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**MARITIME CRIMES AND PROSECUTIONS COURSE, KA IPTC  
REPORT**

**8TH TO 19TH FEBRUARY, 2021**

**KA IPTC, ACCRA – GHANA**

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## **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

The Gulf of Guinea (GoG) maritime domain holds significant wealth in terms of the huge deposits of hydrocarbons, minerals and varied species of marine and fisheries resources. The region's waters serve as a critical route for international commerce, and a shipping chokepoint. These vast potentials of wealth have also become a hotspot for criminal activities at sea. Consequently, the region is plagued with a litany of maritime crimes and threats such as piracy and armed robbery at sea, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing pollution and toxic waste dumping, human trafficking, and maritime terrorism among others. The inability of States in the region to adequately police their waters, apprehend criminals coupled with inadequate law enforcement capacity, under-developed legislation and limited policy implementation have resulted in weakened governance, corruption and contributed to political instability . As part of efforts to respond to maritime insecurity in the GoG, the United Nations (UN) passed two resolutions; Resolutions 2018 (2013) and 2039 (2014) to address various aspects of maritime criminality and call for concerted action to ensure stability in the maritime domain. At the continental level also, the African Unions' Maritime Strategy – (AIMS 2050) developed in 2012 provides a broad framework for the protection and sustainable exploitation of the African maritime domain for wealth creation. In an effort to further consolidate and harness the capacities and efforts of littoral States, the Yaoundé processes provide broad frameworks, principal among which is the 2013 Yaoundé Code of Conduct, as a strategy to combat maritime insecurity in the GoG. Notwithstanding the above, there has been limited progress in curbing maritime crimes in the GoG. As stated above, weak Sate capacity and law enforcement continues to be inimical to maritime security in the region.

Throughout the GoG and particularly in ECOWAS maritime Zones E and F, quite a number of evolving maritime criminal activities and threats are ongoing. A 2019 annual report of the Maritime Coordination Centre (MMCC) Zone F indicates that out of the 128 maritime incidents recorded, 85 occurred in Maritime Zone E and 14 in Zone F. Moreover, a shift in the modus operandi of the pirates have resulted in more kidnapping for ransom vis-a-vis attacks against tankers for petroleum products. Thus kidnapping of crew for ransom, violent armed robberies and suspicious approaches increased in 2019. Another report by the same MMCC indicates that of the 40 incidents recorded in the GoG between January and March, 2020, over 60% emanated from Zones E and D, with Nigeria being at the epicentre of reported incidents. The maritime domain of Nigeria which is in Zone E, for example, is the source of much piracy concerns as all maritime reports including those produced by the International Maritime

Organisation (IMO) calls on vessels, crew and cargo to be vigilant in those waters. A similar situation prevails in the waters of neighbouring Benin. Additionally, in Nigeria, artisanal refining of illegal crude oil has negatively affected the environment so much that huge tracts of lush mangrove swamps have become completely ruined and would require huge investments to restore. Furthermore, in Benin, the absence of laws on maritime crimes has resulted the non-prosecution of offenders. In Ghana and Liberia, IUU fishing continues to be an area of critical concern as foreign trawlers overfishing in the seas have direct impact on the livelihoods of fisher folks in the region. The weak compliance of the fisheries departments and enforcement of the fisheries laws on the part of states is another area of grave concern.

