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**African Maritime Security:
A Human Security Approach to Maritime Securitisation – The Case for an
Alternative Analytical Framework**

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation, which I hereby submit for the degree of Master of Arts in International Relations at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not been previously submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university.



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September 2023

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ABSTRACT

African maritime security in practice, and academically, is gaining significant attention as an area of study. What is overwhelmingly clear is the growing importance of maritime security and its centrality in discourses of geopolitics, development, and human security. In recent years, there has been an observable trend of securitising maritime issues, chief among these has been piracy and armed robbery at sea. Yet, part and parcel of these securitising measures have been implications, often adverse, for the human security and livelihoods of ordinary people. The securitising moves enacted by state officials have in one way or another, disenfranchised and marginalised littoral communities and their needs be it their agency, dignity or livelihoods. Essentially, African communities have been robbed, undermined and subjected to strategies and policies imposed upon them, often without consultation. Arguably, the securitisation of maritime security issues is often done without much thought given to the potential consequences for human security. This study problematises this issue and proposes an alternative analytical framework, pertinent to address maritime insecurity in Africa.

Owing to the link between maritime security and human security, approaches to address the former must take into consideration the latter. Where maritime securitisation is enacted, the principles of human security should inform the process. Therefore, this study posits the need for a human security approach to maritime securitisation. The potential merits of this approach are assessed in this study using notable empirical cases, namely those of piracy off the coast of Somalia and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the Gulf of Guinea. Using these cases, the study first explores the manner in which securitisation measures were enacted by a range of actors, in order to ascertain the impact on human security conditions, and to critique the prevailing situation. Thereafter, the study applies the analytical framework developed in this study to the case of Somali piracy in Chapter Three and IUU fishing in Cameroon and Ghana in Chapter Four, to theorise an alternative outcome. This is done with the overarching aim of demonstrating the value and necessity of a human security approach to maritime securitisation toward enhancing non-state participation and agency among local communities, whilst building resilience.

Keywords: maritime security, human security, securitisation, maritime securitisation, desecuritisation, resecuritisation, piracy, IUU fishing, Gulf of Guinea

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
CEMLAWS	Centre for Maritime Law and Security
CGPCS	Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia
CMTF	Combined Maritime Task Force
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EEAS	European External Action Service
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EMS	Electronic Monitoring Systems
EU	European Union
EUNAVFOR	European Union Naval Forces
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FCWC	Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GGC	Gulf of Guinea Commission
GoG	Gulf of Guinea
IOR	Indian Ocean Region
IRAD	Institute of Agricultural Research for Development
IUU	Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing
JMICC	Joint Maritime Information Coordination Centre
MCS	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance
MINDEF	Cameroon's Ministry of Defence
MINEPIA	Cameroon's Ministry of Fisheries
RMCS	Regional Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Centre
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SSZ	Safety and Security Zone
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNODC	United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WFP	World Food Programme
WIO	Western Indian Ocean
WTO	World Trade Organisation
YCC	Yaoundé Code of Conduct

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Over the past decade there has been an increasing trend towards securitising the maritime domain (Voyer et al 2018: 1). This has been particularly pronounced in terms of the securitisation of irregular migration in the Mediterranean (Leonard & Kaunert 2022: 1417), and piracy off the coast of Somalia (Oliveira 2018: 504). As threats in the maritime domain persist and geopolitical competition heightens, great and emerging powers have continued to scale up their means and methods of securing their respective maritime domains and vested maritime interests. With issues ranging from organised crime to armed robbery at sea, recently African governments and navies, namely those in the Gulf of Guinea, have also sought to bolster their enforcement capabilities, predominantly through the operationalisation of naval task forces (Bueger 2013: 308). This begs the question, how has the process of maritime securitisation, desecuritisation and resecuritisation occurred? Furthermore, what has been the impact of these measures on the livelihoods of ordinary people and communities situated along coastlines? Specifically, has the process of maritime securitisation had a positive impact on human security conditions? It is these questions that form the focus of this study. These questions will be addressed in the study.

The scope of maritime security issues in Africa is vast, comprising blue crimes such as piracy, maritime terrorism, trafficking of illicit goods, and environmental crimes (Bueger & Stockbruegger 2022: 2). The severity of maritime insecurity in African waters, and the impact on national security, economic development, the marine environment, and in particular human security, perhaps warrants a level of securitisation. However, not all security issues require securitisation, as this may conflate what should and should not be classified as threats. Moreover, securitisation, particularly of development issues, can often yield negative consequences, such as worsening human security conditions, failing to address the initial problem, or diminishing the agency of non-state actors (Beseng & Malcolm 2021: 5170). That being the case, what is the most effective way to securitise non-traditional issues, those not typically considered to be hard security (military) issues, but rather soft (non-traditional) issues, which may evolve into or encompass hard security dimensions?

In the context of African maritime security, the study will explore the process of maritime securitisation (shifting an issue out of the realm of 'normal' politics into the realm of

‘emergency’ politics by presenting the issue as an existential threat). The focus is also on the processes of desecuritisation and resecuritisation, and the subsequent effect on human security. These concepts of securitisation, desecuritisation and resecuritisation are defined and discussed in more detail in chapter two.

The link between maritime security and human security, specifically the landward impact of maritime issues, suggests that the securitisation of maritime issues is an indirect securitisation of human insecurity. Therefore, human security considerations should guide the process of maritime securitisation. Arguably, in the context of African maritime security, maritime securitisation is most effective with the inclusion of non-state actors such as civil society organisations, private sector agents, and coastal communities. Using notable examples, namely the response to piracy off the coast of Somalia and illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the Gulf of Guinea, specifically Cameroon and Ghana, the study will critique the securitisation of these issues. This is done with the overarching aim of demonstrating how maritime securitisation impacts human security. In doing so, drawing lessons from these examples, the study proposes the necessity to develop a securitisation framework suitable for the African maritime environment.

1.2 Literature Overview

This literature review consists of three sections. The first section discusses the evolution of the concept of security, namely the shift away from the narrow traditional state-centric conception of security to the widened and broadened security agenda. This will also include a focus on the expansion of maritime security from predominantly military-naval concerns to non-traditional people-centred concerns. From this, the second section discusses perspectives of African maritime security. The third and final section entails a discussion around the securitisation of African maritime issues.

1.2.1 Maritime security: from a narrow conception to a broadened security agenda.

Saleh (2010: 230) notes that throughout the Cold War, in the traditional sense, security was conceived as commensurate to military security vis-à-vis the military power of other states;

commonly referred to as the 'balance of power'. This interpretation aligns with realist definitions of security, in which the government is the main unit of analysis, the security of the state is supreme, and friction between states is inevitable resulting from inherent insecurity and distrust in the international system (Ardam et al 2021: 492 & 495). Thus, stemming from this argument, Ardham et al (2021: 493) state that according to realism, an efficient military force is necessary to support diplomacy, and foreign policy objectives and ensure national security. However, for Booth (1994: 15), McDonald (2002: 284), and many others, realist interpretations of security are perceived as being too narrow, as they remain predominantly state-centric and overlook the role, significance, experiences, and agency of non-state actors and non-traditional (non-military) issues.

Nearing the end of the Cold War, Barry Buzan (1997) published a paper titled 'Rethinking Security after the Cold War', in which he argued that the transitioning global order from one of bipolarity (defined by the US-USSR rivalry) to one of multipolarity, would usher in the expansion of the concept of security. Similarly, Baldwin (1995: 118) notes that the end of the Cold War was the most momentous event in international politics since the end of the second world war and the dawn of the atomic age. According to Buzan and Hansen (2009: 158) as early as the 1980s the importance (priority) attached to the Cold War "political-military security agenda" informing the way to deal with superpower confrontation, had declined. Using the aforementioned argument as a starting point, Saleh (2010) investigates this paradigm shift. In a paper titled "Broadening the concept of security: identity and societal security", Saleh (2010), interrogates whether traditional concepts of security studies, specifically realism, still hold relevance in the post-Cold War era. Saleh (2010: 229) points out that during the Cold War, as within the conventional (traditional) realist paradigm of security, the state was the central actor in the international system, with its sovereignty, territorial integrity and political autonomy being of utmost importance. In this sense, the state constituted the referent object (that which must be protected).

It is important to note that security remains a divisive concept, as pointed out by authors such as Ardham et al (2021: 490), Smith (1997: 77), Newman (2010: 77), and Agir and Arman (2014: 105). By contrast, critical security studies, according to Newman (2010: 77) adopts a broader view of International Relations which includes non-state actors as well as non-traditional (non-military) security issues. In essence, Agir and Arman (2014: 105) among other authors, argue that individuals should be primary referent objects of security. This entails a people-centric approach, known as human security. This concept dates back to the 1990s.

Newman (2010: 78) notes that as early as the 1990s, the erosion of the “narrow state-centric militarised national security paradigm” occurred parallel to a growing interest in human security. In 1992, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defined human security as “safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression, and protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in patterns of daily life whether in jobs, home or communities”. In an earlier publication, Peoples and Vaughn-Williams (2010: 5) and Williams (2013: 3) characterise this broadened and deepened security agenda as the expansion of security to include non-traditional (non-military) threats to the security of non-state entities, in particular the security of people. In line with this, Agir and Arman (2014: 108) state that this paradigm challenges the traditional state-centric notion of security by identifying and assessing the vulnerabilities of non-state actors. This definition also extends to the realm of maritime security.

From a realist conception, maritime security equates to political and military (naval) power contestation between countries at sea. Christian Bueger (2015: 160) points out that the traditional discourse on maritime security has revolved around notions of naval warfare, naval power, and the projection of that power at sea. Over three decades since the end of the Cold War, there is an observable resurgence of heightened great power contestation at sea. This is what Geoffrey Till (2022: 38) describes as “an era of renewed great power competition”. However, arguably, non-traditional maritime security issues pose the greatest threat, particularly for Africa. The non-traditional conception of maritime security moves beyond national security concerns to include matters of economic development and sustainability, embodied in the blue economy. This necessitates the consideration of land-based insecurity with seaward impact and vice versa, and how these affect the safety, security, and livelihoods of ordinary people as well as non-human entities like animals and the environment.

Singhal (2015 :153) notes that security issues borne of socio-economic factors on land, often encroach on the maritime domain. These security issues, according to Singhal (2015: 153) have facilitated the proliferation of non-traditional maritime threats across the Indian Ocean. These non-traditional security issues including but not limited to piracy, armed robbery at sea, maritime terrorism, illegal fishing, and natural disasters, are widespread across Africa’s maritime space (Singhal 2015; Otto 2020)

The proliferation of non-traditional maritime issues in African waters has occurred alongside, or perhaps augmented scholarship on this broad theme, drawing the attention of scholars the world over.

1.2.2 Perspectives of African maritime security

Bueger (2013: 298) describes maritime security as a “long-neglected stepchild of African security politics”. According to Duarte and Kenkel (2019: 10) owing to Africa’s colonial past, an “Africa-wide maritime sector” and African maritime perspective began to emerge only in the 1980s. In an article titled ‘Turning the tide: revisiting African maritime security’, Francois Vrey (2013: 1), argued that maritime security was emerging as a key area on African security agendas. In essence, the threats present in African maritime zones warranted a greater maritime focus. Other authors writing on African maritime security include Brits and Nel (2018: 226), Uppiah (2021: 186), and Lekunze (2022: 5). The arguments of these authors line up with another major challenge identified by Uppiah (2021: 186) which is the unwillingness of states to harmonise regional efforts and collaborate to combat collective threats. According to Uppiah (2021: 186) African states are less willing to cooperate on issues such as IUU fishing, in the way they did to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia. This unwillingness can perhaps be attributed to the contentious nature of IUU fishing, the subsidies that privilege extra-regional actors and the competition for stakeholder deals and investments.

Siebels (2020: 40) notes that prior to the escalation of piracy off the coast of Somalia, maritime security and maritime issues were not political priorities in either East or West Africa. Siebels (2020: 40), as well as other academics, have argued that whilst discussions on maritime security gained momentum, they still had a very narrow orientation on counter-piracy operations. However, since the decline of piracy off the coast of Somalia, maritime security and how it relates to human security and development have gained significance in Africa. Woldeyes (2015: 128) confirms this noting that maritime security and its link to human security, and the latter’s link to poverty, is a key interest for African states in the Indian Ocean Region, owing to the nature of structural violence on the continent. Many scholars, among them Brits and Nel (2018: 237) and Woldeyes (2015: 122), argue that a focus on root causes to address both onshore and offshore insecurity, by means of human development initiatives yields better outcomes.

In the article “An East African perspective for paradigm shift on maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region” Yirga Gelaw Woldeyes (2015) emphasises the link between the maritime domain and hinterland areas. Essentially, the article confirms that security at sea and insecurity on land are in fact interrelated. Woldeyes (2015: 122) argues that maritime security should be considered based on historical lessons on the one hand, and human security and the needs of people on the other. In this paper, Woldeyes (2015: 131) states that the structural violence present in East Africa is linked to maritime security and that it is partly perpetuated by an overemphasis on securing resources over securing people. Further, as a result of this paradigm, the protection of cargo ships from pirate attacks has taken precedence over the prevention of human suffering and issues such as famine and conflict (Woldeyes 2015: 131). Essentially, this speaks to a “profit-over-people” mentality, perpetuated by external actors and arguably by African governments and elites as well.

It is clear, from the authors referred to, that at times human security concerns are secondary to traditional state-centric maritime interests. This is problematic as it implies a disconnect between maritime security and human security as if one can benefit without the other. What is clear from these authors’ work is that human (in)security is inextricably linked to maritime (in)security, thus strategies to address the latter require cross-domain focus and multi-actor collaboration. According to Walker (2020: 173-174) multilateral cooperation “anchors successive efforts” by state and non-state actors to foster and implement common maritime security strategies. Ideally, maritime cooperation should entail cooperation between state and non-state, non-military actors. This framework embodies elements of human security, as it is inclusive of non-state agents, who may possess a better understanding of the lived realities of human subjects at a grassroots (community) level. The same framework should be applied to processes of maritime securitisation, especially of African maritime security issues.

1.2.3 Securitisation of African maritime issues

Among the earliest scholars to study securitisation theory as conceived by the Copenhagen School were Barry Buzan (1998) and Ole Waever (1993; 1994). In a 2009 publication titled “Macrosecuritisation and security constellations: reconsidering scale in securitisation theory”, Buzan and Waever introduce the concepts of macrosecuritisation and security constellations, exploring how to “refine and improve the application of securitisation theory”. This study is

particularly relevant, specifically with regard to the securitisation of maritime spaces. According to Michelle Voyer et al (2018: 1) there is an observable trend toward increasing securitisation of maritime domains, specifically the world's oceans. This is what is known as 'maritime securitisation'. In the most recent edition of the "Routledge Handbook of Maritime Security", in the chapter titled "Maritime Securitisation", Vuori (2022) describes securitisation theory as an approach with which security in general and maritime security, in particular, can be studied. Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 519) confirm this noting that securitisation theory provides a "useful starting point to explore the performative power of security on governance whilst offering a set of core conceptual components to structure empirical research".

In the context of African maritime securitisation, scholars have focused primarily on piracy in the Horn of Africa. However, observably, in recent years the pronounced militarisation of the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) has drawn attention to the region and augmented academic scholarship on the GoG. A Google search of 'maritime securitisation in Africa' produces extensive links to literature on maritime threats in the GoG. However, there are some notable gaps. Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 519) argue that there is limited knowledge of what the "day-to-day response to IUU fishing looks like in practice" due to a lack of research on the process of fisheries securitisation in the GoG. In an article titled "Turning the tide: revisiting African maritime security", Vrey (2013: 1) notes that responses to threats off Africa's coast reflect a preference for cooperation between several stakeholders, in which they securitise maritime threats beyond piracy. Stenmanns and Ouma (2015: 87) in their focus on securitisation of the West African maritime domain, point out that the process has been highly ambiguous bringing new spaces, places, and relations into a play of problematisation". Similarly, Vrey (2013: 14) notes that in West Africa, securitisation has comprised a combination of military, institutional, and private actors in response to persisting maritime threats.

