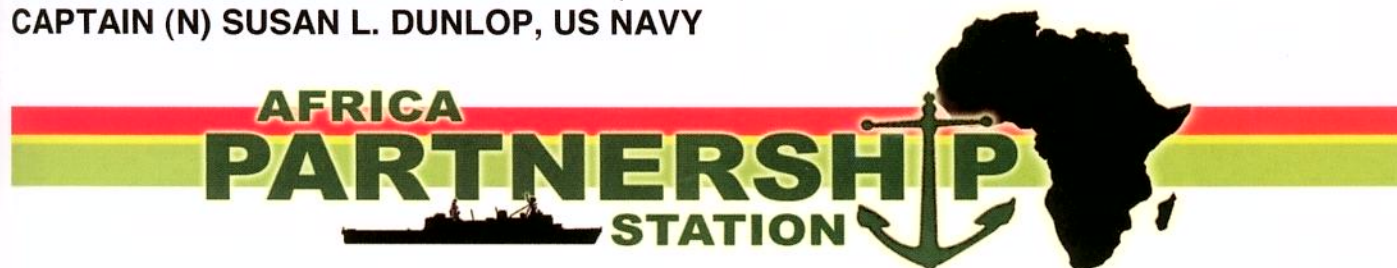


REAR ADMIRAL GERARD P. HUEBER, AND
CAPTAIN (N) SUSAN L. DUNLOP, US NAVY



IMPROVING MARITIME SECURITY THROUGH COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

The authors, **Rear Admiral Gerard P. Hueber**, Deputy Chief of Staff Strategy, Resources and Plans, and **Captain (N) Susan L. Dunlap**, Deputy Director Africa Regional Group, US Navy, describe the foundation and aim of, comprehensive approach for and international participation in African Partnership Station, evaluate first results, and take a look into the future of this multi-national effort.



Fig. 1: Piracy, a new/old menace; terrorists get their money mostly through drug trafficking – a Navy and Coast Guard task to seize the drugs at sea; and illegal fishing, a severe problem for nations and their economies. (All images provided by authors)

FOUNDATION

The US National Strategy for Maritime Security (NSMS) links the notion of security at sea to prosperity and development ashore and improved security for the homeland. Specifically, the NSMS states: "Maritime security is required to ensure freedom of the seas; facilitate freedom of navigation and commerce; advance prosperity and freedom; and protect the resources of the ocean. Nations have a common interest in achieving two complementary objectives: to facilitate the vibrant maritime commerce that underpins economic security, and to protect against ocean-related terrorist, hostile, criminal, and dangerous acts. Since all nations benefit from this collective security, all nations must share in the responsibility for maintaining maritime security by countering the threats in this domain."¹

Indeed, increased economic interdependency and globalisation, made possible by maritime shipping, underscores the need for a coordinated international and interagency approach. These efforts have picked up steam in recent years and now include:

- Non-proliferation amendments to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation and a new International Code for the Security of Ships and Port Facilities (ISPS Code) from the International Maritime Organisation.
- A host of regional initiatives in Africa, to include the Maritime Organisation for West and Central Africa (MOWCA) resolutions and the Abuja Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa.
- The Container Security Initiative, Proliferation Security Initiative, Africa Coastal Security (ACS) Programme, and the US Government's Global Maritime Partnerships Initiative.

Global maritime partners are focused on taking action to address maritime insecurity in Africa. To learn about these complex issues and build consensus for action, the US Navy led a series of workshops and seminars on the topics

WARFARE CONCEPTS



Maritime Professionals



Maritime Infrastructure



Maritime Domain Awareness



Maritime Response Capability

Regional Ties

Comprehensive Approach

Fig. 2: Key to the success of Africa Partnership Station (APS):

Maritime professionals, maritime infrastructure, maritime domain awareness, maritime response capability, regional ties, and comprehensive approach.

of maritime safety and security, bringing together representatives from governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the public and private sectors. Based on trends in trade, shipping and criminal activity, and with concurrence of African partners, the initial area of focus was the Gulf of Guinea.