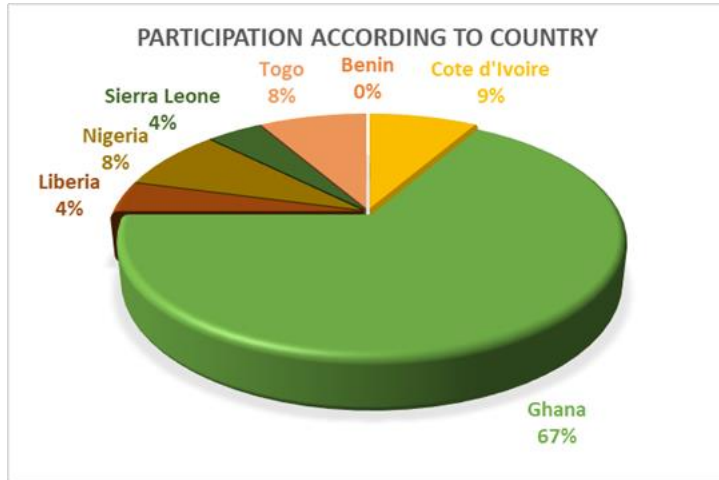
All these maritime crimes are ongoing and increasing at a rate not matched by the response capacities by the states. For instance, inspections, investigations and prosecutions are still in the nascent stages of development and most states do not have the required structures to deal with maritime crimes. In view of the afore-mentioned gaps and challenges, the KAIPTC in partnership with Government of Japan and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is implementing a one year project on '*Maritime Security Capacity Development for Safety and Security in the Gulf of Guinea*' to contribute to promoting the effective implementation of relevant regional and international maritime protocols through research and capacity development in order to control maritime crime, including piracy, in the Gulf of Guinea region by reducing vulnerabilities to maritime crimes thereby enabling communities dependent on marine resources unhindered access to their livelihoods. .

### **COURSE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The two-week course sought to develop the technical capacities of maritime crime control officials in countries within ECOWAS Maritime Zones E and F, to contribute to promoting effective implementation of relevant regional and international maritime protocols through research and capacity development in order to control maritime crime, including piracy, in the Gulf of Guinea. Further, it aimed at promoting intra and inter-agency cooperation and collaboration for managing maritime crime at the national and regional levels in the seven (7) targeted countries (Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Togo).

## SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

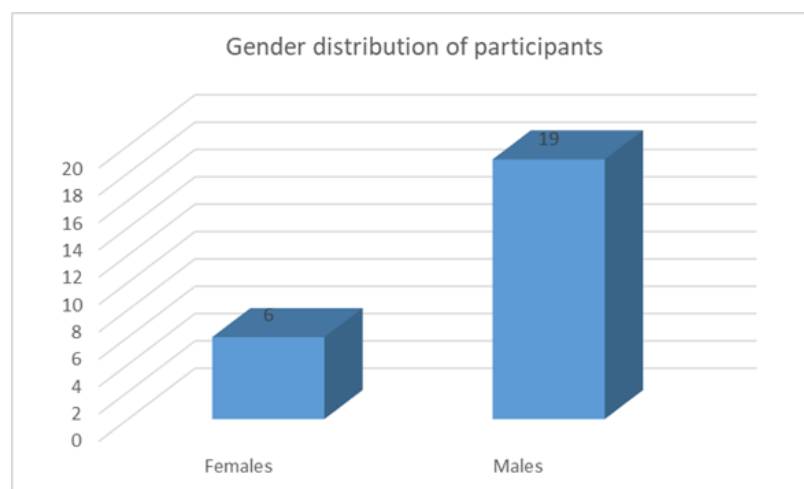
The course initially, targeted 30 operational level officers from the seven (7) selected countries in ECOWAS maritime zones E and F (Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Togo). However, this number had to be revised to 25 participants in accordance



with the KAIPTC's COVID-19 protocols to have a maximum of 25 participants per course.

Invitations were sent to various maritime administration institutions and related security institutions to nominate participants with special emphasis on considerations for gender-balanced nominations.

Participants were drawn from national navies, marine police, customs, immigration, fisheries commission and the Multinational Maritime Coordination Centre (MMCC) zone F. Overall, 25 participants from six (6) selected countries attended the course. Participants from Benin could not turn up at the last minute. However, nominees from the marine police division of the Ghana Police Service joined the course to make up the numbers. In terms of the gender distribution, 6 Females and 19 males were in attendance.