Itay Fischendler's (2015) typology of securitisation, grounded in research on environmental resource management, examines linguistic, institutional as well as structural mechanisms of securitisation. This is the typology applied by Beseng and Malcolm (2021) to their case study in the paper titled "Maritime security and the securitisation of fisheries in the Gulf of Guinea: experiences from Cameroon". In their paper, Beseng and Malcolm (2021) explore Cameroon's response to IUU fishing and conclude that Cameroon's fisheries sector was securitised using a range of linguistic, institutional, and structural mechanisms in tandem with highly military approaches. According to Joao Piedade (2016) in both West and Central Africa, securitisation was initiated in tandem with regional strategies and plans, in order to respond to persisting

maritime challenges. Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 519) acknowledge that Piedade's (2016) research highlighted an emerging trend in regional maritime security governance, however, they state that Piedade's research lacked an in-depth (detailed) analysis of securitisation. Others, like Ian Ralby (2018: 12), have focused on elaborating the manner in which maritime insecurity has evolved, by mapping the establishment of "military-backed cooperative initiatives" in the Gulf of Guinea. Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 519) argue that Ralby's focus was on general regional trends.

Based on the findings of the literature review, it appears that studies tend to focus more on the enactment of securitisation, however, the entire process, including the act of desecuritisation requires analysis. On the aspect of desecuritisation, Austin and Beaulieu-Brossard (2017) explore the process through which securitising moves are undertaken and conclude that securitisation and desecuritisation occur simultaneously. This means that securitising moves are not sequential or linear, but rather they are cyclical or interactive. On this point, studies around the securitisation-desecuritisation process, particularly as it relates to the maritime domain, are limited.

Vuori (2022: 103) confirms this, stating that there remains room for more studies on desecuritisation. This study concurs. According to Vuori (2022: 103) what is often missing from scholarship on maritime securitisation, is the "critical push of securitisation studies where in addition to showing how some process has taken place it is possible to show how things could have been different". Vuori (2022: 103) maintains that this creates "an opening for ethical interventions into the issue". Following Vuori's argument, this study will demonstrate how a human security approach to the securitisation of African maritime issues may produce an alternative outcome and apt framework for analysis.

Taking the above into consideration, this study explores the processes of securitisation, desecuritisation and re-securitisation, specifically as they relate to the African maritime domain and in relation to human security. The increasing trend of securitising African maritime issues, such as piracy off the coast of Somalia, and fisheries in the Gulf of Guinea, has prompted or even occurred parallel to the growing scholarship on maritime securitisation. However, what seems to be missing from the scholarship on maritime securitisation, is its assessment vis-à-vis human security. Given that Africa's maritime security challenges pose the greatest impact on human security conditions, moves to securitise maritime security issues should ideally be

grounded in a human security approach. This process and the subsequent effects (outcome) require an in-depth analysis.

1.3 Formulation and demarcation of the research problem

In terms of the conceptual demarcation, drawing from the indivisible link between maritime security and human security, this study is primarily concerned with maritime securitisation, resecuritisation, and desecuritisation in relation to human security. That is, how African stakeholders have securitised, certain maritime security issues and the subsequent implications for human security. To do this, the study explores how African states have enacted securitisation within their jurisdiction. Using different empirical examples of maritime security issues spread across the continent, the study will assess the cases of piracy off the coast of Somalia, and fisheries in the Gulf of Guinea, specifically in Cameroon and Ghana. In each of these cases, the study will explore how securitisation was enacted and its effects on human security; thereafter the analytical framework developed in chapter two will be applied, to ascertain what an alternate outcome may have been. This is done to demonstrate that maritime securitisation, without considerations of human security, may be ineffective and self-defeating. However, not all issues are matters of security, and making this designation (promoting an issue as a security matter or existential threat), can also have serious consequences. Thus, the study will also venture to develop a framework that deliberates which non-traditional maritime issues require securitisation, why and how this would occur.

The research assumption is as follows: in the African context human security is (should be) central to the processes of maritime securitisation, desecuritisation, and resecuritisation. Therefore, in securitising maritime issues, human security tenets¹ should guide (inform) the process.

The overarching theme that the study is concerned with is the process of securitising African maritime issues.

Two broad themes are discussed in this study. The first theme is that of the processes of maritime securitisation, desecuritisation and resecuritisation, to build an analytical framework centred around (grounded in) human security. The second theme applies the analytical

¹ The human security paradigm has five fundamental principles: (1) people-centred, (2) comprehensive, (3) context-specific, (4) prevention-oriented, and (5) protection and empowerment. These will be discussed further in Chapter Two.

framework developed in this study to the cases of piracy of the coast of Somalia, and securitisation of IUU fishing in the Gulf of Guinea, with a focus on fisheries in Cameroon and Ghana. This is done in order to theorise alternative outcomes for human security conditions, following the securitisation of maritime issues.

In the context of Africa, maritime security is inextricably linked to human security. Efforts to securitise maritime security issues entail securitising aspects of human insecurity, but what are the implications of failing to recognise this connection? This dynamic requires greater attention and therefore the core research question to be explored in this study is:

How, if at all, will maritime securitisation contribute towards fostering a positive human security condition in an African maritime security context?

In answering the core question, the following sub-questions will be considered:

- How does maritime securitisation, de-securitisation, and re-securitisation occur and in what ways does it affect human security?
- How can human security and maritime securitisation be conceptually integrated into a framework for African maritime security?
- How can the conceptual framework be applied to the examples of Somalia, Cameroon, and Ghana to explain the disconnect between human security and maritime security?

1.4 Objectives of the study

This study has three objectives. The study assesses the process and interplay of securitisation, de-securitisation and re-securitisation in order to demonstrate the effects of maritime securitisation on human security. The second objective of the study is to build an analytical framework with which to assess and understand maritime securitisation vis-à-vis human security. The third objective of this research is to contribute to the literature regarding African maritime security. To do this the study builds upon an array of secondary qualitative sources in order to construct the theoretical argument and illustrate the value of a human security approach to maritime securitisation.

1.5 Contribution of the study

There is an extensive range of scholarship on securitisation, and based on the literature review, it is clear that scholarship on maritime securitisation is growing. However, on this subject, there is a need to explore the relationship between the concepts of maritime securitisation and human security. With this in mind, the study aims to make the following contributions. First, to contribute to the growing body of literature on African maritime security and maritime securitisation. Second, to develop a framework with which the process(es) of maritime securitisation, de-securitisation and re-securitisation can be assessed and better understood.

1.6 Methodology

The research draws on a critical approach, and key concepts common in the sub-field of Security Studies, namely maritime (in)security, human (in)security, and securitisation. These concepts are defined and discussed in more detail in chapter two. The research is qualitative in nature, grounded in a conceptual framework, and focusing on available and relevant literature concerning African maritime security and maritime securitisation, desecuritisation and resecuritisation. The primary focus of the study is the processes of securitising African maritime issues and the subsequent impact on human security. From this, the study aims to build an analytical framework in which a human security approach is applied to maritime securitisation. This analytical framework is used throughout the study and applied to various cases in which securitisation has been enacted, namely the cases of piracy off the coast of Somalia, and IUU fishing in Cameroon, and Ghana. The research is exploratory, as the application of a human security approach to maritime securitisation of African maritime threats, is relatively under-researched.

The study is based primarily on a literature review of scholarly books and journal articles which cover the core concepts central to this study, namely securitisation, de-securitisation, re-securitisation, maritime security, and human security. Several primary and secondary sources are used, including documents produced by intergovernmental organisations, and reports from research institutes and think tanks. The primary sources include grey literature, namely speeches, press briefings, and declarations of key officials, to analyse the securitising moves enacted through the speech act. All the material used is available in the public domain. A potential limitation of the study is the unavailability of the complete maritime security strategy documents of certain regional economic communities (RECs). Another limitation is the

specifications of the scope and length of research, as it does not permit a wider study on additional regions; for that reason, the securitisation of irregular migration falls outside the purview of this study. Thus, the study comprises five chapters.

Chapter one outlines the research problem and demarcation of the study. It also consists of a literature overview that concludes with an identification of the gap in the relevant literature. The structure of the study is provided in this chapter.

Chapter two comprises the conceptual framework. The chapter begins with an exploration of the theory of securitisation, as conceived by the Copenhagen School. To do this, the section begins by discussing the work of Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and other notable theorists and academics who have studied securitisation. Following this the concept of maritime security is assessed, that is how it has evolved, and the dimensions attached to it. This leads to an assessment of the relationship between maritime security and human security. Thereafter, the concept of securitisation is assessed in relation to maritime security, namely the concept of maritime securitisation. Finally, the chapter develops an analytical framework in which a human security approach is applied to maritime securitisation. The framework developed in this chapter will be used in the analysis of the study.

Chapter three discusses the manner in which piracy off the coast of Somalia was deemed an existential threat and subsequently securitised by the relevant African stakeholders in collaboration with their non-African counterparts. This leads to an assessment of the implications of maritime securitisation on human security and the livelihoods of coastal communities. From this, the chapter explores the present-day situation, and thereafter applies the framework developed in chapter two, in order to theorise what an alternative outcome would look like.

Chapter four explores the securitising moves enacted in the Gulf of Guinea, and discusses the manner in which IUU fishing in Cameroon and Ghana was deemed an existential threat. Following this, the implications of maritime securitisation on human security and the livelihoods of coastal communities will be discussed. From this, the chapter explores the present-day situation, and thereafter apply the framework developed in chapter two, in order to theorise an alternative outcome.

The final chapter synthesises the information provided in the preceding chapters as well as provides the concluding remarks and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 2: A HUMAN SECURITY APPROACH TO MARITIME SECURITISATION – AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

While the tradition of securitisation has existed for several decades, there is now an observable trend towards increasing securitisation of maritime spaces, particularly in Africa (Voyer et al 2018: 1). Yet, how much thought is given to the implications of maritime securitisation on human security? From the securitisation of piracy off the coast of Somalia to the securitisation of IUU fishing in Cameroon and Ghana, what have been the consequences for human security? From the outset, it should be noted that this chapter provides an extension of the literature review from the preceding chapter. This chapter aims to develop an analytical framework that assists in explaining and applying a human security approach to maritime securitisation in the context of African maritime security.

In order to understand the phenomenon of maritime securitisation, it is necessary to reflect on the key concepts and theories which underpin this study. The concept of securitisation as conceived by securitisation theory within the Copenhagen School, as well as the concept of maritime security, are crucial to the understanding of maritime securitisation. Therefore, as a point of departure, the chapter explores securitisation theory and its central tenets. Thereafter, the chapter discusses the evolution of the concept of maritime security. This leads to a discussion about human security and its link to maritime security. This will illustrate that while there have been significant contributions to understanding the relationship between maritime security and human security, there remains an over-privileging of the traditional state-centric dimensions of maritime security. Consequently, human security considerations are often relegated to the periphery.

From this discussion, a human security approach to maritime securitisation is outlined and proposed as an analytical framework to assist in understanding and tackling African maritime security issues. The framework developed in this chapter will be applied throughout the study.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Securitisation and Securitisation Theory

The concept of securitisation and its earlier associative terms were introduced in Ole Waever's analysis of the conclusion of the Cold War (Bilgin 2011: 401). Barry Buzan (2015: 5) notes that the process of securitisation, as highlighted by the Copenhagen School, offers a "constructivism-all-the-way-down counterpoint to the materialist threat analysis of traditional Strategic Studies and realism". At its core, securitisation is about the manner in which security politics arise (Vuori 2022: 96). That is, the transformation of a particular issue from a political matter to a matter of security. This would entail framing an issue as an existential threat to a particular referent object (that which must be protected) (Peoples & Vaughn-Williams 2010: 77). Simply put, it involves promoting the status of an issue to a more serious issue, thus warranting an urgent (emergency) response. According to Buzan and Waever (2009: 12) many securitisation processes are often caused by the bulk of developments epitomised in the term globalisation.

At its core, securitisation theory as conceived by the Copenhagen School, revolves around the manner in which an issue becomes a matter of security (Beseng & Malcolm 2021: 522). For the Copenhagen School, security is a referential (denotative) practice, because the promotion of a politicised issue to a security issue does not imply it is a genuine existential threat, but rather it is presented as such (Peoples & Vaughn-Williams 2010: 76). Vuori (2022: 97) states that the securitisation process can be "contested or resisted". According to Vuori (2022: 97) securitisation can occur through "speech acts in high politics", however, it can also occur "diffusely through security practices, techniques and technologies". Moreover, the manner in which issues become security concerns or are "removed from security agendas is dynamic" (Vuori 2022: 97). Securitisation studies, according to Vuori (2022:97) aims to precisely discern, "who (securitising actors) can securitise (political moves via speech acts) which issues (threats), for whom (referent objects), why (perlocutionary intentions/how-causality), with what kinds of effects (interunit relations) and under what conditions (facilitation/impediment factors)". Buzan and Waever (2009: 12) note that securitisation processes can define threats as emerging from the global level, for example from global warming or financial instability, however, the referent objects may exist at the global level and other levels. The referent objects of security can "range from societal and identity questions to global or macro-level issues that concern the physical survival of most of humanity" (Vuori 2022: 97). With this in mind, a

securitising actor identifies an existential threat to a certain referent object, and in doing so frames the issue as “a special kind of politics or as above politics” (Beseng & Malcolm 2021: 522).

According to Vuori (2022: 97) despite the numerous dangers to referent objects, these perceived “threats” must first be labelled as threats. This aligns with the arguments of Buzan and Waever (2009: 4) noting that the processes of securitisation are subject to influence by several factors. Through (subsequent) political action, these threats are assigned “rights, duties, obligations, requirements and authorisations” that occur by “performing and convincing others to accept” (Vuori 2022: 97). Therefore, the act of securitisation warrants the use of extraordinary means and/or the deployment of emergency measures to respond to the perceived threat (Peoples & Vaughn-Williams 2010: 72).

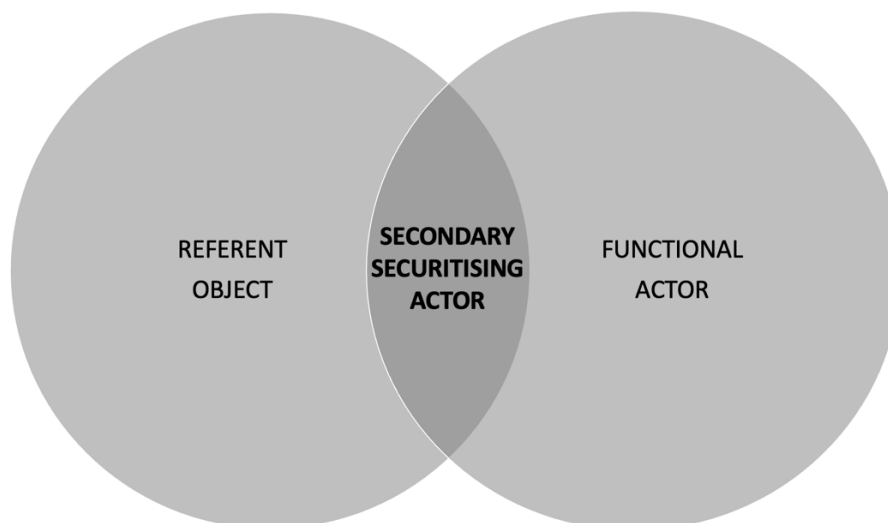
It is worth noting that securitisation may not always be intended to serve and protect ordinary people (or other referent objects); it can bear several political functions. According to Vuori (2022: 97) securitisation can be employed not only to elevate an issue onto a security agenda, but also “legitimise past or future actions, control subordinates or deter opponents”. Vuori (2022: 97) further argues that securitisation may also be used to “gain moral support without recourse to actual security action”. With this being the case, is there a role for non-state entities to play?

2.2.2 Non-state actors as secondary securitising actors?

In Buzan and Waever’s “Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security” (2009), they note that securitisation may shift away from a process solely conducted by state actors, to one in which sub-state or non-state actors are involved. Given the possibility that securitisation may arise from self-interested political motives, or even result in abuses of power, securitising actors and their actions, should ideally be checked by non-state entities. This would be similar to the ‘checks and balances system’ which allows separate branches of government, to check (oversee) other branches and prevent unethical actions, the centralization of power, and abuses of power. The study aims to propose an alternative framework for securitising Africa’s maritime security issues. In this alternative model, non-state agents would constitute secondary securitising actors.