The US was subsequently invited to deliver a presentation at the Seapower for Africa Symposium in Abuja, Nigeria in May 2006 on the topic of "Cooperation and Development for the Enhancement of Africa's Maritime Capabilities." The event concluded in a series of resolutions aimed at establishing state maritime structures that would then report to a larger continental body. The symposium also proposed to adopt a network-based approach in order to improve maritime domain awareness (MDA) and suggested that African navies should conduct sub-regionally coordinated training for maritime operators.² These discussions culminated in a November 2006 conference in Cotonou, Benin; where ministers representing 11 Gulf of

Guinea nations agreed to a communiqué and action plan to "commit to address maritime governance at the national, sub-regional and regional levels."³

As dialogue expanded at the forums, so did US Navy presence in Africa, increasing from just a few weeks in 2004 to a near continuous presence this year. Initial deployments of ships, aircraft and liaison teams served to inform both the US Navy and Africa partners of the scope of the challenges within the continent's maritime domain. Planning and execution of the deployments helped develop a spirit of partnership between the US Navy and Africa's maritime personnel. As the partnership matured, it became clear that Africans welcomed the Navy's help in order that they might build the capabilities and capacity to provide for their own maritime security. African partners asked for assistance specifically to:

- Develop MDA, or a clear picture of maritime traffic
- Build maritime professionals

- Establish maritime infrastructure
- Provide for maritime law enforcement capability
- Draft legal and regulatory regimes
- Establish mechanisms for improved sub-regional cooperation, and
- Grow public awareness of the impact of maritime security.⁴

This consensus was built upon a common understanding of the maritime challenges and opportunities that face the global community and more specifically the African continent.

MARITIME SECURITY FOSTERS AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT AND IMPACTS GLOBAL COMMUNITY

Africa is the subject of renewed strategic focus for the US and many in the international community. The potential for both progress and per-

il has invited this focus, even as the positive and negative effects of globalisation have amplified it. Although Africa contends with many issues, its largest maritime problem is illegal activity flourishing in the waters that surround it. Coastal states are contending with a range of challenges at sea, to include illegal unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing, oil theft, piracy, illicit trade, narcotics trafficking, illegal immigration and environmental degradation. This article is intended to introduce an initiative by the US Navy to improve maritime security in partnership with interested stakeholders.

Africa's maritime affairs impact its stability ashore and have global economic implications (see figure 1). Consider these statistics:

- Over 41 percent of global trade touches Africa in some way, with an estimated value of approximately US\$3,200Bn.
- Illegal fishing, a problem that has been assessed by the Marine Resources assessment Group as costing up to US\$9Bn worldwide and US\$1Bn in sub-Saharan Africa alone.⁵
- Between 2005 and 2008, 46 metric tons of cocaine destined for the Western European market were seized by law-enforcement officials in or around West Africa.⁶
- Approximately 55 percent of global seaborne crude oil trade transits through African waterways or sea-lanes.
- Ten per cent (around 55 million barrels) of Nigeria's oil is stolen and trafficked every year.⁷
- At sea piracy cost the global community more than US\$16NBn per year.⁸

Pervasive maritime insecurity is a significant obstacle to achieving larger objectives that African nations have established for themselves with the assistance of the international community. These objectives are comprehensively outlined in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. The corrosive effects of illegal activity at sea interfere with international efforts to promote good governance, economic development, environmental protection, stability, and security in Africa. Many African nations are currently unable to exert even minimal control over their own exclusive economic zones, territorial waters and ports, so they are at risk of losing precious resources to other predatory states. Africans pay a huge cost every day in terms of unrealised national revenue and untapped human potential. Such conditions foster opportunities for transnational threats to travel within and around Africa, allow them to establish new routes of travel when old ones are disrupted, and provide bases of support for criminal enterprise. While these problems are complex and have deep historical roots, they are not insurmount-

able. Africans and their global partners must take collective action to confront these challenges.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Africa, with its infinite resources and economic potential, has garnered a second look from nations both with mature and developing economies. In addition, Africa is being seen as a new front in the global war on terror. In some areas corrupt governance, lax regulations and poverty make its population susceptible to violent extremism and crime. All of these issues highlight the importance of maritime security and the need for the global community to address the challenges collectively.

Naval Forces Africa (NAVAF) has served as a catalyst in providing a wide range of products to African partners and in expanding partnerships to include European and South American nations. Working together with partner nations, Governments, NGOs and the private sector,

NAVAF intends to continue its efforts to promote maritime security in Africa. Working with so many disparate partners highlighted the need for a common approach toward addressing maritime security.

