



Atlantic Centre

I Course on “Maritime Security in Gulf of Guinea”

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Concept Note

The Gulf of Guinea assumes a key relevance in the context of maritime spaces worldwide. The fact that it encompasses an important route for commercial shipping between Europa, the Americas and Africa heightens its centrality amidst international maritime trade. But its role as a global supplier of energy is also fairly uncontroverted, particularly when accounting for the vast natural resources within its limits and its corresponding exports to such markets as the United States, Europe, China or Japan.

In this context, security perils have become proportional to the strategic value of the region. Recent years have witnessed a growing escalation in cases of armed robbery at sea and piracy, illegal bunkering of hydrocarbons, illegal trafficking in arms, drugs and persons, and illegal unreported and unregulated fishing. Multiple initiatives, either led by single countries or collectively under broad multilateral formats, have also expanded in number and in scope, with the aim of targeting the root causes of such phenomena. However, the vastness of the maritime space, the structural connections to development issues faced by communities in land, the ramifications of climate change and pollution on local economic dynamics, or the lack of proper legal frameworks to prosecute perpetrators when intercepted in tandem with inadequate monitoring and enforcing capabilities, still impairs the effectiveness of overall responses.

This course therefore aims to provide the appropriate conceptual tools to better grasp the complexity of the challenges that lie within the Gulf of Guinea, as well as the institutional responses that have been recently put forward, and the different lessons learned from cooperative experiences in this domain.