Secondary securitising actors, according to Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 523), are ordinary people acting in consort with primary securitising actors (state and military agents), to frame security issues as threats and subsequently securitise them. Ordinary people as referent objects under threat and in need of protection, do not possess the power to securitise, however, functional actors represent the flipside, as they may prompt securitisation. Functional actors are “neither the securitising actors, nor the referent object” however, they still have some influence on the processes and decisions in the field of security (Vuori 2017; Floyd 2021: 81-82; Vuori 2022: 97). Floyd (2021: 84) states that functional actors do not necessarily aim to initiate “their own securitisation”, but rather convince more powerful actors (governments) of the existence of a perceived threat in need of securitisation. However, according to Floyd (2021: 84) functional actors are often the source of the threat – threats to the referent object. To reconcile this conflict, it may be necessary to view (imbue) the ‘referent object’ with the power of the ‘functional actor’, to produce the secondary securitising actors. These would constitute agents who not only reinforce securitisation, but may also prompt it.

Figure 1: Referent Object-Functional Actor nexus²



In the continuum described by Emerson (2019: 515), the securitiser is not a fixed agent, rather they are constituted through the securitising move. Similarly, the audience is also flexible moving from a “proscriptive subject interpellated by the securitiser to an agent whose everyday

² The infographic depicting the ‘referent object-functional actor nexus’, was designed by the author to provide a visual aid that demonstrates the intersection of the referent object and a functional actor to constitute a securitising actor.

life is integral to securitisation” (Emerson 2017: 515). The framework proposed is similar in the sense that the relevant stakeholders are not fixed agents, but rather, their role is dependent on the securitising moves. The framework proposed above, is one in which the characteristics (qualities) of functional actors are merged with referent objects to produce secondary securitising actors that serve the following purposes:

- Legitimise the act of securitisation and designate a perceived threat as real
- Safeguard against abuses of power, and strengthen accountability and transparency
- Empower ordinary people and promote a sense of inclusion and responsibility

The question is, how does securitisation occur in the maritime domain and how does it impact maritime security?

2.3 Conceptual Framework

2.3.1 Defining maritime security

From the outset it should be noted that in practice, maritime security has a long history going back centuries (Otto 2020: 6). The term maritime security, however, was initially coined in the 1990s, yet over time it has gained substantial attention as a result of the emergence of maritime terrorism and piracy off the coast of Somalia and elsewhere (Bueger & Edmunds 2017: 1293). Despite the depth of literature and scholarship on maritime security, the concept remains heavily debated (Bueger 2015: 159). Lisa Otto (2020: 7) points out that hitherto maritime security has been understood in terms of the realist and liberal viewpoints, in which the seas are viewed as a theatre for power projection and contestation. At the time of publication, Christian Bueger (2015: 159) noted that there was no consensus on the definition of maritime security. This is hardly surprising given that the term ‘security’ remains to this day a ‘contested concept’ as Barry Buzan and Lene Hansen (2009: 13) put it. Bueger (2015: 160) also classifies maritime security as an “essentially contested concept”, because the term sparks endless debates concerning its applicability and meaning in practice. According to Chapsos (2016: 59) the understanding of maritime security varies based on the viewpoint of the individual employing the term. Bueger and Edmunds (2018: 6) confirm that the definition of maritime

security and the priorities assigned to specific issues varies substantially between states and regions.

Given the difficulty of arriving at a consensus on the definition of maritime security, Bueger (2015: 159) developed several frameworks to identify commonalities and disagreements. Firstly, maritime security can be understood in relation to other concepts namely sea power, blue economy, marine safety and resilience (Bueger 2015: 159; Otto 2020: 8). Under Bueger's (2015: 161) maritime security matrix, the aforementioned concepts fall under wider concepts namely national security, economic development, marine environment, and human security, respectively. In the traditionalist view, maritime security is about sea power, geostrategy, and protecting the state and its core interests from maritime threats (Bueger et al 2019: 971). According to this view, maritime security is inextricably linked to sovereignty, a state's outward power projection, and the translation of that power into naval capabilities (sea power) (Bueger & Stockbruegger 2022: 2) This traditional understanding of maritime security also includes maritime diplomatic duties and constabulary roles namely patrolling and protecting sea lanes as well as maritime boundaries (Voyer et al 2018: 4). In contrast to the traditional view of security, a non-traditional critical view of maritime security is concerned with the protection of people and non-human factors such as wildlife and the environment from sea-based (maritime) threats (Peoples & Vaughn-Williams 2020: 6). This encapsulates both the marine safety dimension of maritime security and the human security (resilience) elements of maritime security as identified by Bueger (2015: 161). It should be noted that the dimensions of maritime security identified by Bueger (2015: 161) are inextricably linked to one another. Stated differently, insecurities in one dimension may affect the others, for example, climate change, a dimension of marine safety, may affect the resilience of coastal communities as well as a state's blue economy aspirations.

The second framework proposed by Bueger (2015: 125), is that maritime security can be understood according to the securitisation framework, which enables an assessment of the manner in which maritime threats are made. According to Bueger (2015: 159) this framework facilitates an understanding of how maritime threats are framed, to unveil which political interests and ideologies inform (underly) these threats. Third and finally, maritime security may be understood according to security practice theory, which enables an assessment of "what actors actually do when they claim to enhance maritime security" (Bueger 2015: 159).

It is important to note that over time the understanding of maritime security has evolved. Bueger (2022) has since revised (adapted) his argument, because at present an established understanding of maritime security is widely accepted. Bueger and Stockbruegger (2022: 2) argue that the difficulty no longer lies in the understanding of maritime security, but rather in how maritime issues should be prioritised. At present there are three recognised dimensions of maritime insecurity namely (1) maritime crimes or ‘blue crimes’; (2) terrorism and violent extremism in the maritime domain; and (3) inter-state rivalries and disputes (Bueger & Stockbruegger 2022: 2). The first dimension focuses on “non-state actors driven by economic gain”, whilst the second dimension focuses on “non-state actors driven by political objectives” (Bueger & Stockbruegger 2022: 2). In contrast to the first two dimensions, the third focuses on state actors in the pursuit of “strategic national interests” (Bueger & Stockbruegger 2022: 2). Arguably, the latter dimension constitutes the basis for maritime geopolitics.

Bueger (2015: 159) points out that the term maritime security shines a light on new security issues and prompts responses for dealing with these challenges. Bueger (2015: 159) further argues that discourse on maritime security tends to focus on listing the ‘threats’ which exist in the maritime domain. These threats often include piracy, armed robbery, maritime terrorism, maritime inter-state disputes, illegal fishing, trafficking of illicit goods, including human and wildlife trafficking, arms proliferation, maritime accidents and disasters, and environmental crimes (Bueger 2015: 159; Bruwer 2020: 1). Based on this approach, which points to prevailing threats in the maritime domain, maritime security then refers to the absence of these threats (Bueger 2015: 159). However, there is a danger in this approach, what Bueger (2015: 159) terms a ‘laundry list’ approach to defining maritime security. By merely listing existing maritime security threats, this approach overlooks the intersections (linkages) between these threats and fails to not only prioritise certain issues, but also indicate how these threats can be resolved (addressed) (Bueger 2015: 159). Bueger (2015: 159) goes further and argues that this approach sparks debates on which threats should be included and which should be excluded. Consequently, issues such as environmental crime, illegal fishing and port security have been given less attention compared to the more traditional security issues (Bueger & Edmunds 2017: 1293).

Bueger and Edmunds (2018: 23) argue that when it comes to maritime security, context is important. According to Bueger and Edmunds (2018: 23) maritime security governance and capacity building present different challenges depending on a country's history of maritime

activity (engagement), the stability of its government, and the strength of its institutions. Conflict-ridden countries with weak or fragmented institutions have a harder time securing their maritime domains effectively and with efficiency (Bueger & Edmunds 2018: 23). As a result, states facing such challenges, among them financial constraints and internal (domestic) turmoil often require the assistance of external actors in order to build their capacity and secure their maritime zones (McCabe 2019: 12). This, however, does not mean that maritime security strategies in one region, are applicable (or maybe transplanted) to another region. Bueger and Edmunds (2018: 6) point out that maritime security issues differ from country to country. Thus, there is no one-size-fits-all approach; stated differently, a copy-and-paste methodology is inadequate. Maritime security strategies must be customised (uniquely designed) based on the needs and conditions of a particular region, state and community. What is needed are strategies that speak to context and go to the heart of human security.

2.3.2 The evolution of the concept of human security

Human security as conceived by critical security studies theorists gained momentum in the mid-1990s. However, it should be noted that critical security scholarship pre-dates 1989 (Peoples & Vaughn-Williams 2010: 9). Following the end of the Cold War, it became apparent that the security and livelihoods of people were threatened by issues beyond military threats (Agir & Arman 2014: 107). In essence, critical security studies adopts a broader understanding of security, one which goes beyond the traditional (narrow) focus; it included both non-traditional (non-military) security issues and non-state actors (Newman 2010: 77). The widening or broadening of security entails a “shift away from the narrow focus of security”, to include threats beyond military ones, and accommodate economic, societal, political and environmental threats (Dalby 2000: 5). In stark contrast to the traditional conception of security, which views the state as the referent object (that which must be protected), the deepened view of security views individuals and groups as the ultimate referent objects (Hama 2017: 14). This framework also considers non-human species, such as wildlife and the environment as referent objects (Peoples & Vaughn-Williams 2020: 6). This framework culminated in the concept of human security, which emerged in the 1990s (Williams 2013: 3).

In 1992, former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali called for an “integrated approach to human security” to address the root causes of conflict (UN Trust Fund for Human Security 2009: 56). Pursuant to this, Boutros-Ghali submitted a report titled “An Agenda for Peace: preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping”. Boutros-Ghali’s agenda made the first explicit reference of human security within the UN (UN Trust Fund for Human Security 2009: 56). In the report, the concept of human security was used in association with the concepts of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and post-conflict recovery (UN Trust Fund for Human Security 2009: 56). Two years later, in 1994, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defined human security as “the safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease, and repression, and protection from sudden and harmful disruptions in patterns of daily life whether in jobs, homes or commodities.” According to the UNDP (1994: 22) human security entails the freedom from fear, that is the “absence of physical or direct violence”, and the freedom from want, which refers to the “absence of structural violence”.

At the UN Millennium Summit in 1999/2000, the then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, called on the international community to prioritise and promote the agendas of “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want”, epitomised in the concept of human security. Annan put forward the following definition of human security:

Human security, in its broadest sense, embraces far more than the absence of violent conflict. It encompasses human rights, good governance, access to education and health care and ensuring that each individual has opportunities and choices to fulfil his or her potential. Every step in this direction is also a step towards reducing poverty, achieving economic growth and preventing conflict. Freedom from want, freedom from fear, and the freedom of future generations to inherit a healthy natural environment -- these are the interrelated building blocks of human and therefore national security.

Annan’s (2005) characterisation of human security comprised three components, together with the “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want”, it also included the “freedom to live with dignity”. In essence, the UNDP definition of human security links it to the notion of human development, in this sense they are essentially flipsides of the same coin.

Since its emergence, the concept of human security has been reconceptualised several times. Like Annan, Amartya Sen (2002) included the notion of dignity in his conceptualisation of

human security. Sen (2002: 1) defined human security as the “protection from the menaces that threaten the survival, daily life and dignity of human beings and strengthening the efforts to confront these threats”. Siphamandla Zondi (2016: 205) defines human security as a “hybrid term” which blends the broadened concept of security with the concept of human development. Essentially, human security recognises the correlation between peace, development, human dignity, and human rights (United Nations 2016: 6).

According to the United Nations Handbook on Human Security (2016: 7), a human security approach is comprehensive, context-specific, people-centred, prevention-oriented, and geared towards building resilience. It is aimed at addressing various forms of human insecurity, namely “economic, political, personal, community, health, food, and environmental insecurities” (United Nations 2016: 7). The abovementioned insecurities and their respective root causes are as follows:

- Economic insecurity includes issues such as “persistent poverty, unemployment as well as insufficient access to credit and other economic opportunities”.
- Political insecurity includes issues such as the “lack of the rule of law, and justice, political repression, and any other human rights violation”.
- Personal insecurity entails “physical violence in all its forms”, this includes forced labour, child labour, as well as human trafficking.
- Community security includes “crime, terrorism as well as religious, inter-ethnic and other identity-based tensions”.
- Health insecurity refers to the “lack of access to adequate (basic) healthcare, and is also associated with issues such as epidemics, malnutrition and poor sanitation”.
- Food insecurity refers to the “unreliable (inconsistent) access to food, which may be the result of slow and sudden onset weather and climate events and/or sudden increases in food prices”.
- Environmental insecurity is associated with issues such as “natural disasters, resource depletion, environmental degradation, and climate change”.

The aforementioned dimensions are interrelated, as many of them, if not all, embody cross-cutting elements. Further, these human security dimensions not only relate to one another but to maritime security as well.

2.3.3 Maritime security and human security

Both maritime security and human security are essentially contested concepts (Newman 2001: 239). In both cases, there is no single agreed-upon definition of maritime security or human security, nor is there a consensus on the means with which to achieve maritime security and human security.

In some cases, maritime security and human security are viewed as separate, rather than as components of each other. Yet, human security cannot and should not be separated from maritime security, nor should it be a tangential or peripheral aspect of it. The reality is, maritime security and human security are interactive, they are essentially flip sides of the same coin. There is, however, a growing recognition of the linkages between human security and maritime security. In recent years, the link between maritime security and human security has been articulated, most notably by Christian Bueger (2015: 161). Like Bueger and Edmunds (2017: 1300), Chapsos (2016: 60) highlights the nexus between maritime security and human security. Chapsos (2016: 60) points out that human insecurity on land is an enabler of insecurity at sea.

An apt example is the way in which violent (armed) conflict poses the risk of spilling over into the maritime domain, jeopardizing the safety and stability of shipping lanes, and sometimes forcing refugees to flee by sea. The same is true on the reverse side. Whilst human insecurity on land is an enabler of insecurity at sea, insecurity at sea, may pose landward impacts. For example, overfishing and the subsequent degradation of fish stocks may engender food insecurity on land, particularly amongst fishing communities that rely on fish for both consumption and commerce. Therefore, human security approaches – should be integral – to maritime security efforts, because maritime issues ultimately affect people, whether directly or indirectly. Human security should be recognised, though non-cognate by language, but certainly, a relation of maritime security because a human security approach to maritime security is aptly suited to address root causes. Where such recognition is not yet a reality, the quest for the elevation of human security will remain elusive.

Essentially, the maritime security-human security nexus means that strategies aimed at addressing maritime security issues will have a direct effect on human security. This is especially true in the case of maritime securitisation.

2.3.4 Maritime securitisation

According to Michelle Voyer et al (2018: 1) there is an observable trend toward increasing securitisation of maritime domains, specifically the world's oceans. This is what is known as 'maritime securitisation'. Vuori (2022: 96) characterises maritime securitisation as a study with a focus on "the politics of making maritime concerns issues of security". In essence, it entails elevating the status of maritime issues, to emphasise the threat they pose to the security of the referent object(s). The literature on maritime securitisation has dealt with and continues to deal with a wide range of threats that both national (state) and international actors have securitised in their respective documents and activities (Vuori 2022: 98). According to Vuori (2022: 98) the literature on maritime securitisation has engaged with theoretical discourse as well, focusing on general theory and the dynamics of securitisation. This includes processes of de-securitisation, subsequent re-securitisation, counter-securitisation, and the failed securitisation of particular issues like fisheries and fishing disputes (Vuori 2022: 98).

In the context of maritime security, Vuori (2022: 98) outlines the number of ways particular threats can be dealt with:

- Deterrence: one of the many methods of tackling potential threats (primarily aimed at preventing the emergence or escalation of threats)
- Judicialised: enables the employment of constabulary actions
- Politicised: rather than being securitised, the act of politicisation facilitates the use of international diplomacy. This entails actions aimed at negotiation, mediation and conciliation.
- Securitised: possesses its "own domestic and international costs and effects, and is not an inevitable feature of any policy or practice, but a political choice".