THE MARITIME SECTOR DEVELOPMENT MODEL: TOOL FOR BUILDING A FOUNDATION

The complexity of maritime issues and need for a common approach led Naval Forces Africa to adopt the Maritime Sector Development Model to provide a framework for training and developing partner maritime forces whether they be Navies or Coast Guards. The Maritime Sector Development Model guides Naval Forces Africa and partner efforts by allowing planners to focus on four areas that are crucial for a mar-

Fig. 3: APS goes international, the staff being internationalised and nearly 30 countries having participated, with ships from the UK, Netherlands, Spain, Italy and Belgium integrated.



itime force to function efficiently and effectively; these are maritime professionals, maritime infrastructure, MDA and maritime response capability. These four pillars are addressed with regional ties in mind and with a comprehensive approach taking in account all appropriate maritime stakeholders (see figure 2).

Maritime Professionals: Trained professionals are a key component of any Navy. Maritime professionals in its simplest sense is: "do they have personnel capable of maintaining and operating their equipment?" NAVAF concentrates upon developing personnel who are expert at their work, whether by providing formal classroom training, embarking them onboard ships, or having them participate in exercises. **Africa Partnership Station (APS)** offers courses geared to produce sailors proficient in tangible marine skills such as navigation, hull and engine maintenance, or search and rescue, and in non-tangible skills such as leadership and decision-making. The ship rider programme allows Africans to embark on partner Navy ships where they are assigned running mates who will literally

'show them the ropes'. Exercises teach individuals and units how to work together, not only with personnel from their own organisation, but with members from other agencies and partner nations. The goal is to produce a cadre of personnel capable of working together as a team with the discipline necessary to confront the rigors of work at sea.

Maritime Infrastructure: In order for a Navy to function, it requires the proper infrastructure ashore for administrative, maintenance and logistics support. In other words, does a country have the necessary port structures, command centres, piers, boat ramps or repair facilities necessary to support maritime commerce and activity? One way our partners support this pillar is in the repair or refurbishment of these facilities. This is precisely how NAVAF employs their Naval Construction Battalion or 'Seabees'.

Maritime Domain Awareness: In order to police their waters, a Navy or Coast Guard must know what vessels are out there and in what kind of activities they are engaged. Maritime Domain

Awareness (MDA) is the pillar of the Maritime Sector Development Model that gives partners the eyes and ears to be able to detect activity at sea. MDA encompasses all electronic sensors and visual means that enable an observer to form a picture of vessel location either close in territorial waters or out at the limits of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The principal electronic sensor for vessel detection is the Automated Identification System (AIS), which is required equipment for vessels greater than 300 tons. A shore station with requisite receivers and software is able to pick up identification and location information from vessels operating AIS equipment. AIS, together with coastal radars, can provide a fairly complete and accurate electronic picture which can be interpreted with a minimum of training.

Maritime Response Capability: Even if you have trained professionals capable of operating equipment, the necessary infrastructure to support them and the ability to see what's going on in your country's waters, you still need a response capability which can interdict the illic-



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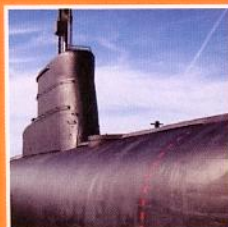
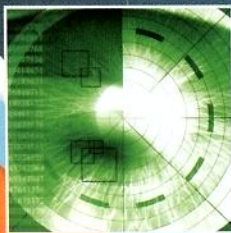
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Fig. 4: Although the APS agenda is heavily weighted to Navy-related topics such as seamanship, the training agenda also features fisheries enforcement and interagency cooperation for environmental protection. The training regimen is flexible enough to accommodate changes on demand.

it activity or render assistance to a ship in distress. This pillar speaks to the number of units in a fleet, the readiness of those platforms, and the ability of personnel to use those craft in response to a crisis. Contributing nations have augmented the size of African fleets by contributing excess defence articles or providing gifts of patrol craft and support equipment. APS activities to develop maritime professionals and create infrastructure help Africans to keep boats operable while exercises test the ability of maritime professionals to marry MDA with sea-borne response. Taken together, the pillars of the Maritime Sector Development Model build a foundation that NAVAF believes will result in maritime forces with the ability to detect, deter or prosecute threats in their own waters to the full limit of their EEZ's.