## OPENING CEREMONY AND PROJECT LAUNCH



1. From left: Dr. Angela Lusigi - Resident Representative, UNDP-Ghana, Mr. John Pokoo-Head of Conflict Management Programme, KAIPTC, Maj. Gen. Francis Ofori - Commandant, KAIPTC.

The official launch of the project was combined with the opening ceremony of the first course of the three capacity development courses outlined as per the project. Both the opening ceremony and the project launch took place in the conference room of the KAIPTC. In attendance were the

Commandant of the KAIPTC, Maj. Gen. Francis Ofori, the Resident Representative of UNDP – Ghana, Dr. Angela Lusigi, course participants, project staff from KAIPTC and UNDP and the media. In his welcome remarks, the Commandant of KAIPTC welcomed all participants and expressed his appreciation of their commitment towards promoting peace and security in the region by attending the training even in the face of current challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. He outlined the pervasiveness of maritime security threats across the region which illustrates the need for a holistic approach to maritime security response in the region. He also acknowledged and expressed appreciation to the Government of Japan and the UNDP for financial support and technical support respectively. Finally, he urged participants to actively contribute to the course proceedings to encourage experience sharing and also develop networks during the course of the training programme. Dr. Angela Lusigi of UNDP-Ghana in her address also enumerated the vast resource potentials of region and the prospects it holds to drive economic development in the region. However, the recent yet increasing spate of maritime insecurity threatens to derail the progress that have already been made towards inclusive, equitable and sustainable human development in the region. She however, expressed UNDP’s commitment to this initiative that seeks to advance human security and promote development. Finally, she joined the host, the KAIPTC to welcome all participants and also re-emphasized the UNDP’s longstanding partnership with the Government of Japan and the collaboration with the KAIPTC over the last 10 years which has resulted in stronger state security agencies and enhanced staff capacities towards continued peace and human security

in the West African region and hoped that this relationship will only grow stronger in the quest to contribute to the stability and peace in Africa.

Mr. John Pokoo, the project Coordinator and Head of the Conflict Management Programme in his remarks also reiterated that the collaborative partnership among the KAIPTC, UNPD and the Government of Japan is evolving and sustaining largely because of the flexible, collegial but professional approach that has guided the course of the partnership in the last 13 years. The partnership has relied on tool of projects to address security sector capacity gaps in West Africa. He explained that within the stated period, it has helped in enhancing the capacities of around 2,300 mid-career security sector practitioners in the 15 member states of ECOWAS and hopes that the partnership will continue to make impacts even in the face of changing situations across the region and even globally.

The project launch and opening ceremony ended with a group photograph and [media](#) briefings by the Resident Representative of UNDP-Ghana and the Project Coordinator, Mr. John Mark Pokoo.

## COURSE PROCEEDINGS

The ten-day course was developed and designed to offer participants theoretical, practical and useful field experience based on the KAIPTC's training and research experience and approach.

In this regard, the course set off with an overview of the maritime security situation in the Gulf of Guinea. This introductory module provided an understanding of the nature of maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea including: meaning of basic concept, nature of crimes and the impact of maritime crimes. This was followed by the Legal and Policy Frameworks on maritime crimes and the Regional Maritime Security Architecture for the Gulf of Guinea. Subsequent modules, expatiated the various maritime crimes including: maritime piracy, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, marine pollution, narcotics and drugs trafficking, human trafficking and migrant smuggling and money laundering. These modules expounded the nature of these maritime crimes, how they manifest in the region, their linkages to other crimes while highlighting their investigations and prosecutions, using cases studies,