According to Vuori (2022: 98) securitisation can "work in tandem with other logics for dealing with threats, such as risk management, and it can be used to combine disparate issues together into security continuums and fields of practice". In this sense, maritime securitisation, not only entails military (naval) elements, but institutional mechanisms as well, such as UN resolutions that designate security issues as threats, and subsequently address them.

Therefore, with this in mind, securitisation may occur alongside development-oriented (human security) approaches to security. It should be noted, that securitisation, even in the maritime

domain may have adverse consequences on socio-economic conditions and the livelihoods of ordinary people – those already plagued by insecurity. Thus, the solution to resolving this issue may lie in a human security approach to maritime securitisation.

2.4 Analytical Framework

2.4.1 A human security approach to maritime securitisation

When responding to maritime security, human security must constitute the starting point, as an operational foundation as well as the end goal. Human beings are at the core (centre) of maritime security challenges. Whether as perpetrators of maritime crimes or the victims of vulnerabilities emerging from the seas, people face the greatest threats. Given the linkages between human security and maritime security, the act of securitising the maritime domain and issues in this space should reflect and/or be grounded in the paradigm of human security. Stated differently, maritime securitisation should take cognisance of the tenets of human security. These tenets – comprehensiveness, people-centred, prevention-oriented, context-specific, and resilience-building – should constitute a guide, as opposed to a checklist and mere ticking boxes. Ordinary people, be they local coastal communities, fishing villages, seafarers, or civil society organisations (CSOs), should be included in efforts to address maritime security issues, in particular the process of maritime securitisation.

A human security approach to maritime securitisation may look as follows:

- Comprehensive: an approach which not only focuses on the human security dimensions of maritime security, but all the dimensions identified by Christian Bueger (2015: 159), however, with human security as the core (focal point);
- People-centred: the referent object is people and communities; however, they would constitute not only that which must be protected, but they should also play a central role in securitising that which threatens them, thus, the process is empowering and conducive to inculcating ownership, commitment, and collective (mutual) identification;
- Prevention-oriented: strategies aimed at not only addressing an existing problem but averting potential future issues;
- Context-specific: uniquely tailored strategies based on the sub-region, scale, and impact of the security issue, in essence, strategies that are relevant, responsive, and proactive;

- Resilience-building: a strategy that moves beyond short-term gains, to encompass considerations of the long-term effects of maritime securitisation, these constitute sustainable approaches.

2.4.2 Securitisation continuum

It is worth noting that long-term securitisation may pose drastic adverse effects on socio-economic conditions and the livelihoods of ordinary people. Thus, the act of securitising, particularly from a human security approach, should include a process of desecuritisation once the ‘threat’ has been contained (managed). In this sense, desecuritisation would entail scaling down the emergency measures enacted to curb the initial threat. From this point, the strategy should not be one of securitisation, but rather one premised on a developmental approach. This does not entail a military response, but rather a strategy that focuses on consolidating what has been done by reconstructing the capacity of the referent objects and building their resilience, to sustain a conducive environment. Should the initial issue (threat) re-emerge or escalate it may be necessary to embark on a process of re-securitisation; however, based on the lessons from the previous action of securitisation.

Influenced by the work of Vuori (2022), the process described above, of securitisation, desecuritisation, and resecuritisation, is what the study dubs a ‘securitisation continuum’. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, a continuum is “something that changes in character gradually or in very slight stages without any clear dividing points. In 1994, Didier Bigo coined the concept of a security continuum, and defined it as the “blurring of the distinction between international; and external security”. Another characterisation of a security continuum offered in the ‘Sixth European Security Summit White Paper’ (2019), is the “optimisation of resilience by ensuring the absence of weak links in the security chain”. What this essentially means, is shoring up and strengthening each stage and/or link involved to the continuum, and done in such a way that the links are in-built and intrinsic. In the context of security, the Threat Analysis Group, LLC (2011) characterises a security continuum as comprising four distinct security strategies namely (1) deterrence, (2) prevention, (3) mitigation, and (4) investigation.

This study argues that a securitisation continuum constitutes a process in which securitisation cannot exist and/or occur successfully without subsequent desecuritisation and resecuritisation. In the context of maritime securitisation this would entail deterring potential threats, in order to prevent their emergence or escalation, to mitigate the possible impacts and, in the worst case,

should the threat emerge, investigate its re-occurrence and subsequently resecure or manage the issue as required. In this study a human security-centred maritime securitisation continuum is as follows:

Table 1: Securitisation Continuum³

	Maritime Securitisation	Maritime Desecuritisation	Maritime Resecuritisation	Maritime Desecuritisation
What	Initiating an urgent response to a perceived maritime threat.	Gradually, scaling down the emergency measures enacted to respond to the initial threat.	Reinstating securitisation measures, following desecuritisation.	Once again scaling down the measures of resecuritisation, and moving toward a developmental approach
Why	Recognition that the issue constitutes a serious threat to a particular referent object.	The severity of threat has diminished to a level manageable through policy.	The initial threat has re-emerged or re-escalated, once again posing a major threat.	The issue no longer constitutes an emergency, and can thus be managed through moderate measures
When	Following the speech act, in tandem with the acceptance of the audience, namely referent objects', that the threat and act of securitising is legitimate.	After consultation with the referent objects, those most affected, not only by the threat, but by the securitising measures as well.	At the request of the referent objects; with careful consideration of the measures previously enacted.	At the request of the referent objects, and after careful evaluation of the issue.
How	Traditionally, securitisation entails a primarily military response, however, a human security approach entails promoting the perceived threat as a core issue, and placing it high on a security agenda. If absolutely, necessary it may encompass military dimensions, implementing policies, initiating security practices, and integrating technologies to tackle the issue.	Scaling down of securitisation measures should include mechanisms for evaluation and monitoring.	Resecuritisation should be instituted in proportion to the re-emerging threat as well as in line with the findings from the evaluation and monitoring done following the initial desecuritisation.	Scaling down resecuritisation measures and implementing developmental strategies, namely people-centred post-securitisation recovery plans, such as strategies aimed at building resilience.

³ This table was designed by the researcher (student), to concisely frame and explain the securitisation continuum.

A final and integral component of the securitisation continuum, is the 'who'. Who are the securitising agents in the continuum. Although government and military agents remain the primary securitisers, throughout the entire process, from start to finish, non-state agents should play a central role, as secondary securitising actors.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter outlined and critically analysed the concept of securitisation and its associative terms. Further, the concept of maritime security and its relation to human security was assessed in this chapter. Both these concepts were subsequently employed to develop an analytical framework in which human security informs the process of maritime securitisation.

It is evident from the analysis in this chapter that the spectrum of issues that may be securitised is endless, given the broadened understanding of security. Throughout the discussion, it became clear that securitisation presents several challenges. The complex nature of securitisation implies that there is no one method of securitisation, no perfect formula, or a one-size-fits-all approach. This is especially true in the case of African issues, which require uniquely tailored approaches, as opposed to a copying-and-pasting of strategies constructed outside the African context and environment.

Despite the extensive literature on securitisation, a human security (developmental) approach to maritime securitisation has yet to be explored, particularly in an African context. That is the objective of this study, to propose an alternative framework for securitising Africa's maritime security issues as well as understanding these securitising moves.

In the next chapter, the study will assess the case of Somali piracy, the mechanisms of securitisation, and the subsequent implications to human security. Thereafter, the analytical framework developed in this chapter will be applied to theorise an alternative outcome.

CHAPTER 3:

THE SECURITISATION OF PIRACY OFF THE COAST SOMALIA

3.1 Introduction

Okafor-Yarwood and Onuoha (2023: 950) argue that piracy is considered the “prime threat driving much of the global securitisation of the maritime domain”. However, the securitisation of maritime security issues is a relatively new phenomenon in Africa. Whereas non-African actors, specifically Western countries perhaps have a long tradition of maritime securitisation, the opposite is true for their African counterparts. In order to understand how African maritime security issues have been securitised, and the implications to human security, this chapter will assess the case of piracy off the coast of Somalia.

The first part of the chapter will focus on the conceptualisation of the term piracy and how the phenomenon has evolved and manifested in African waters, specifically in Somalia. The next section will provide background on the issue of piracy off the coast of Somalia. Following this, the chapter will discuss the securitisation measures enacted in order to combat piracy in the Horn of Africa region. Thereafter, depending on the availability of current literature and updated information, an assessment of the present-day situation as well as the human security conditions will follow. For this, the study is primarily focused on the period between 2004 and 2022. Finally, the chapter will apply the analytical framework and the securitisation continuum developed in the previous chapter in order to theorise an alternative outcome.

3.2 Case of piracy off the coast of Somalia

3.2.1 What is piracy?

It is worth noting that piracy is not a new phenomenon. Otto and Jernberg (2020: 95) state that piracy is one of the oldest threats to maritime security.⁴ With the exception of Asia, piracy was presumed to have been eradicated in most of the world’s oceans, by the 1830s (Otto & Jernberg 2020: 95). However, by the late twentieth century and the early twenty-first century, piracy re-

⁴Amirell et al (2021: 9) argue that the origins of piracy can be traced to the pre-historic past, around eighty years ago when people first began venturing out to sea for commercial purposes.

emerged as a major threat to international maritime security and stability (Otto & Jernberg 2020: 95). The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) defines piracy as “any illegal acts of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by the crew or the passengers of a private ship or a private aircraft, and directed: on the high seas, against another ship or aircraft, or persons or property on board such ship or aircraft” (UN 1994: 61). De Souza (1992: 13) defines piracy as “armed robbery involving the use of ships”, this definition encompasses three elements namely violence, acquisition and maritime travel. Besley et al (2012: 2) point out that this illicit practice has posed a threat to maritime-trade for centuries. Besley et al (2012: 2) as well as Chapsos (2016: 68) argue that piracy thrives in regions lacking law and order.⁵ This lack of law and order often stems from poor state capacity and/or government complicity with criminal elements. This thus creates the conditions and environment in which piracy may thrive.

Like many other security concepts, the term piracy may take on various meanings, depending on the context and the manifestation of the issue. For Amirell et al (2021: 15), piracy is a fundamentally European concept, which at times is inappropriately applied to economic, political, social, and cultural contexts which differ vastly from those prevailing in Europe. Therefore, in the case of African maritime security the understanding of piracy, in particular the root causes, and the motivations of the perpetrators may vary in scope and nature. Thus, strategies to address piracy in African waters should be carefully tailored to suit the African context (environment). A pertinent case to study in order to assess the nuances of piracy in Africa, is the case of piracy off the coast of Somalia.

3.2.2 Understanding piracy off the coast of Somalia

In the mid-2000s, what Lanigan (2016: 1) dubs a “scourge of maritime piracy” emerged in the Horn of Africa region, emanating from Somali territorial waters. According to Lanigan (2016: 1) the Horn of Africa has a “long and turbulent history which underlies the complicated and dynamic geopolitics of the region”. This region has been plagued by insecurity, ranging from famine and conflict to mass flows of refugees and internally displaced people (Lanigan 2016: 1). This has been compounded by acts of piracy and armed robbery. Piracy off the coast of

⁵ According to Chapsos (2016: 68) fragile or unstable states offer an ideal environment for pirates to conduct their activities. These otherwise ungoverned spaces or poorly governed areas serve as sanctuaries (safe havens) for pirates.

Somalia engendered a multifaceted threat to global, economic, strategic as well as security interests (Otto 2012: 2). With the case of Somali piracy, it may be argued that there were several enabling factors. In 2008, piracy off the coast of Somalia increased to proportions never witnessed before in the Horn of Africa.

At a seminar in 2009 at the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, the discussants noted that the collapse of Siad Barre's regime,⁶ in 1991 in Somalia, entrenched insecurity on a large scale. To provide context, during the early 2000s, Somalia was governed by a system of clans that operated in three relatively autonomous regions, these included Somaliland in the northwest, Central Somalia in the central and southern regions as well as Puntland in the northeast (Gilpin 2009: 5).⁷ According to Gilpin (2009: 5) a mix of corruption, inter-clan rivalry, arms proliferation, extremism and impunity, facilitated high levels of crime. Gilpin (2009: 5) argues that this widespread insecurity including poverty, unemployment and the absence of a central authority, led to the dispersal of insecurity on land, toward the sea.

Gilpin (2009: 6) argues that clan militia transitioned to maritime crime under the guise of protecting Somalia's territorial waters from poachers and polluters. This may not be entirely false. There was indeed a wave of illegal fishing and pollution in the waters off Somalia, perpetrated by foreign vessels. This is confirmed by Bjoern Seibert (2009) and a Marine Insight article by Raunek (2022) which points out that the illegal activity of external actors, specifically fishing trawlers, "outmuscled" the local Somali fisherfolk, and depleted the fisheries in the area. This sparked recurrent major conflict over fish. Devlin et al (2022: vii) argue that in the Somali region, fisheries conflict emerged as a result of "unmanaged competition over fish stocks and was exacerbated by institutional instability" within Somalia's fisheries sector. According to Moss and Pigeon (2022: 09), early attacks on vessels were employed by the Somali National Movement (SNM) to dissuade shipping companies from conducting trade with Siad Barre's regime.⁸

⁶ Mohammed Siad Barre took power through a military coup d'état in 1969; he ruled until his government collapsed in 1991 (Leeson 2007: 692).

⁷ A 2009 report by the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD) identifies several clans which operated at the time, and distinguishes between nomadic clans and agro-pastoralist groups.

⁸ In December 1989, near the port of Zeila in northern Somalia, armed SNM rebels hijacked *Kwanda*, an Italian-flagged tanker, whose petroleum cargo was subsequently discharged, while the vessels and crew were robbed and held hostage for 27 days (Sone 2010: 19).

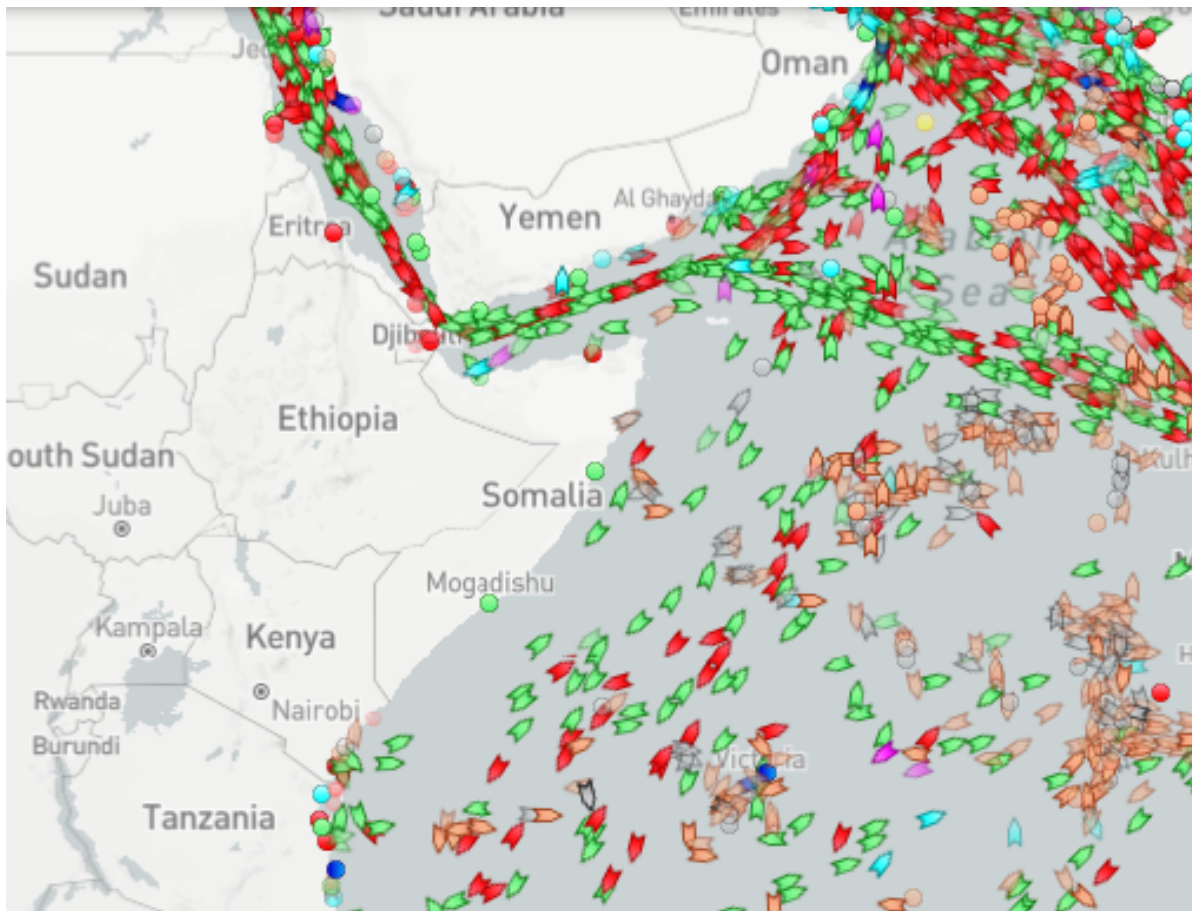
In a recent ‘Secure Fisheries’ publication, Devlin et al (2022: vi) note that fisheries conflict in Somalia clustered around different periods, namely the late 1990s, the mid-2000s and in late 2010. In the late 1990s, fisheries conflict occurred between foreign fishers and domestic fishers in the Horn of Africa (Devlin et al 2022: vi). In late 2010, the main participants, on opposing sides were again foreign fishers and domestic fishers (Devlin et al 2022: vi). In the mid-2000s however, the fisheries conflict manifested as pirate attacks of foreign vessels which were engaging in illegal fishing (Devlin et al 2022: vi). Observably, this rampant illicit fishing occurred alongside the illicit dumping of nuclear waste and other toxic materials (McConnell 2012). Consequently, according to Raunek (2009) Somalis were prompted to explore alternative methods to make money. At this point, clan militia began forcibly levying taxes as well as fines on vessels they managed to board (Gilpin 2009: 6). Raunek (2009) states that eventually fishermen aligned with the local militia, and unemployed youth in order to hijack vessels and subsequently demand ransom. Seibert (2009) argues that the motives behind piracy evolved when it became apparent how lucrative it is. It was believed that senior officials in Puntland were purportedly abetting piracy networks (Gilpin 2009: 6). This would have made cooperation between senior officials in Puntland and external stakeholders particularly difficult. Ultimately, piracy off the coast of Somalia was deemed to be a threat posing major dangers to the stability of the region, and in turn global trade routes situated in the Horn of Africa.

