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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 5513 822 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321

Email: situationroom@africanunion.org

PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
1346TH MEETING

15 MAY 2026
ADDIS-ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.1346.2 (2026)

COMMUNIQUÉ



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Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1346th meeting held on 15 May 2026 on briefing on efforts towards the operationalization of the combined maritime task force in addressing piracy in the Gulf of Guinea:

The Peace and Security Council,

Recalling all of its previous communiqués and pronouncements on efforts towards the Operationalization of the Combined Maritime Task Force (CMTF) in addressing Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, particularly Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1275 (2025)] adopted at its 1275th meeting held on 23 April 2025 ; and Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1209.1 (2024)] adopted at its 1209th meeting, held on 18 April 2024;

Reiterating the commitment to ensure full implementation of the African Charter on Maritime Security, Safety and Development in Africa (Lomé Charter), adopted by the Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union held in Lomé, Togo, on 15 October 2016 and the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIM);

Reaffirming the Council's commitment to supporting maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea and other regions of the continent;

Taking note of the opening remarks by H.E. Ambassador Nasir Aminu, Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the AU and Chairperson of the PSC of the AU for May 2026; and the introductory statement by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, read on his behalf by Ms. Neema Chusi, Head of the PSC Secretariat; as well as the statement delivered by Ms. Pamela William Levira, policy officer for Climate Change, on behalf of H.E. Moses Vilakati, Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment;

Also taking note of the presentation by Commodore Mohammed Shetima, the Coordinating Commander of the CMTF; the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC); Dr. Ibrahim Norbert Richard, Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC); as well as by the representatives of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Economic Community of the West African States (ECOWAS); and

Acting under Article 7 of its Protocol, the Peace and Security Council:

1. **Expresses deep concern** over the growing insecurity and illicit activities in the Gulf of Guinea, including piracy, organized crime, illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, armed robbery at sea, and the illegal dumping of toxic waste; **and reiterates the call for** all Member States to ensure the arrest, prosecution, and accountability of those who perpetrate, encourage, finance, or facilitate such transnational criminal activities;
2. **Also expresses deep concern over** the attempts by terrorist groups to expand their activities to the littoral states of West Africa, and **requests** the AU Commission and the United Nations to actively support countries in the region to adequately counter this threat;
3. **Emphasizes** that counter-piracy efforts must extend beyond military measures to comprehensively address the fundamental root causes of maritime insecurity, **urges** Member States to take coordinated action to resolve these underlying factors; and **encourages** countries of the Gulf

of Guinea to strengthen their judicial cooperation, extradition arrangements, and prosecution mechanisms relating to maritime crimes, including piracy, trafficking, oil theft, and IUU fishing;

4. **Recognizes** that the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) presents an opportunity to accelerate Africa's economic integration; in this respect **acknowledges** the critical importance of maritime security in facilitating the achievement of Africa's Blue Economy initiatives and in the effective implementation of the AfCFTA; and **reiterates the call** for the strengthening of regional maritime security architecture in order to prevent, reduce, and coordinate responses to risks, offences, and crimes committed at sea, especially in the Gulf of Guinea;

5. **Re-emphasizes the need** for enhanced collaboration between the AU, ECOWAS, ECCAS, the Gulf of Guinea Commission, the International Maritime Bureau Piracy Reporting Centre, regional maritime coordination centres, and national maritime structures in order to enhance collaboration through improved intelligence and technology sharing and plan joint patrols, forestall duplication, improve overall operational effectiveness; and ensure the implementation of robust counter-terrorism and anti-piracy measures in the Gulf of Guinea.

6. **Underlines** that the CMTF presents an important opportunity to strengthen the maritime dimension of the African Standby Force (ASF), as well as to advance the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy, the Lomé Charter, and the Silencing the Guns initiative;

7. **Underscores** that operationalizing the CMTF, as an African-led maritime security mechanism, is essential for safeguarding Africa's strategic autonomy and continental ownership of Africa's maritime governance; and in this context, **welcomes** the progress made thus far towards operationalizing the CMTF, including the adoption of the CONOPS and takes note of the proposed flag-off ceremony for the CMTF-Gulf of Guinea, scheduled for 1st June 2026, in Lagos, Nigeria and **reiterates** the Council's decision to be represented at the event;

8. **Commends** the Republics of Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone for indicating operational readiness towards the operationalization of the CMTF, and **calls on** other countries in the Gulf of Guinea region, that are yet to do so, to consider joining this endeavour;

9. **Encourages** Member States of the Gulf of Guinea Commission to provide robust political and operational support for the full and effective operationalization of the CMTF, with a view to further enhancing maritime security activities across the region;

10. **Urges** AU Member States to actively support efforts towards the full operationalization of the CMTF as Africa's first standing, ready-to-deploy force, capable of delivering rapid and coordinated maritime security responses;

11. **Requests** the AU Commission to collaborate with the CMTF in the Gulf of Guinea and to provide the Force with the necessary support, including logistical support and materials, from the Continental Logistic Base (CLB);

12. **Underlines** the importance of strengthening African capacities in securing maritime spaces, notably through the intensification of the exchange of experiences and expertise, as well as enhanced coordination among existing regional mechanisms, particularly the structures of the Yaoundé Architecture, including ECOWAS, ECCAS, the Gulf of Guinea Commission, the ICC, CRESMAC, and CRESMAO;

13. **Underscores the need** for sustainable and predictable financing arrangements, equitable burden-sharing, and collective ownership in ensuring the operational effectiveness of the CMTF and

in this regard, **appeals** to international development partners, including the UN system, as well as countries in a position to do so, to support the operations of the CMTF;

14. **Calls on** AU Member States and strategic partners to support the AU Commission in conducting the Ex AMANI III-Command Post maritime exercise;

15. **Recalls** the request made by the June 2023 Ministerial Conference on the “Blue Economy and Climate Action in Africa: Island and Coastal States at the Forefront”, for the AU Commission to organize an annual Forum of African Coast Guards in collaboration with RECs and Intergovernmental Organizations to strengthen maritime security and safety in Africa; and in this regard, **requests** the AU Commission to take urgent and practical steps towards the establishment of the Committee of African Heads of Navies and Coast Guards (CHANS), and to facilitate the participation of relevant stakeholders in its inauguration as enshrined in the 2050 Africa’s Integrated Maritime Strategy, before the end of 2026;

16. **Reiterates** the request for the AU Commission to expedite the establishment and operationalization, within the Commission, of a Coordination Mechanism and/or a Maritime Security Unit, without any financial implications, pursuant to paragraph 12 of Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1174 (2023)] adopted at its 1174th meeting, held on 18 September 2023; and

17. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.