Regional Ties: Given the nature of the maritime domain it is important to address the Maritime sector regionally. If you build one nation's capability, the illicit actors only need to outrun those forces into the regional neighbours' waters in order to evade apprehension. For meaningful maritime security all of our global partners need to work with one another to address the issues collectively.

Comprehensive Approach: While much of this article tends to focus on Navies and Coast Guards it is important to realise, when addressing maritime security there are many stakeholders. From ports and security, to fisheries, to justice, transportation, shipping companies, and more there are many organisations that have a vested interest in maritime security and in working together.

The United States believes that the key to solving African problems, however, is in African hands – supported by the community of nations. It is in this spirit that NAVAF has implemented APS.

APS: AFRICAN SOLUTIONS FOR AFRICAN PROBLEMS ... WITH GLOBAL SUPPORT

APS began as a 'Global Fleet Station' initiative, which was a planned international effort and involved sending a ship forward with the ability to conduct focused training and collaboration on a regional scale. USS "Fort McHenry" (LSD 43) and HSV-2 "Swift" were deployed to the Gulf of Guinea from November 2007 to May 2008. These two ships along with an international staff made up of 14 countries made repeat visits to multiple nations, including Senegal, Liberia, Ghana, Cameroon and Sao Tome and Principe. The initiative was subsequently christened 'Africa Partnership Station (APS)'.

African and European partner nations have given APS a distinctively international feel. The APS staff in charge of executing APS events is modelled after a US operational staff and is comprised of members from a number of different countries. The senior member of the staff is typically a US Navy Captain; however, his or her staff also includes African and European deputies. NAVAF envisions the day that an African partner will serve as head of the staff.

In addition, APS ships have been provided by several of our international partners. In 2009, the HNLMS "Johan de Witt" (L 801) deployed from the Netherlands with US and Belgian staff and trainers embarked to participate in APS. Belgium provided the BNS "Godetia" (A 960) and Spain subsequently the corvette "Centinela" (P 72). In 2010, HMS "Ocean" (L 12) and HMS "Portland" (F 79) of the UK Royal Navy sailed under the APS banner as will ships from Spain, Italy and Belgium in 2011. At the time of writing, nearly 30 countries have participated in APS, with growing interest from others (see figure 3).

With the Maritime Sector Development Model in mind, the 2011 version of APS continues to evolve. APS is now a year-round concept featuring a variety of activities and multiple partners all focused on improving maritime security. The concept addresses all areas of the Maritime Sector Development model and strives to address regional cooperation by selecting "hub" locations where several partner nations will come together to take part in APS activities collectively. Activities include U.S. and partner nation ships cruising independently in order to conduct training, small tailored flyaway teams performing a variety of engagements such as medical capacity building or fisheries instruction, and multi-service participation, particularly by the Marine Corps and Coast Guards.

WHAT APS BRINGS TO THE TABLE

APS has acquired brand-name recognition and set the standard for successful engagement in Africa. This can be attributed to unique features of APS, including:

- **Self-sufficiency:** APS requires no bases and minimal footprint ashore. Ships provide all the necessary support services and cargo capacity. The ships operate as floating education and training platforms.
- **Multinational involvement:** A multi-national staff is responsible for APS planning and execution. European partners constitute a portion of the staff and training team members, rounded out by a dozen or more African participants. Ships from the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Spain, Italy and Belgium have participated in APS. This international involvement helps emphasize the concept that maritime security is indeed an international area of concern.

- **Tailored and flexible:** APS training encompasses a full spectrum of topics germane to the creation of effective maritime forces. Although the APS agenda is heavily weighted to Navy-related topics such as seamanship, the training agenda also features fisheries enforcement and environmental protection. The training regimen is flexible enough to accommodate changes on demand. More importantly it can be tailored to a given regions specific challenges (see figure 4).
- **Joint/Interagency participation:** The Coast Guard, Marine Corps, US Department of State, and US Agency for International Development have played key roles in APS. These agencies have supported APS events from initial planning through execution. A Coast Guard Officer typically augments the international staff, and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration has sailed with APS to advance several of its projects. Additionally we see increased interest by African organisations like the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC).
- **Non Government Organisation (NGO) support:** APS has been a mechanism for advancing humanitarian and environmental assistance projects in Africa, as ships offer an ideal transportation and logistics base. Several NGOs have sailed with APS in the past and negotiations continue for NGO participation in the future. We are told one of the biggest costs facing NGOs operating in Africa is the price of transporting goods from the US or Europe to the African destination. Why not take advantage of a US or European Navy asset heading that way and transport it there for free?