3.3 The securitisation of piracy off the coast of Somalia

3.3.1 Threat and referent object

Despite the recognition that illegal fishing and waste dumping is what drove Somali piracy, illegal fishing and waste pollution were not securitised or treated as the most pressing matter. Rather, in this case, pirate attacks were designated a major threat (Tsvekova 2009: 44; Oliveira 2018: 505). In 2008, it was estimated that approximately 500 million USD of the global trade and shipping industry was incurred as a result of Somali piracy (Gilpin 2009: 7). These costs affected several vessels from various parts of the world. It is noteworthy that the Horn of Africa holds significant geostrategic importance for global trade and shipping (Gaas 2019: 12). On any given day, thousands of vessels transit this region (see fig. 2).

Figure 2: Screenshot of an image depicting the real-time maritime traffic in the Horn of Africa (Marine Traffic 2023)



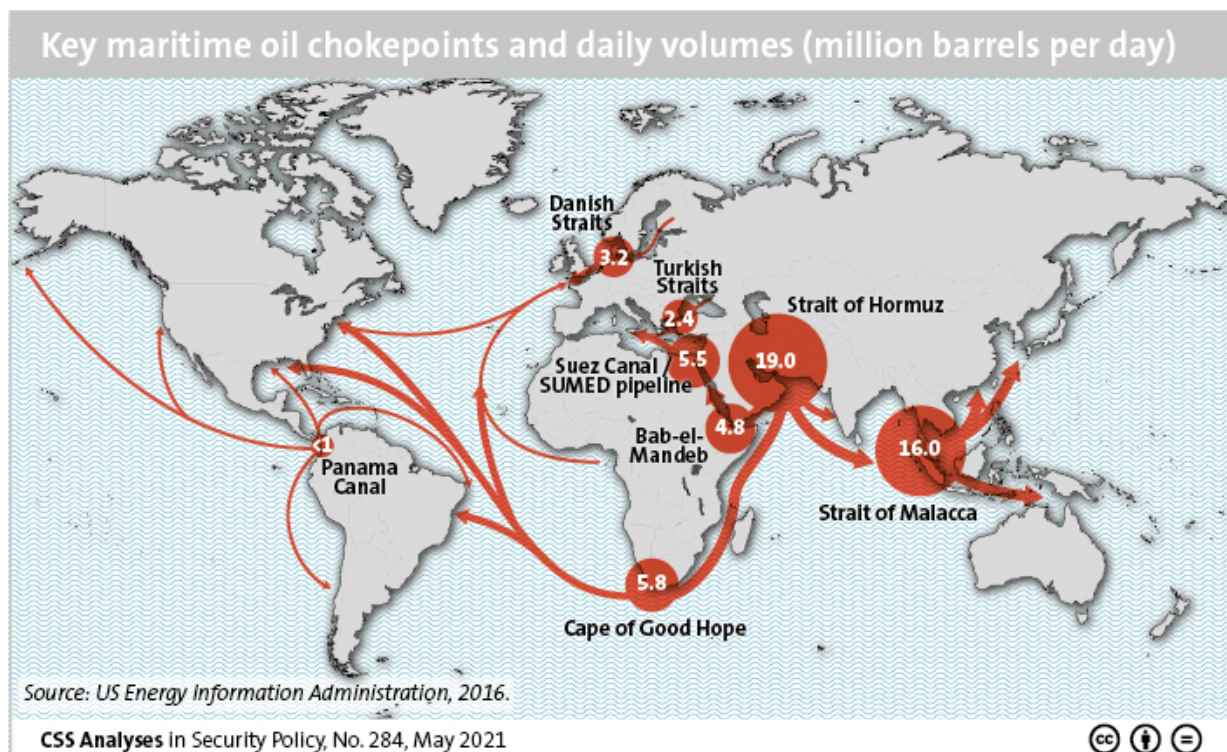
The red icons represent tankers, the green represents cargo vessels, the dark blue (indigo) icons represent passenger vessels, the orange icons represent fishing vessels, the purple icons represent pleasure crafts, and the little blue icons represent tugs and special crafts. Albeit few, the yellow icons represent high-speed crafts and the unspecified icons are marked in grey.

To put it in perspective, the Horn of Africa is strategically located within close proximity to the oil-rich Arabian Peninsula (Mabera 2020: 1). This region in the Indian Ocean holds substantial geostrategic and geo-economic significance. The Bab El-Mandeb Strait connects the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea in the wider Indian Ocean (Willima & Ramachela 2022). Therefore, the Bab-El-Mandeb Strait is considered a vital maritime waterway and chokepoint⁹, critical to the world's oil trade (Mabera 2020: 1). Oil tankers from the Arab Gulf states and Iran transit this waterway before traversing the trade

⁹ Maritime chokepoints are narrow waterways (channels) which connect two bodies of water along highly used sea routes, also known as Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) (Singh 2022: 3).

routes in the wider Indian Ocean (see fig. 3), and eventually arriving in ports around the world (Cordesman et al 2014: iv).

Figure 3: Map of the world's oceans, illustrating the strategic maritime chokepoints through which millions of barrels transit on a daily (Centre for Security Studies 2021).



It is clear from figure 3, that in 2021 the number of oil barrels transiting the Bab El-Mandeb Strait per day was roughly 4.8 million, combined with the 5.5 million barrels transiting the Suez Canal, roughly 10.3 million barrels of oil passed through the Horn of Africa per day.

Chokepoints are central to maritime security and vital to global trade, yet their narrow geography, makes them vulnerable hotspots for maritime attacks (Schneider 2020: 187; Veronneau & Yoho 2020: 138). Thus, maritime security, but also oil-driven energy security hinges on the protection and stability of these waterways. From this standpoint, Somali piracy and the costs incurred from persistent attacks were perceived as a large enough threat to warrant securitisation on a mass scale.

In this case, piracy off the coast of Somalia was perceived as posing a danger to a particular referent object, namely the stability of countries in the region as well as global shipping routes, oil tankers traversing these waters, and the economies of states around the world (Tsvekova 2009: 44; McCabe 2019: 330; Moreschi 2022: 6). Besley et al (2012: 3) estimate that the

resource costs incurred as a consequence of Somali piracy to be around 120 million USD annually.

Thus, the recognition of Somali piracy as a major threat (Tsvetkova 2009: 44; Oliveira 2018: 505), prompted extraordinary measures by several stakeholders to respond to this issue (Moreschi 2022: 6).

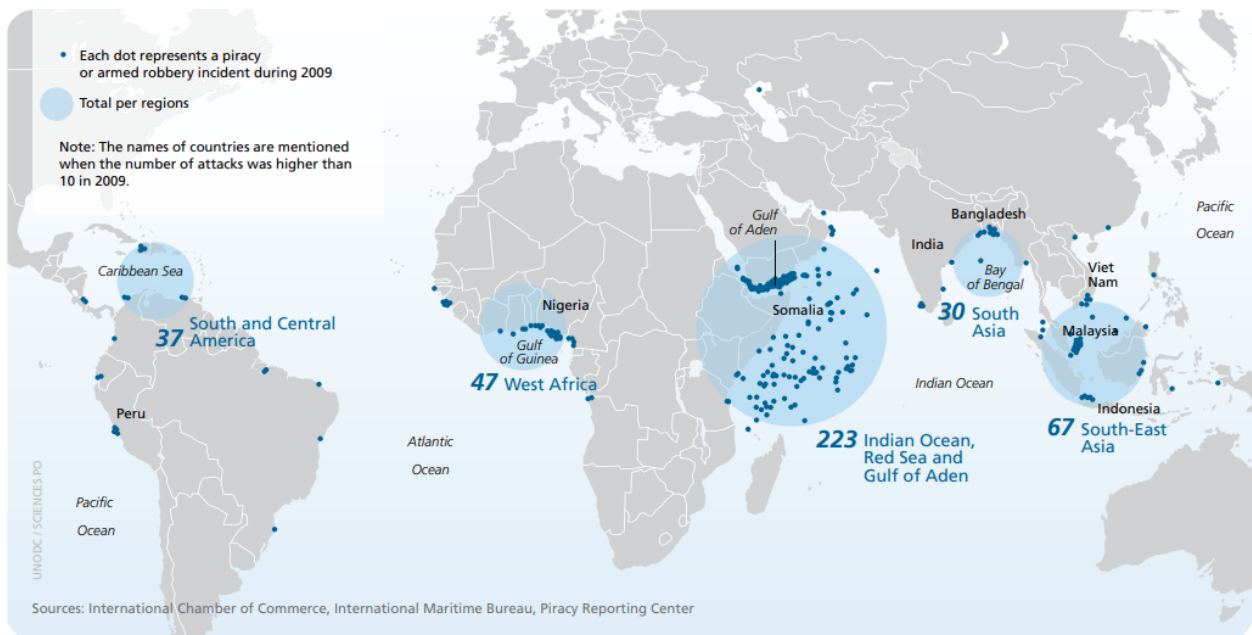
3.3.2 Securitising actors and action

Besley et al (2012: 3) argues that piracy has always been an issue due to the difficulty reaching a consensus over whose responsibility it is to tackle the problem and how to share the costs (burden). However, in the case of piracy off the coast of Somalia, the relevant stakeholders managed to pull together and settle on a plan of action.

At the height of Somali piracy, a number of African, and non-African countries collaborated to combat this issue (Morechi 2022: 6). According to Gilpin (2009: 7) in late 2008, over 30 naval vessels from more than a dozen countries were deployed in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean.¹⁰ Despite the presence of a large multi-national armada, attempted hijackings rose substantially in late 2008 (Gilpin 2009: 7). Figures demonstrate that between January 2009 and the end of May 2009, hijackings surpassed the total hijackings of the previous year. In fact, in 2009, the number of attacks in Somalia and the Gulf of Aden surpassed the number of global pirate attacks (UNODC 2010: 9) (see fig. 4). Further, attacks in the first quarter of 2009 (January to March), were ten times higher than attacks during the first quarter of 2008 (Gilpin 2009: 7).

¹⁰ Countries that deployed naval forces in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean in May 2009 included: “Australia, Canada, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, India, Iran, Italy, Japan, South Korea, The Netherlands, Pakistan, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom and United States”.

Figure 4: Map of the world's oceans illustrating the number of pirate attacks in 2009 (UNODC 2010).



In the figure above, each blue dot represents an act of piracy or armed robbery that occurred in 2009. From this map, it is clear that the majority of these attacks, 223 to be exact, took place in the Horn of Africa region.

The seriousness attached to Somali piracy is evident in the language used to frame the issue. In late 2008, US defence officials from the Pentagon and the White House used certain words and phrases to demonstrate the urgency to tackle piracy. Quoting directly, a Reuters article published on 19 November 2008, notes that the White House spokeswoman at the time, Dana Perino, called Somali piracy “a very complicated issue”. According to Reuters (2008) Perino further stated that present-day piracy is “much more dangerous, and they (the pirates) have a lot more weapons”. The use of such descriptive and somewhat emotive language served to demonstrate the gravity of Somali piracy and the increase in attacks.

Another indication of the severity of the issue was evident first and foremost, in the decision by the then UN Secretary General Mr Ban Ki-Moon’s endorsement of the extension of the International Maritime Organisation’s (IMO) anti-piracy mandate (Relief Web 2009). In a letter to Mr Efthimios Mitropoulos, the IMO Secretary General at the time, Mr Ki-Moon wrote, “We must do more and act quickly to fight this terrible scourge” (United Nations 2008).

This urgency was further reflected in the plethora of UN resolutions concerning Somali piracy, in particular resolutions 1814, 1816, 1838, 1844, 1846, all from 2008 (United Nations Security Council report 2023). The subsequent result of all these resolutions, was the adoption of Resolution 1851. The official resolution document is framed in such a way that it notes the severity of the issue and the UN's commitment to resolving piracy off the coast of Somalia. The second paragraph stipulates:

*Continuing to be **gravely concerned** by the **dramatic increase** in the incidents of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia in the last six months, and by the **threat** that piracy and armed robbery at sea against vessels pose to the prompt, safe and effective delivery of humanitarian aid to Somalia, and noting that pirate **attacks** off the coast of Somalia have become **more sophisticated and daring** and have **expanded** in their geographic scope, notably evidenced by the hijacking of the M/V Sirius Star 500 nautical miles off the coast of Kenya and subsequent unsuccessful attempts well east of Tanzania.*¹¹

Paragraph five goes further in noting the seriousness of Somali piracy, it states:

*Again, taking into account the **crisis situation in Somalia**, and the **lack of capacity** of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to interdict, or upon interdiction to prosecute pirates or to patrol and secure the waters off the coast of Somalia, including the international sea lanes and Somalia's territorial waters.*

As a direct result of UN resolution 1851, the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) was formed (Lanigan 2016: 27). This resolution as noted by the UN document, prompted the "launching of the European Union (EU) Operation Atalanta to combat piracy off

¹¹ All bolded text in the indented quotations is included by the author to add emphasis to specific linguistic tools of securitisation. The same method for emphasis added is applied throughout the text, particularly in chapters three and four.

the coast of Somalia and to protect vulnerable ships bound for Somalia”. Vrey (2013: 14) confirms that the securitisation of maritime threats in East Africa resulted in an extensive naval response, by and large operating under the umbrella of the United Nations (UN).

According to Walker and Reva (2022) since 2008, on an annual basis the UNSC had instituted and renewed its anti-piracy resolutions. This allowed foreign naval missions to “legitimately use all necessary means to repress acts of piracy and armed robbery” in Somalia’s territorial waters, with the consent of the Somali government (Walker & Reva 2022). Essentially, the combined UNSC resolutions facilitated the intervention in Somalia’s territorial waters in order to pursue, intercept and arrest pirates (Walker & Reva 2022).

3.3.3 Response

Following the recognition of Somali piracy as a threat, the waters surrounding the Horn of Africa became highly militarised (Vrey 2011: 54; Melvin 2019: 1). This militarisation culminated in the increased presence, patrols and other activities of regional and international actors, as well as their specialised task forces. Among these, the most notable were the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS), and the EU Operation Atalanta.

