New Plan for Growth in the Danish Maritime Sector](#)
- [Peace and Stabilisation Programme for the Horn of Africa 2018-2022](#)



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