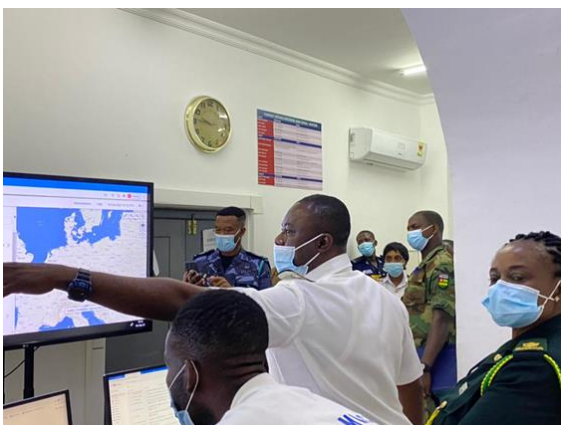
Below: Media reportage from the Project Launch





exercises, discussions and scenarios. The module on Inspections, Investigations and Prosecutions which is the crust of the course, discussed issues involved in the inspection, investigation and prosecution of maritime crimes and offenders in an effective and fair manner consistent with highest international standards of due processes. More specifically, this module draws on practical cases and experiences. Other modules touched on the importance of inter-agency collaboration and the role of non-state actors in promoting a safer and secure maritime domain. The final aspects of the course included a scenario-based exercise which threw a challenge to participants by presenting a case study which requires participants to solve the case in groups of five, using various aspects of the lectures and presentations to solve the problem. This is intended to help course participants put the lectures and presentations into practical knowledge.

In addition, a field trip was organised to the Multinational Maritime Coordination Centre (MMCC) zone F headquarters based at the Christianborg castle in Osu, The purpose of this visit was to help participants familiarize themselves with maritime operations and monitoring equipment of MMCC Zone F and also have a practical experience of the theoretical aspect of the course, particularly, the collaborative initiatives taken at the regional level in combating maritime insecurity in the region. During the study tour, the brief also emphasised the alarming rates of violent attacks on ships and vessels and how the operations systems are helping to monitor, the waters and send information to ships and crew. They also enumerated the challenges relating to the efficiency, compatibility and inter-operability of equipment and stressed the importance of networking and inter-agency collaborations as some of the more practical ways to working towards the threats that confronts maritime security in the region.



*Participants on a field visit to MMCC zone F Headquarters at the Christianborg Castle, Osu, Accra*

## **FACILITATORS**

The course brought together a total of thirteen (13) facilitators who comprised experts, practitioners and academics with expertise in maritime security and other related fields. They included six (6) internal staff from the KAIPTC and seven (7) external facilitators including two (2) female maritime lawyers from Nigeria, retired naval captains and a captain from the Ghana Navy who is also the immediate past director of training at the Inter-regional Coordinating Centre (ICC) based in Yaoundé. Overall, the course evaluation indicated that their interventions were generally satisfactory and well appreciated by the participants.

## **CLOSING CEREMONY**

The two weeks course on maritime crimes and prosecutions successfully ended on Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2021. The closing ceremony was presided over by the Deputy Commandant of the KAIPTC, Air Commodore George Arko-Dadzie , naval Captain Solomon Asideu-Larbi and Mr. John Pokoo the Head of Conflict Management Programme at the KAIPTC. In his closing speech, Air Commodore Arko-Dadzie congratulated participants for the successful completion of the course and urged participants to use the knowledge acquired to find innovative solutions in responding to challenges that confront them in their line of duty. He equally challenged them to continue to network and share ideas in the spirit of fostering collaborations to confront common challenges.

On behalf of all participants, a representative of the course participants expressed appreciation to the organisers of the training, the KAIPTC, UNDP and the Government of Japan for the support which has made it possible for them to be part of such a pertinent course where they have had the opportunity to acquire knowledge, new skills and also developed networks which will be useful for their future endeavours.