The CGPCS became one of the most significant initiatives to combat Somali piracy. Pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1851, the CGPCS was established in 2009 (Tardy 2014: 3). The U.S Department of State characterises this formation as a “voluntary ad hoc international forum” which brought together several countries, organisations and industry groups in order to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia. To this effect, all the participants involved sought to coordinate military, political, industry as well as non-governmental efforts towards the eradication of Somali piracy. The CGPCS focused on addressing several aspects of counterpiracy operations, with collaboration between actors in the public and private sectors, (Lanigan 2016: 1). This was carried out through the CGPCS Working Groups.¹² Working Group One, chaired by the UK, focused on capacity building, force generation, and operational coordination. Working Group Two, chaired by Portugal, constituted a ‘legal forum of the CGPCS’, which focused on judicial mechanisms for deterring acts of piracy. Working Group Three, chaired by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), focused on ‘maritime counterpiracy and

¹² See <https://2009-2017.state.gov/t/pm/rls/fs/2016/255175.htm>

mitigation operations’, and worked with the commercial shipping industry to enhance awareness and capabilities. Working Group Four, chaired by Italy, focused on ‘disrupting pirate networks onshore’, by identifying illicit financial flows related to piracy. In November 2013, the Contact Group convened its first meeting in the Horn of Africa, in Djibouti (U.S. Department of State 2016). In its early years, the CGPCS was not viewed positively by all the relevant stakeholders, in particular the Somali government. Ehrhart and Petretto (2012: 36) argue that Somali politicians, the Transitional Parliament in particular, “persistently oppose changing their current stance as they fear that declaring the EEZ instead of territorial waters will in some way give away Somali sovereignty”. The CGPCS persists today, however its membership and capacity no longer boasts preponderance. According to Bueger and Stockbruegger (2022) at present the CGPCS has fewer participants who engage at lower diplomatic levels.

Besides the CGPCS, Operation Atalanta, also known as European Union Naval Forces (EU NAVFOR) is another one notable example, which may be viewed as complementary to the CGPCS. According to their mission statement, Operation Atalanta constitutes an “integral part of the EU’s approach to the Horn of Africa,” which also supports what it calls its sister missions, EUCAP-Somalia and EUTM-Somalia. The former, is the European Union Capacity Building Mission in Somalia, which according to the European External Action Service (EEAS)¹³ is a “civilian crisis management mission that supports the development of Somali maritime security and wider police capacity”. While the latter, the European Union Training Mission in Somalia, launched on 7 April 2010, aims to strengthen the Somali federal defence institutions through training, mentoring and advice (EUTM 2017). Both initiatives noted above are aimed at building capacity, in essence they are intended to build resilience. However, it is necessary to examine the extent to which these initiatives have fostered the resilience of the local Somali population, if at all. Some analysts, like Badar (2022) have argued that along with the EUNAVFOR, the EUCAP and EUTM should be “overhauled to reflect the country’s needs and contribution”. This is a noteworthy argument as it emphasizes the necessity to enhance the

¹³ The European External Action Service (EEAS), is the EU’s diplomatic service. It is responsible for overseeing the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy with the goal of promoting peace, prosperity, and security (EEAS 2021) See [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/about-european-external-action-service_en#:~:text=External%20Action%20Service-.The%20European%20External%20Action%20Service%20\(EEAS\)%20is%20the%20European%20Union's,18.08.2021%20Strategic%20Communications](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/about-european-external-action-service_en#:~:text=External%20Action%20Service-.The%20European%20External%20Action%20Service%20(EEAS)%20is%20the%20European%20Union's,18.08.2021%20Strategic%20Communications) .

agency of the Somali government in taking charge of their own maritime security, and by extension human security.

3.4 Human security impact

The coordinated efforts were a success in that they managed to quell the severity of attacks (Bruwer 2020: 1), but arguably they did not address the root causes of the problem, because the strategy lacked a human security dimension. Reva (2018) confirms this arguing that although pirate attacks have subsided, the root causes of piracy still need to be addressed. It may be argued that the initial securitising moves focused primarily on the protection of commercial vessels and the interests of stakeholders in the private sector.

Referring back to paragraph two of the UN resolution 1851, and paying close attention to the language (linguistic tools), it states:

*Continuing to be gravely concerned by the dramatic increase in the incidents of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia in the last six months, and by **the threat that piracy and armed robbery at sea against vessels pose to the prompt, safe and effective delivery of humanitarian aid to Somalia**, and noting that pirate attacks off the coast of Somalia have become more sophisticated and daring and have expanded in their geographic scope, notably evidenced by the hijacking of the M/V Sirius Star 500 nautical miles off the coast of Kenya and subsequent unsuccessful attempts well east of Tanzania.*

Despite the mention of the obstacles to the effective delivery of humanitarian aid, the main focus, based on the language employed, seems to be on the dangers posed to vessels, as opposed to the livelihoods of local communities. Woldeyes (2015: 122) argues that there was an implicit overemphasis on securing oil tankers and cargo ships from pirate attacks, over securing the people in the region. This was confirmed at a 2009 seminar at the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, where the discussants noted that “piracy and the resultant dangers posed to international shipping brought an array of naval deployments from various external actors...”. Once again, the focus was on international shipping and global trade.

According to Moreschi (2022: 7) there was a ‘profound disconnect between security practices and the needs of local communities’. It may be argued that the securitisation of Somali piracy did not take into account long-term consequences, it also overlooked underlying causes, thus it failed to build the resilience of coastal communities. Woldeyes (2015: 131) argues that since the advent of the securitised response to piracy, the protection of cargo ships from pirate attacks has taken precedence over the prevention of human suffering and issues such as famine and conflict. Ultimately, the failure to incorporate non-state, grassroots-level actors in the process of securitisation, perhaps created a sense of alienation and exclusion and diminished local ownership and agency. This served as a push factor, prompting coastal communities to take matters into their own hands, to secure (defend) their livelihood. A similar situation may have occurred in Senegal, where according to Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 518) artisanal fishers threatened to engage in piracy in response to the illicit activities and destructive practices of foreign industrial trawlers.

3.5 Current Situation

A 2013 report by the International Maritime Bureau (IMB),¹⁴ reveals that the clampdown on piracy off the coast of Somalia led to a substantial decline in global piracy. It appears that piracy off the coast of Somalia and the possibility of it resurging have remained a low probability event. Even so, there appears to be a persistence of piracy in Somalia’s territorial waters. Although not in the high numbers witnessed in 2012, piracy remains an issue. On 16 October 2018, roughly 340 nautical miles (630 kilometres) off the coast of Mogadishu (Somali capital), four assailants attempted to board the bulk carrier MV KSL Sydney (Reva 2018). The attack was prevented by private security guards on board the vessel, who returned fire on the pirates, leading them to abandon (abort) their advance (Schuler 2018). However, compared to the situation prior to 2012, this attempted attack is a rare occurrence.

On 31 March 2022, the UN Security Council’s counter-piracy Resolution 2608,¹⁵ expired (Walker & Reva 2022). According to Walker and Reva (2022) this is the first time that the

¹⁴ See <https://icc-ccs.org/index.php/904-somali-pirate-clampdown-caused-drop-in-global-piracy-imb-reveals>

¹⁵ United Nations Resolution 2608, adopted by the Security Council at its 8917th meeting on 3 December 2021, recalls the Security Council’s previous resolutions concerning the situation in Somalia, in particular resolutions 1814 (2008), 1816 (2008), 1838 (2008), 1844 (2008), 1846 (2008), 1851 (2008), 1897 (2009), 1918 (2010), 1950 (2010), 1976 (2011), 2015 (2011), 2020 (2011), 2077 (2012), 2125 (2013), 2184 (2014), 2246 (2015), 2316 (2016), 2383 (2017), 2442 (2018), 2500 (2019), and 2554 (2020).

UNSC has not renewed this resolution. Owing to the substantial decline of pirate attacks in the last few years, in January 2023, the Indian Ocean High Risk Area (HRA) was lifted (Toucas 2023). Cumulatively, these moves constitute desecuritisising measures. Despite the drop in pirate attacks in Somali territorial waters, some analysts including but not limited to Isilow and Tih (2017) as well as Stavridis (2023) argue that piracy has not disappeared and caution against complacency. Essentially, these analysts argue that although attacks have subsided, the “Somali pirate threat is still real” (The Maritime Executive 2021). This study concurs with these assessments (observations), and the arguments of Denys Reva (2018) that the root causes remain overlooked. Consequently, piracy should not be perceived as a thing of the past, but rather as a phenomenon with the potential to re-emerge. In fact, it may be argued that piracy has evolved, and dispersed to other regions in Africa, most notably the Gulf of Guinea (Otto & Jernberg 2020: 95). Nonetheless, according to the United Nations (2023) the issue of piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea is gradually declining; this will be discussed in the next chapter. However, key to note is the dwindling number of pirate attacks.

Furthermore, albeit incidences of piracy have declined, other maritime security issues remain present in the Horn of Africa (Al Taher 2022). The main issues appear to be, arms smuggling as noted by Willima and Ramachela (2022), environmental crimes, as well as illegal fishing (Al Taher 2022). A report from 2021 published by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime (GITOC 2021: 1), notes that despite the decline of piracy attacks since 2012, foreign fishing vessel have gradually returned to the waters surrounding Somalia. According to this GITOC (2021) report, many of the vessels engaged in IUU fishing originate from Iran, Yemen, and Southeast Asia. Some of the trawlers that have been identified include vessels flagged as Chinese, Korean, Cambodian (Bahadur 2021). In October 2016, Somali authorities identified a Panamanian-registered fishing vessel, flagged to Belize which was engaging in illicit fishing practices and subsequently seized (Ighobor 2017). Several authors, including but not limited to Hatcher (2015) and Ighobor (2017), state that European trawlers are also guilty of exploiting fish stocks in Somalia’s territorial waters.

Evidently, although the securitisation of Somali piracy succeeded in quelling attacks in the region, the issue has not fully disappeared. Seldom, pirates attempt to board vessels, and in most cases, the attackers are either deterred or intercepted (Statista 2023). Even so, it is worth noting that the strategy of securitisation adopted in the case of Somali piracy, failed to address the root causes. According to Devlin et al (2022: vii) the decline in fish stocks was not the

leading cause of conflict (including pirate attacks) in the waters off the coast of Somalia. This suggests that there were deeper push factors driving (motivating) the so-called pirates. Although, Desai and Shambaugh (2021: 1) established a link between piracy, habitat degradation and IUU fishing. Therefore, declining fish stocks should be considered a contributing factor of piracy.

3.6 Key lessons

In 2014, the EU Institute for Security Studies published a document detailing the lessons learned from the Contact Group on Piracy. Several researchers, among them Tardy (2014), Walker (2020: 187), Menzel and Otto (2020: 238), to name a few, note the potential and innovation present by the CGPCS. Tardy (2014: 3) states that the CGPCS was indeed successful arguing that the “CGPCS has been instrumental in achieving concrete and positive results” in lowering the number of pirate attacks. In spite of this fact, the human security conditions and well-being of the Somali population were not the priority at the time. Basically, the securitising measures enacted to safeguard commercial vessels and the interests of powerful states, government elites and private sector agents came at the expense of ordinary people. This is the result of failing to consult local coastal populations, namely fishing communities and CSOs.

It may be argued that securitising without the participation of and inputs from non-state actors is ineffective and possibly even self-defeating. In the case of Somali piracy there was little to no involvement of non-state actors, rather the main actors were state actors particularly, government, and military agents as well as regional intergovernmental organisations. The appeal of multi-actor collaboration is clear. It presents the potential for enhanced cooperation, mutual benefit, and burden sharing, however, there is a reverse side. According to Gilpin (2016: 1) the international response, specifically the deployment of foreign naval vessels in and around the Horn of Africa, could potentially enable great power and/or proxy conflicts in the region.¹⁶ Thus, this may have been the best strategy at the time because the Somali government was not at maximum capacity, as it was undergoing major changes and did not possess full authority

¹⁶ The Horn of Africa region, specifically the country known as Djibouti, hosts a large number of military bases, namely those belonging to China, France, Germany, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Russia and India also have strong interests in establishing military bases in Djibouti. Thus, the Horn of Africa may constitute a hotspot for geopolitical contestation.

(control) in certain areas of the country. However, this strategy forebodes major implications for the stability of the Horn of Africa and the sovereignty of Somalia.

In their article titled 'The dialectics of piracy in Somalia: the rich versus the poor', Samatar et al (2010: 1377) argue that Somali piracy has been poorly understood. They make the argument that it is not only a matter of "robbery on the high seas", but also a matter of "political economy and conflict over resources" that have been key to the onset of Somali piracy. Thus, Samatar et al (2010:) state that what is required is a "new alliance" between a "genuinely serious international community" and Somalia's civic movement in order to re-establish a government that serves the interest of all. Similarly, Besley et al (2012: 4) argue that the best long-term solution to piracy off the coast of Somalia, would entail restoring a "functional Somali state which can deny pirates safe haven".

This has long been argued by several authors including but not limited to Sterio (2009: 375), and Weldemichael (2012: 110). However, the latter author argues that although restoring the state and combatting piracy may minimise the conditions which pirates find favourable, ultimately this alone will not eradicate poverty (Weldemichael 2012: 110). According to Weldemichael (2012) what is required is the successful containment of the "corporate terrorism" that triggered acts of piracy. This to some extent aligns with the with the arguments of Samatar et al (2010), specifically the argument of extra-regional actors as "global predators" exploiting Somalia's resources. In this sense, the Somali pirates were primarily acting in the defence of their livelihoods; they are not mere criminals. Ondigi et al (2022: 41) confirm as much arguing that it is not sufficient to view piracy as simply a "criminal business enterprise", as this is only half the picture of what they describe as a "complex phenomenon". They argue that Somali piracy may be better understood if it were presented as a "multi-layered engagement whose various actors' participation is driven by varied motivations beyond ... the phenomenon as a struggle for control, domination and fierce competition among actors".

Over and above, the international military interventions in Somalia's territorial waters overlooked the complexity of the issue. Yet plainly the reduced intensity of piracy in the Horn of Africa cannot be ignored; this much is confirmed by Otto and Jernberg (2020: 96) as well as several incident reports. However, Somalia's territorial waters remain rife with insecurity, namely with what Bueger and Stockbruegger (2022: 1) call blue crimes, these include environmental crimes, IUU fishing, organised crime as well as armed robbery at sea.

Undoubtedly, the preoccupation (overemphasis) of international strategies and missions with piracy, neglected other prevailing non-traditional maritime security issues in the region.

The strategies adopted to address Somali piracy should have taken cognisance of its nuanced nature and its intersection with other insecurities. In this regard, a human security approach would not only promote the recognition of these intersections, but also how people are affected, and how they may be culpable as well. By acknowledging these complexities more apt and appropriate strategies can be developed. Perhaps what is also required is revising or revisiting the way in which piracy is defined in the context of African maritime security as it relates to human security.

3.7 Applying the securitisation continuum – a human security approach to maritime securitisation

The following section will apply the framework and continuum developed in the previous chapter to the case of piracy off the coast of Somalia in order to theorise an alternative outcome. Thus, the section will first identify the threat and referent object, and thereafter the main securitising actors. Following this, the section will explore the possible responses, before applying the securitisation continuum developed in this study.

In late 2022, Operation Atalanta was extended to December 2024, with a new mandate (EUNAVFOR 2023). The new mandate aims to “preserve the EU’s efforts to protect World Food Programme (WFP) and other vulnerable vessels; deter, prevent and repress piracy and armed robbery at sea; monitor fishing activities in the Horn of Africa and the Western Indian Ocean; combat drug trafficking and contribute to the arms embargo on Somalia, the illicit trade in charcoal and IUU fishing.”

According to this new mandate, Operation Atalanta operates in a number of maritime areas within the broader region of the Northwest quadrant of the Indian Ocean (see fig. 5). These areas include the Red Sea, the Somali Basin, the Gulf of Suez, the Gulf of Aqaba, as well as the Gulf of Aden and neighbouring countries, including the port and city of Muscat in Oman (EUNAVFOR 2023).

