

Statement by the President of the Security Council

The Security Council reaffirms its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and recognizes the primary responsibility of States in the eradication of piracy and armed robbery at sea.

The Security Council, in this regard, reiterates the primary role of States in the region to counter the threat and address the underlying causes of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea, in close cooperation with organizations in the region, and their partners.

The Security Council reaffirms its respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of States concerned.

The Security Council remains deeply concerned about the threat that piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea pose to international navigation, the security and economic development of States in the region, to the safety and welfare of seafarers and other persons, as well as the safety of commercial maritime routes.

The Security Council expresses its deep concern at the reported number of incidents and level of violence of acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea, in the first half of 2013.

The Security Council recalls that international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982, sets out the legal framework applicable to activities in the ocean, including countering piracy and armed robbery at sea.

The Security Council stresses that the coordination of efforts at the regional level is key for the development of a comprehensive strategy to counter the threat of piracy and armed robbery at sea, in order to enable the prevention and disruption of such criminal activities, and also notes the need for international assistance as part of a comprehensive strategy to support national and regional efforts to assist the Member States undertaking steps to address piracy and armed robbery at sea and the illegal activities connected therewith.

The Security Council stresses the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach led by the countries of the region to counter the threat of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea, as well as related criminal activities, and to address their underlying causes. The Security Council recognizes the efforts of the countries in the region in adopting relevant measures in accordance with international law to counter piracy and armed robbery at sea and to address transnational organized crime, such as drug trafficking, as well as other measures to enhance maritime safety and security.

The Security Council welcomes the initiatives already taken by States in the region and regional organizations, including the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC) and the Maritime Organization for West and Central Africa, in cooperation with the African Union, to enhance maritime safety and security in the Gulf of Guinea.

The Security Council welcomes the holding of the Heads of States and Governments of the Gulf of Guinea Summit on maritime safety and security which took place in Yaoundé, Cameroon on 24 and 25 June 2013.

The Security Council welcomes the adoption, during the Summit, of the *Code of Conduct concerning the Prevention and Repression of Piracy, Armed Robbery against Ships, and Illegal Maritime Activities in West and Central Africa*, which defines the regional maritime security strategy and paves the way for a legally binding instrument. The Security Council encourages, in this regard, all States of the region to sign and implement the Code of Conduct as soon as possible, and calls upon them to undertake further effective measures at the national level to combat piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea.

The Security Council also welcomes the adoption of a Political Declaration of the Gulf of Guinea Heads of State and Government on Maritime Safety and Security and the adoption of a Memorandum of Understanding among ECCAS, ECOWAS and the GGC on Maritime Safety and Security in West and Central Africa. The Security Council stresses the need to coordinate efforts at the national and regional levels for the implementation of the regional strategy on maritime safety and security.

The Security Council further welcomes the decision to establish, in Cameroon, an inter-regional coordination center responsible for coordinating the implementation of the regional strategy for maritime safety and security, which should contribute to the implementation of multi-national and trans-regional mechanisms covering the whole region of the Gulf of Guinea. The Security Council welcomes, in this regard, the support provided by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to the States of the region, and encourages IMO to continue assisting States of the Gulf of Guinea.

The Security Council reiterates its call upon States in the region to criminalize piracy and armed robbery at sea under their domestic law, and to prosecute perpetrators of piracy and armed robbery at sea, consistent with applicable international law including international human rights law. The Security Council further reiterates the urgent need to investigate and prosecute, consistent with applicable international law including international human rights law, not only suspects captured at sea, but also anyone who incites or intentionally facilitates such crimes, including key figures of criminal networks involved in piracy who illicitly plan, organize, facilitate, or finance and profit from such attacks.

The Security Council urges States and international organizations, as well as the private sector to share evidence, information and intelligence, as appropriate, for law enforcement purposes related to piracy and armed robbery at sea, including for ensuring effective prosecution of suspected, and imprisonment of convicted, perpetrators and facilitators, and encourages existing and future initiatives in this regard.

The Security Council welcomes the contributions by United Nations Member States and international organizations in support of ongoing national and regional efforts to secure Gulf of Guinea coastal areas and conduct maritime safety and security operations. The Security Council encourages bilateral and international partners to provide, upon request, support to States and regional organizations, taking into account the Yaoundé Summit outcomes, its implementation and follow up measures, in enhancing their capabilities to counter piracy and armed robbery at sea in the region, including their maritime capability to conduct regional patrols and operations in accordance with international law.

The Security Council expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for the strong support provided through the United Nations Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) and the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) for the organization of the Summit and of the preparatory ministerial meeting held on 18 and 19 March 2013 in Benin. The Council encourages UNOCA and UNOWA to continue to assist States and sub-regional organizations in implementing the outcomes of the Yaoundé Summit, in accordance with their respective mandates.

The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to support efforts towards mobilizing the necessary resources for the implementation of the outcomes of the Yaoundé Summit, and strengthening of national and regional capacities, in close consultation with Gulf of Guinea States and relevant regional organizations and other United Nations entities.

The Security Council further requests the Secretary-General, through UNOCA and UNOWA, to keep it regularly informed on the situation of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea, including on progress made in implementing the outcomes of the Yaoundé Summit.