## **COURSE SUPPORT**

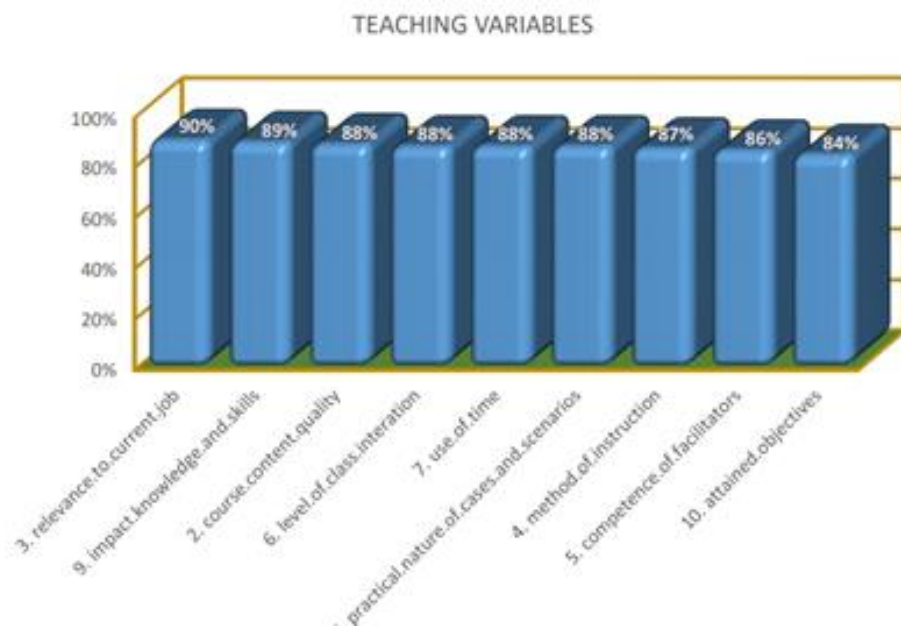
Generally, the course received the needed support from the various units at the KAIPTC. These included the project team, the training and evaluation department, course services and clerks units, MOVCON, catering, IT and the design and production unit. They all performed their expected duties, thus there were minimal hitches in the running of the course.



## EVALUATION

The comments gathered from participants indicated that the course was timely. The modules were relevant and were well delivered by the facilitators. The objectives of the course were also met as well as their expectations.

In the final analysis of the daily feedback, participants scored ‘relevance to current job’ and



*Participants' evaluation scores on teaching variables*

‘Impact knowledge and skills’ as very pertinent, rating them at 90% and 89% respectively. While, ‘attained objectives’ was rated at a variable of 84%. The field trips were also very educative and exciting. The information gathered complemented and confirmed most of the issues discussed in the class.

## CHALLENGES

While the course was generally successful. The following are some of the challenges which were identified in the roll-out of the training course:

**Gender Composition:** Even though the invitation letter specified the need for gender-balanced nominations, most countries male participants only. As indicated earlier, of the 25 participants only six (6) were female.

**COVID-19 pandemic and impact on International Participation:** Due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, the initial date scheduled for the course in November, 2020 had to be rescheduled at the very last minute in order to allow the KAIPTC put in place additional measures to ensure

safety and security of both personnel and course participants for in-person course. These affected the participation of some international participants who had been nominated earlier. This explains the low numbers of international participants. The COVID-19 pandemic equally impacted budget plans in terms of the global requirements for COVID tests for participants which had not been factored into initial budget costs for the course.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Nomination of female participants. To address the issue of gender balance, the invitation letters to some countries must specify the nomination of only female participants for the course.

In the face of changing safety situations occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to have ample time to prepare for courses of this nature, while building alternative scenarios in planning processes.

Overall the response and enthusiasm displayed by the participants indicates the high need of the course to be run in West Africa. It is recommended that more of such courses are organized to fill the gap in training on maritime security issues.

## **CONCLUSION**

By and large, the first of three sets of trainings on maritime crimes and prosecutions was successfully rolled-out. All sections at the KAIPTC gave the needed support and were highly appreciated by both participants and facilitators. The daily evaluation feedback for the content and facilitator performance as well as the overall assessment of the course recorded higher ratings which proves that all the events of the course was well managed.