Figure 5: Expanded geographic and operational scope of Operation ATALANTA under the new mandate (EUNAVFOR 2023).



Under the new mandate, the expanded geographic and operational scope facilitates a broader approach to addressing a wide range of issues, chief among these are IUU fishing and the subsequent implications. However, the question must be asked whether this new mandate serves (benefits) local communities. Beyond this, it is necessary to interrogate the political motives driving the inclusion of IUU fishing. Chapter four will expand on these points.

3.7.1 Threat and referent object

Devlin et al (2022: vii) identified five major causes of fisheries conflict: (1) the presence of foreign fishers (whether legal or illegal), (2) illegal fishing, (3) territorial disputes, (4) weak governance, and (5) piracy. Arguably, in Somalia, the causes of conflict were a combination of two or more of the aspects noted above. A 2022 Stable Seas report on the Western Indian Ocean

notes that piracy is often linked to insecurity on land (Moss & Pigeon 2022: 8). This in essence acknowledges the onshore-offshore nexus and the interconnectedness of human security and maritime security. This is clear as the report states that the underlying causes of Somali piracy are the poor socioeconomic situation exacerbated by ongoing conflict and the vested interest of the various clans (Moss & Pigeon 2020 :8). Linked to this is the lacking capacity and capabilities of law enforcement, an ineffective government, as well as a weak criminal prosecution system (Moss & Pigeon 2022: 8). Another root cause identified by Moss and Pigeon (2022: 8) is the widespread availability of arms due to the influx from neighbouring countries.¹⁷

The threat in the case of Somalia was two-fold: there was an initial issue(s), which acted as a catalyst prompting the secondary threat. Without overlooking land-based insecurity, the initial maritime issue which perhaps should have been securitised (addressed with urgency) was illegal fishing by foreign trawlers and waste dumping (Bodetti 2023). The second threat was the acts of piracy by local fisherfolk, who were first driven by the necessity to defend their livelihoods and eventually the profitability of piracy as an alternative source of income.

In this case, there are also multiple referent objects, with varying levels of importance, in terms of which requires the greatest protection. Given that the securitisation continuum developed in this study advocates for a human security (people-centred) approach to maritime securitisation, the ultimate referent objects are the local (Somali) coastal population and their livelihoods.

3.7.2 Primary securitisers

Within the securitisation continuum, the primary securitising actors remain state actors, this includes government officials, policymakers, and military personnel. Given that these actors possess a preponderance of influence and the legitimacy to make high politics decisions, they would serve to lay the foundation for more comprehensive and inclusive securitisation. This is done with the aim of eventually bringing in the expertise and lived experiences of ordinary (local) people, who constitute secondary securitising actors. Such initiatives have in fact been established in some countries such as Pakistan.

¹⁷ There are weapons exchanges between Al-Shabaab-linked armed groups in Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia and even as far south as Mozambique (Willima & Ramachela 2022).

In 2013, Pakistan established a Joint Maritime Information Coordination Center (JMICC),¹⁸ a national platform intended to deal with maritime related activities occurring in its EEZ (Rashid 2020). A noteworthy dimension of the JMICC is its community engagement programme, which operates at the “grassroots level”. Under this initiative, JMICC staff members periodically visit coastal villages in Pakistan in order to engage with village elders and fisherfolk. According to Rashid (2020) much of the information used by the JMICC is from human resources, namely the knowledge and experiences of local communities. These expertise according to Rashid (2020) constitute an early warning mechanism, whilst enabling the quick transmission of information, particularly in areas where surveillance is unavailable. The JMICC not only engages with local communities, but also with seafarers. In this sense, the JMICC takes cognisance of both the onshore (land-based) and offshore (sea-based) environments.

The extent to which this initiative is operational and successful in practice requires an in-depth evaluation. Nonetheless, the model formulated may serve as a guide for replication in other regions. Besides the involvement of local communities and CSOs, other participants to consider when securitising based on a people-centred approach, are academics and researchers. These non-state actors, from academics, to CSOs and local communities would constitute secondary securitising actors.

3.7.3 Secondary securitising actors

The secondary securitising actors are ordinary people, essentially non-state actors, that have the ability to prompt and/or influence securitisation measures. In the case of Somali piracy, secondary securitising actors would be the local fisherfolk and coastal population, those most hard-hit by the consequences of overfishing and subsequent pirate attacks. In the findings of a study conducted by the ‘Secure Fisheries’ initiative, Devlin et al (2022: vii) confirm the importance of involving local communities. Devlin et al (2022: vii) states that the “laws and regulations governing fisheries resources need to be developed more fully with the participation of fishing communities”. Elaborating further, Devlin et al (2022: vii) state that at the local level, it is crucial to integrate fishing communities in the process of fisheries management. The argument put forth is that “community-driven natural resource management partnerships” present an opportunity to build both management capacity and government

¹⁸ See <https://www.jmicc.gov.pk/>

legitimacy. Essentially, this would mean attaining buy-in from the local community of government policies and strategies. This would serve to promote transparency, and build trust, but also support interoperability between the relevant stakeholders.

There is another potential dimension to involving secondary (non-state) participants. This additional dimension may manifest as a process in which primary and secondary securitising actors work to cultivate sufficient trust and good faith in order to eventually engage in dialogue and mediation with perpetrators. In the case of Somali piracy, the perpetrators would be the individuals engaged in holding ships for ransom and executing both violent and non-violent attacks or other related plans. However, a mediation strategy may not be a favourable one not only for the pirates who may be against dialogue with parties they do not trust, but also for state actors and security officials whose reluctance may stem from maintaining a status quo. Shire (2021: 3) points out that some authors, like Crelinsten and Schmid (1993) have argued that dialogue with “militant groups who employ terrorist tactics” may embolden other dissident groups to employ similar strategies “as an effective method to achieve political change”. Therefore, this may be a strategy best pursued in the final phase of the securitisation continuum, specifically where developmental and resilience-building approaches must be implemented.

3.7.4 Collaborative (Co-) securitisation

According to the securitisation continuum and analytical framework developed in the previous chapter, collaborative securitisation or co-securitisation constitutes the process through which primary and secondary securitising actors enact securitisation together. This can take on two forms. In the first, the relevant stakeholders securitise as a joint unit. Whereas the second form of co-securitisation is one in which the securitising efforts of secondary securitising actors build on the measures enacted by the primary securitisers, a kind of top-down approach. This can also occur vice versa, as a bottom-up approach, where the primary securitisers may prompt securitisation, however, the secondary securitising actors would spearhead the implementation of measures. This entails secondary securitising actors playing decision-making roles and overseeing what measures are implemented and how. These measures would then be funded, and authorised by the primary securitisers; thus, forming part and parcel of the collaborative securitisation response.

3.7.5 Response

In the case of Somali piracy, the response to what was deemed a crisis was highly militarised. However, the framework and continuum developed in this study advocate for a different approach, which pays attention to people, their needs, and their agency as active participants of securitisation.

Within the securitisation continuum and in line with a human security (people-centred) approach to maritime securitisation, an alternative response may have been two-pronged. On the one hand, the strategy could have been similar to that of Operation Atalanta, and other similar task forces. Essentially, a response in which naval vessels remain present in the area deemed volatile, in order to deter would-be perpetrators, prevent potential attacks, and intercept hostile vessels. However, this may be difficult to do, specifically in Somalia. According to Moss and Pigeon (2020: 8-9), Somalia's capacity to monitor and manage activities such as illegal fishing is constrained due to a shortage of patrol vessels. Therefore, any strategy which entails the constant presence of a naval fleet to deter criminal activity would require the support of international actors, namely the deployment of foreign vessels by state actors and perhaps even the private security sector. Yet, this may have the unintended consequence of aggravating and alienating the local population. Moss and Pigeon (2022: 9) argue that the perception of piracy as a 'crime' differs between the West and areas (communities) where piracy exists. The local communities in Somalia, often view pirates as "businessmen" and "benefactors" of the community, thus when pirates are arrested the communities see this as unlawful (Moss & Pigeon 2022: 9). Thus, such a strategy may be self-defeating.

On the other hand, the flip side of a militarised strategy would have entailed engaging the Somali coastal populations, like village leaders and local fisherfolk, and empowering them so they may exercise their agency. Such a strategy would have required greater participation from the so-called referent objects, namely the local population (those most affected by overfishing, waste dumping, and subsequent acts of piracy). It is worth arguing for a revisiting of the term referent 'object'; references to local communities as 'objects' implies they are inanimate or lacking a will of their own, and thus only existing as recipients, supposed "beneficiaries". This attitude and terminology reflect old and elitist mindsets. When in fact, the so-called referent objects are actually citizens and bearers of rights, obligations and responsibilities; they constitute legitimate stakeholders and constituencies who are essential to the success and sustainability of the securitising initiatives and interventions. With such a shift in attitude, the

so-called referent objects would not constitute mere objects to be protected, but active subjects or participants that have a say in the securitising moves undertaken to protect their livelihoods.

During this phase of securitisation, the response to acts of piracy would ideally respond to the imminent (immediate) threat namely pirate attacks, as well as the main root (underlying) causes, that is overfishing and waste dumping. The responses should occur alongside each other, in tandem, thus acknowledging the seriousness of both issues.

Essentially, the securitising moves undertaken in Somalia should have accommodated three elements, namely illegal fishing by foreign trawlers, waste dumping as well as pirate attacks (which was the main focus). Though Devlin et al (2022: vii) state that the decline in fish stocks was not the main motivation for conflict, they do state that the “international community must take greater responsibility for stopping illegal fishing by global fleets in Somali waters”. Chapter four will discuss in detail strategies that are aptly suited to address IUU fishing and its associative effects.

3.7.6 Desecuritisation

Once the so-called threat has reached a manageable level, specifically to the satisfaction of the local population and other relevant stakeholders, this marks the beginning of the phase to embark on a process of desecuritisation. This would entail scaling down the emergency measures enacted to contain (quell) the threat. It does not necessitate a complete abandonment of precautionary measures.

In the case of Somali piracy, desecuritisation entailed the non-renewal of the UNSC anti-piracy resolutions. According to Walker and Reva (2022) the Somali government insisted that the UNSC’s resolutions were successful in achieving their primary objective of suppressing piracy and thus there was no need for their renewal.¹⁹ Despite some pushback from a number of governments including France and other European countries citing the emergence of a security vacuum (France24 2021), the UNSC did not renew the anti-piracy mandate. This raises questions about initiatives exclusively and/or primarily established to tackle piracy off the coast

¹⁹ In a [letter](#) dated 26 February, addressed to the President of the Security Council, Somalia’s Ambassador to the UN Abukar Osman told the UNSC “We (Somalia) have accelerated our efforts to build and capacitate our maritime law enforcement agencies and have established a specialised maritime unit to specifically deal with new international maritime threats and crime”.

of Somalia like the CGPCS. In and of itself the CGPCS and its current relevance remain debated. Bueger and Stockbruegger (2022: 9) point out that the 2022 CGPCS Strategic Framework argues that the “legitimacy of the CGPCS is partially derived from multiple resolutions passed by the UNSC...” However, in light of the non-renewal of the UNSC anti-piracy resolutions, the CGPCS’ salience is plausibly dwindling. This reflects dynamics and moves, both intentional and unintentional, to desecuritize piracy off the coast of Somalia.

Within the securitisation continuum, desecuritisation should entail a post-securitisation assessment of sorts. This means instituting monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, in order to assess the success and failures (the milestones and setbacks) of the initial securitising actions. Therefore, it may be necessary to develop a criterion in order to attain this measurement, it may be one of comparison. This could entail comparing the initial issue to the current situation or even comparing the issue and its securitisation in its entirety to another relatable initiative of securitisation. From this point, should the issue re-emerge, it may be necessary to embark on a process of resecuritisation.

3.7.7 Resecuritisation

It bears mentioning that pirate attacks are likely to reoccur. In recent years, there have been an increasing number of attacks on military and civilian vessels in the Red Sea, specifically in the Bab El-Mandeb Strait (Al Taher 2022).²⁰ Furthermore, there have also been a number of drone attacks on oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman (BBC News 2019). Evidently, there is an observable trend of non-state actors, in particular militant groups using drones for surveillance (reconnaissance) and in order to perpetrate attacks both on land and at sea (Reva & Ramachela 2022). It appears that these kinds of sophisticated attacks have not yet been perpetrated in Somali territorial waters, however, their proximity to the Horn of Africa region cannot and should not be overlooked.

Moss and Pigeon (2022: 9) point out that piracy as well as armed robbery are often cyclical, in essence arguing that they form part of a community’s culture, making it difficult to break the cycle or pattern. This means that pirate attacks are likely to re-emerge, particularly in what is known as “piracy hotspots”. The report states that piracy hotspots are usually locales where

²⁰ Some sources point to the Houthi rebels as the perpetrators of these attacks, see <https://www.thenationalnews.com/mena/2022/11/22/somali-pirates-have-all-but-disappeared-but-other-threats-remain-at-sea/>

piracy was previously a problem for authorities, but had been “normalised or received local buy-in” (Moss & Pigeon 2022: 9).

Within the parameters set by the analytical framework and securitisation developed in this study, should the issue of piracy re-emerge it may be necessary to resecuritize, depending on the scale of the issue. In this phase of resecuritisation, the scale of the issue specifically pirate attacks should be compared with the scope of its initial manifestation. In essence, this means assessing the nature, sophistication, and frequency of the attacks, the kinds of weapons being used, the mode of transportation (for example speedboats), and the tactics (such as sabotage, integrating drones, etc.) being employed. Such an assessment will determine the scope of the securitising actions. If the attacks appear as extreme as the initial occurrences, the re-securitising moves enacted may be high in magnitude, similar to the initial securitising moves. However, if the attacks are minimal in scale compared to the initial attacks, then the re-securitising moves will be considerably lower in magnitude. For example, the fleet deployed to deter and/or intercept pirates, will not be as large as the fleet deployed during the initial phase of securitisation.

However, according to Walker and Reva (2022), both attempted attacks and attacks have declined since 2013, and no successful hijackings have been reported since March 2017. Therefore, for the time being, it may not be necessary to resecuritize.

3.7.8 Desecuritisation and developmental approaches

The latter phase of the securitisation continuum entails once again gradually scaling down any resecuritisation measures enacted. At this point, what is required to further manage the issue are developmental approaches.

In the case of Somali piracy, there are some notable examples of the manner in which developmental approaches were established and implemented. One such initiative is the extension of Operation Atalanta and its expanded mandate beyond the scope of deterring and repressing piracy (EUNAVFOR 2023). The mandate extended to December 2024, now includes monitoring fishing activities along the eastern coast of Africa, specifically combatting IUU fishing in the Horn of Africa region, and the Western Indian Ocean (EUNAVFOR 2023). Now with IUU fishing included, Operation Atalanta’s mandate caters to what is considered a non-traditional security issue, that is illegal fishing, specifically IUU fishing. At first glance,

this dimension responds to the needs of local fishing communities. However, the question must be asked whether this mandate is truly intended to serve the local community, and to what extent it considers local needs.

Within the securitisation continuum, at this stage of the (de-)securitisation process, development should be prioritised. This requires the formulation and implementation of an intensive development plan of action. This plan or framework must be uniquely tailored to suit the environment in which it will be applied. This plan should be constructed collaboratively between primary securitisers, namely policymakers, and the secondary securitising actors

3.8 Intended outcome

The overall aim of adopting a human security (people-centred) approach to maritime securitisation, is not only to facilitate greater participation from non-state actors, but legitimise securitising actions whilst promoting conditions for enhanced multistakeholder collaboration.

This is in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17, which aims to ‘strengthen the means of implementation and revitalising the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development’. This goal recognises “multi-stakeholder partnerships as important vehicles for mobilising and sharing knowledge, expertise, technologies, and financial resources to support the achievement of the SDGs in all countries, particularly developing countries”. Furthermore, Goal 17 seeks to “encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships”. This is precisely the aim of applying a human security approach to maritime securitisation with the African context.

Ideally, a people-centred approach should ensure the continued involvement of ordinary people (non-state actors) specifically the local population, even after securitisation measures have been scaled down. The local population should be part and parcel of formulating development strategies, aimed at enhancing their resilience and safeguarding their livelihoods. An approach and process which ensures such inclusion and integration is an ideal safeguard of success, legitimacy, and sustainability.