- **Transparent, collaborative working environment:** APS is an unclassified event. APS information can be passed via commercial websites. To sustain momentum, APS has welcomed journalist and public affairs participation with an eye to creating an open and inviting environment.

APS planners working with African navies continue to build on the skill sets imparted by APS and continue to look for new ways to put these skill sets to use. As African nations have felt the effects of illegal oil bunkering, poaching of fisheries, drug trafficking and piracy, their Navies have increasingly been called upon for law enforcement missions. This was the impetus for the Africa Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership (AMLEP) Programme, which is now in its third year. The AMLEP Program exercises bilateral agreements, which are maritime law enforcement agreements between the U.S. and a partner nation that address illicit transnational maritime activity, such as drug interdiction and fisheries enforcement. Each bilateral agreement is tailored to respect a partner nation's internal governmental and political processes and their laws and policies.

Missions conducted under bilateral agreements share with partner nations the Coast Guard's law enforcement skill set for conducting law enforcement boardings, gathering evidence, maintaining chains of custody, and at sea space accountability. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachments (LEDETs) are embarked aboard U.S. Navy or Coast Guard vessels, where the LEDET is able to train African partners and actually engage with them in law enforcement operations. If arrests are made they are normally done by the African nation maritime force and brought back to their judicial system for prosecution. AMLEP assists in allowing the host nation to venture farther out to sea, working to expand the Rule of Law in often lawless waters. The U.S. Coast Guard's platform in 2010 was

the US Coast Guard Cutter MOHAWK, which spent three months off the West coast of Africa executing the AMLEP mission. MOHAWK conducted joint boardings and right of approach queries with embarked partner law enforcement teams from Senegal and Sierra Leone. The value of AMLEP was demonstrated in particular by the Senegalese when they boarded a suspect fishing vessel and located about 100 grams of methamphetamine. The vessel was subsequently detained and remanded to Dakar for further investigation.

EVALUATING RESULTS: WHAT HAS APS ACCOMPLISHED SO FAR?

True maritime security in Africa is a long-term effort. But even in the short three-year history of APS, the effects of training and engagement are being witnessed in increased African activity at sea and in recognition of success at sea by African policy makers. Operability at sea has prompted the Tanzanian Navy to conduct counter-piracy escorts, allowed Mauritius to build its Coast Guard into a capable rapid response force, and enabled Sierra Leone to impound and prosecute an illegal fishing trawler. The Benin Navy boarded and recovered a pirated tanker and the Cameroon military was able to repel a pirate attack. The Liberians have established a Coast Guard and brought their Regional Rescue Centre online, and Cape Verde has established a Maritime Interagency Fusion Centre. These small victories bode well for a future of success.

These accomplishments have not gone unnoticed by African leaders and policy-makers. After the Benin Navy freed the pirated tanker, Captain Ferdinand Ahoyo, Benin Chief of Staff, said in November 2009 that the "Benin Government recognises maritime security as key to national and regional stability. We are committed to procuring new boats and two maritime patrol aircraft. We were able to do this because

Fig. 5: A final look at the span of activities of Africa Partnership Station.



of APS.” Similarly, RADM Nambo, Gabon Chief of Naval Service, said in August 2010 that he had “only thought of coordinated maritime operations (ultra-light and defender boat coordination) because of Africa Partnership Station.” APS has had the effect of ‘leading up’, in that small achievements by African maritime forces have influenced the larger thinking of Navy leaders and Government officials.

WHAT IS NEXT FOR APS?

As APS helps to build African Navies into more capable and responsive forces, future iterations of the event will become more complex. Having trained Africans to use and maintain boats, the next logical step would be applying those skills in an exercise or operation. APS 2011 features three new exercises – OBAN-GAME EXPRESS, SAHARAN EXPRESS and CUTLASS EXPRESS. Africans and multinational partners will be able to test newly acquired skills in MDA, ship-to-shore and ship-to-ship communications, and prosecution of targets. NAVAF anticipates that these exercises will become more complex and challenging, with Africans eventually taking over the bulk of the training, planning and execution.

One challenge to improved security has been termed ‘Sea-Blindness’, which relates to a failure to recognise the importance of the sea to a specific nation, the global economy and how it impacts prosperity and stability ashore. This ‘sea blindness’ has resulted in neglect of maritime forces and maritime infrastructure. Through APS, partners can influence from the bottom up, but need help working the maritime security message from the top down. APS has incorporated senior leader engagement by both military and civilian officials to help introduce African leaders to the benefits of the maritime domain as well as highlight the challenges occurring in their waters. From a highway for transportation of commodities to a bread basket for nations, the sea is a resource that needs preserving. The Gov-

ernments of Africa need to realise that investing in maritime governance will yield a profit. By investing in their Navies or Coast Guards they will directly impact prosperity and stability ashore.

We fully expect more partners (nations, regional organisations, inter-agencies and NGOs) to take a more active role in building our partners’ capacity to address illicit activity. Already Nigeria and South Africa are taking leadership roles in their regions and this has translated to an ever increasing role in APS. The Chiefs of European Navies (CHENS) recently completed a paper addressing maritime cooperation in Africa which highlighted the importance of Africa maritime issues and the need to work together. We welcome other partners to contribute assets and training teams to this international effort and envision a time when all partner capacity efforts are synchronised on the continent to improve efficiency and de-confliction.

In a letter commending APS to the US Secretary of Defense from the Commissioner of Peace and Security at the African Union dated 16 April, 2009 he wrote: “Since effective maritime governance has wide-ranging political, economic, social and security benefits in Africa, I take on to promote more awareness and to advocate for a tangible political will in addressing Africa’s Maritime Safety and Security (MSS) challenges. In this era of globalisation, MSS around Africa is a *sine qua non* of global economic stability and it is certainly essential for regional and global prosperity. We will all have to show a greater commitment and dedication to promote cooperation, collaboration, information sharing, and coordination to deal with the multi-faceted threats of Africa’s maritime domain.”

SUMMARY

APS is a comprehensive international approach designed to build maritime security in Africa in a collaborative manner with our part-

ners. APS responds to specific African requests for assistance, is aligned with broad international community and U.S. objectives and reflects the mission of NFA’s combatant commander, United States Africa Command.⁹ Most importantly, APS has provided the U.S. with access to African nations and navies such that they can learn the ways in which to safeguard their seas and resources. APS is inspired by the belief that effective maritime security will contribute to development, economic prosperity, and security ashore, so as to deter violent extremist ideology. It will take the U.S., Africans and other international partners working together toward this common purpose to address Africa’s maritime challenges.

NAFO

Notes:

- ¹ The National Strategy for Maritime Security, 2005, p. 2
- ² Resolutions of the Seapower for Africa Symposium 2006, Abuja, Nigeria, 26-31 May 2006
- ³ Communiqué of the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Safety and Security Ministerial Conference, 15 November 2006, p. 1
- ⁴ Bullets taken from the Action Plan agreed to at the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Safety and Security Ministerial Conference, assessments, and meetings with African officials
- ⁵ McConnell, Tristan, (Aug-Sep 2008), The African Report No12, Fishing: An offshore free-for-all, Page 1 from http://www.ird.fr/ecostproject/lib/exe/fetch.php?id=ecost&cache=cache&media=026-028_front_fishing_tar12.pdf
- ⁶ McGuire, Peter, L., (March 2010), The Pardee Papers No. 9, Narcotics Trafficking in West Africa: A Governance Challenge, Page 3, Retrieved November 17, 2010 from http://www.bu.edu/pardee/files/2010/03/Pardee_Paper-9-Narcotics-Trafficking.pdf
- ⁷ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime report, *Oil Theft Lubricates Corruption in West Africa* (July 10, 2009). Retrieved on November 17, 2010 from <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2009/July/illegal-oil-trade-in-nigeria-worsens-rule-of-law-in-west-africa.html>
- ⁸ Hanson, Stephanie (January 7, 2010), *Council on Foreign Relations, Combating Maritime Piracy*. Retrieved November 17, 2010 from http://www.cfr.org/publication/18376/combating_maritime_piracy.html
- ⁹ Department of Defense objective statement for US Africa Command (AFRICOM): “In concert with other US Government and international partners, US Africa Command conducts theater security cooperation activities to assist in building security capacity and improve accountable governance.”