3.9 Conclusion

The case of piracy off the coast of Somalia remains a significant phenomenon in the African maritime discourse. The threat posed by Somali piracy brought together several different actors, that cooperated on many levels to manage the issue. The securitising moves enacted were successful in quelling pirate attacks in Somalia's territorial waters, however, adverse socio-economic conditions still plague the local Somali communities living along the coast. It may be argued that the securitising moves enacted failed to cater to the human security needs and conditions of the local population. At present, this is evident in the resurgence of illegal fishing by foreign vessels in Somalia's territorial waters. Further, other issues such as transnational organised crime, namely arms smuggling and even armed robbery in nearby waters persist to the present day. Thus, an alternative securitisation framework should be explored.

This alternative framework, a human security approach to maritime securitisation does not deny the necessity of state actors such as national navies, coastguards, and other law enforcement agencies. Rather, it emphasises the need for diverse strategies which prioritise the principal commitment to the needs of people. In this sense, in addition to the involvement of law enforcement, responses to piracy should be complemented by considerations of the possible effects to the local population. This would also entail the participation of non-state actors, specifically coastal communities, CSOs and even academics and researchers. The formulated strategies should ideally shore up the resilience of coastal populations and prepare them preventatively and even for the potential resurgence of harsh pirate attacks.

Arguably, strategies that do not consider the effects on human security, produce unsustainable results. Simply stated, a human security approach to maritime securitisation is aptly suited to address root causes. Such an approach should be proactive, preventative, protective, and developmental in that it should anticipate and build capacity and empower the local population.

The framework and continuum proposed and applied in this chapter remain theoretical, and therefore its success or failure is hypothetical. A mode of securitisation such as this would need to be tested, against other cases and perhaps even in practice, to a real (tangible) issue. The following chapter proceeds to do the former, that is, applying the analytical framework and securitisation continuum to maritime securitisation in the Gulf of Guinea (West Africa), with a specific focus on IUU fishing in Cameroon and Ghana.

CHAPTER 4:

THE SECURITISATION OF IUU FISHING IN THE GULF OF GUINEA: AN ASSESSMENT OF CAMEROON AND GHANA

4.1 Introduction

Having assessed the securitisation measures in the Horn of Africa, this chapter endeavours to do the same, however, the focus will be on West Africa, specifically the Gulf of Guinea. According to Jacobsen and Nordby (2015: 8) the international attention paid to piracy off the coast of Somalia contributed to the securitisation of piracy as a whole and its representation as a global threat. Vrey (2013: 7) points out that piracy in the Gulf of Guinea has drawn significant international attention. On this point, Jacobsen and Nordby concur. Writing a decade after Vrey, Okafor-Yarwood and Onuoha (2023: 944) argue that piracy in the Gulf of Guinea has garnered significant national, regional as well as international interventions, primarily through UNSC resolutions and maritime security frameworks.

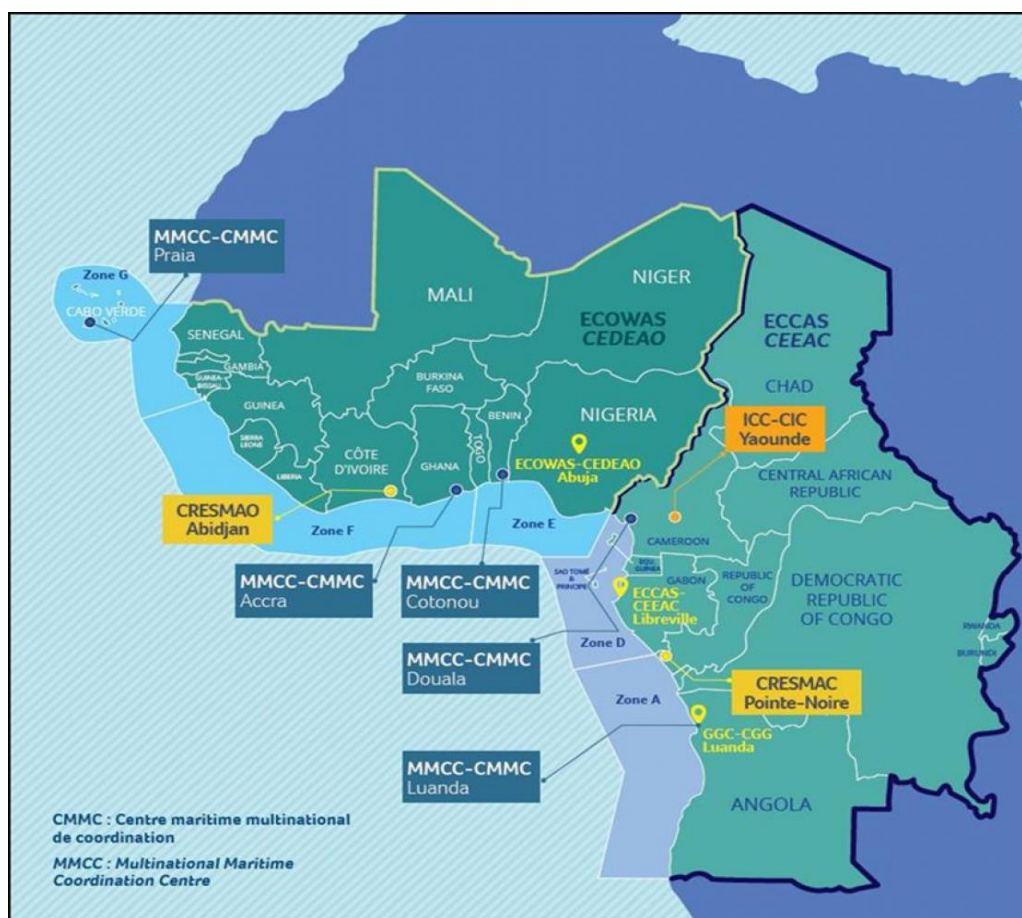
However, it may be argued that IUU fishing and its associated crimes, namely fisheries-related crimes and crimes associated with the fisheries sector, have not garnered equal attention as that afforded to piracy. Moreover, the securitisation of IUU fishing and its subsequent effects on human security as well as national security and the advancement of Africa's blue economy objectives warrant greater interrogation.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a critical assessment of the nature and scope of these measures. The first part of the chapter will provide the contextual background pertaining to the maritime environment of the Gulf of Guinea. Thereafter, the chapter will hone in on the issue of IUU fishing in the region; in this regard, it will dissect the cases of IUU fishing in Cameroon and Ghana. Following this, the focus will be on the manner in which Cameroon and Ghana have enacted securitisation measures to combat IUU fishing and the subsequent implications for human security. The final section of this chapter will apply the analytical framework and securitisation continuum developed in chapter two in order to theorise an alternative outcome. This section will employ empirical examples to draw pragmatic solutions and conclusions to the securitisation of IUU fishing informed by a people-centred approach.

4.2 Case of the Gulf of Guinea

In recent years the Gulf of Guinea has emerged as a focal point of the international community, largely due to the maritime security situation in the region. The Gulf of Guinea (in West Africa) is a vast region, with a coastline of roughly 6,000km (EEAS 2021). This maritime region is delineated from Angola in the south, stretching northwards toward Cameroon, then west across Nigeria, toward Liberia and Sierra Leone (see fig. 6).²¹

Figure 6: EU Maritime Security Factsheet – map of the Gulf of Guinea region (EEAS 2021).



Like the Horn of Africa and the waters off the coast of Somalia, the Gulf of Guinea is considered relatively insecure. This can partly be explained by the onshore environment of the

²¹ The Gulf of Guinea's countries include: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo

countries in the region. According to Vrey (2013: 9) Nigeria's oil politics tend to dominate the discourse on maritime threats and vulnerabilities off the West coast of Africa and particularly the Gulf of Guinea, though for Vrey the "threat landscape" is much more nuanced.

It may be argued that a number of the threats in the region originate primarily from instability in coastal states. Writing over a decade ago, Vrey (2013: 9) noted that the political turmoil in states including but not limited to Equatorial Guinea, the Congo Brazzaville, Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone, has a direct impact on the maritime environment. Put simply, the onshore insecurity in West Africa compounds the offshore security environment in the Gulf of Guinea which hosts a plethora of non-traditional maritime security challenges. These include piracy, armed robbery at sea, kidnapping seafarers, illegal fishing and transnational organised crime, namely smuggling and trafficking (EEAS 2021). As a consequence of the prevailing threats, countries in the Gulf of Guinea continue to have difficulty effectively harnessing and maximising the use of their marine resources. Beyond this, the lack of implementation of regional policies and the poor enforcement capability of the region's forces arguably exacerbate the situation. However, it should be noted that the security situation in the Gulf of Guinea is evolving as countries in the region, with assistance from external partners, bolster their maritime security capabilities. In this regard, the United Nations (2023) notes that incidents of piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea are declining.

Despite these improvements, IUU fishing remains a key issue in the Gulf of Guinea. During the 9355th meeting (briefing) of the UN Security Council convened on 21 June 2023, Carolyn Abena Anima Oppong-Ntiri, of the Ghanaian delegation, warned that the region is "not out of the woods yet", as it continues to endure the "vestiges of piracy, armed robbery, and illegal fishing".²² This sentiment was echoed by a number of delegates present at the meeting. Therefore, the feasibility and appropriateness of the measures enacted to combat maritime security issues and in particular IUU fishing require critical reflection.

It should be noted that the maritime space known as the Gulf of Guinea is a large region and encompasses a range of issues. In essence, the region and its issues are too broad to analyse within the scope of this study. Therefore, the focus will be confined to the issue of IUU fishing, particularly the securitisation of IUU fishing by the governments and militaries (navies) of Cameroon and Ghana.

²² See <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15331.doc.htm> .

4.2.1 What is IUU fishing?

IUU constitutes one of the most pervasive maritime practices, serious crimes, of the 21st century. According to Logo (2022: 14), to date it has proved difficult to find effective solutions to IUU fishing owing to its complexity as well as its ability to “circumvent robust conservation measures” initiated by national, regional, and international organisations to sustainably manage fisheries, so much so that the former Secretary-General of the UN Kofi Annan described IUU fishing as ‘*organised theft disguised as commerce*’. The 2001 Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing, provides a thorough outline of the nature and scope of IUU fishing. Summarised hereunder, is section 2 paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3 of the FAO Plan of Action, which define illegal fishing, unreported fishing, and unregulated fishing:

Illegal fishing includes activities:

- (1) conducted by national or foreign vessels in waters under the jurisdiction of a State, without the permission of that State, or in contravention of its laws and regulations

- (2) conducted by vessels flying the flag of States that are parties to a relevant regional fisheries management organization but operate in contravention of the conservation and management measures adopted by that organisation and by which the States are bound, or relevant provisions of the applicable international law

- (3) in violation of national laws or international obligations, including those undertaken by cooperating States to a relevant regional fisheries management organisation

Unreported fishing refers to activities:

- (1) which have not been reported, or have been misreported, to the relevant national authority, in contravention of national laws and regulations

- (2) undertaken in the area of competence of a relevant regional fisheries management organisation which have not been reported or have been misreported, in contravention of the reporting procedures of that organisation

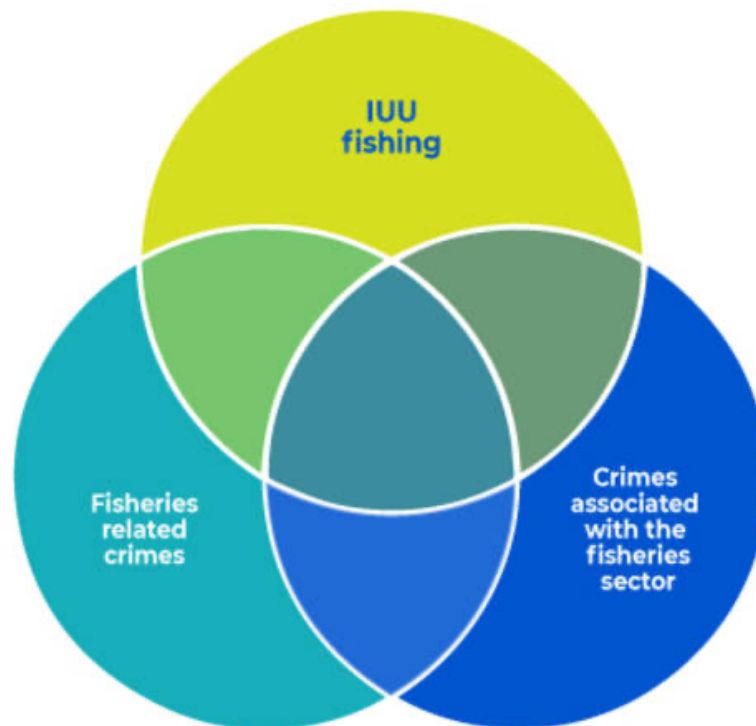
Unregulated fishing refers to activities:

- (1) in the area of application of a relevant regional fisheries management organisation that is conducted by vessels without nationality, or by those flying the flag of a State not party to that organisation, or by a fishing entity, in a manner that is not consistent with or contravenes the conservation and management measures of that organisation

- (2) in areas or for fish stocks in relation to which there are no applicable conservation or management measures and where such 3 fishing activities are conducted in a manner inconsistent with State responsibilities for the conservation of living marine resources under international law

Taken as a whole, such activities as described above, constitute IUU fishing. According to the FAO (2023), IUU fishing can constitute, lead to, or go hand in hand with other (associated) crimes in the fisheries sector (see fig. 7). These can be classified into two separate categories namely ‘fisheries-related crimes’ and ‘crimes associated with the fisheries sector’. The former refers to infractions such as money laundering, tax crimes, inappropriate working conditions, or document fraud for example forged fishing licenses. Whereas the latter, crimes associated with the fisheries sector, include violations such as piracy, narcotics, and arms trafficking, as well as human trafficking (FAO 2023).

Figure 7: Infographic illustrating the intersections of IUU fishing, fisheries-related crimes, and crimes associated with the fisheries sector (FAO 2023).



Where these crimes intersect, the implications for the national and economic dimensions of maritime security as well as human security are wide-ranging. The unregulated dimension encompasses complex legal issues, namely because IUU fishing in the Gulf of Guinea is most pronounced in terms of a lack of regulation. Thus, classifying it as illegal presents a significant challenge as such issues are not governed by law. Given the scale of the issue in the Gulf of Guinea, certain countries in the region, like Cameroon and Ghana have taken extraordinary steps to combat IUU fishing.

4.2.2 Fisheries in Cameroon and Ghana

As previously noted, fisheries constitute a substantial component of the Gulf of Guinea's maritime security, as well as human security, namely economic development and food security. In the Gulf of Guinea, the fisheries sector is categorised into two parts: industrial fisheries and artisanal fisheries (Beseng & Malcolm 2021: 520). The former is dominated by foreign trawlers primarily from China, and Europe (Long 2021) as well as Nigeria, while the artisanal fisheries (small-scale fishers) include fisherfolk from Benin (4.11 percent), Cameroon (21.25 percent),

Ghana (2.99 percent), Nigeria (71.58 percent), and Togo (0.07 percent) (Beseng & Malcolm 2021: 520).

According to a recent Aljazeera documentary,²³ approximately 6.7 million people living in West Africa are dependent on fishing as both a source of food (consumption) and a source of income (commerce) and overall livelihood. Cameroon's fisheries sector makes up a substantial part of its economic security and food security (Beseng & Malcolm 2021: 520). The FAO (2007: 2) notes that fish is the preferred source of protein for most Cameroonians. Furthermore, citing Cameroon's Ministry of Finance, Mahnta (2019) notes that in 2019 the country's fisheries sector contributed roughly three percent of Cameroon's gross domestic product (GDP). Moreover, Cameroon's marine capture fishing operations account for approximately 83 percent of the national fish production (Mahnta 2019). It is clear that the fisheries sector supports the livelihoods of millions of Cameroonians, in particular women who rely on the fish trade as a source of livelihood. This is a common fact across West Africa; fish constitutes a crucial part of not only the economy but everyday life. The same is true in Ghana, where a large percentage of its population is heavily dependent on fish as a source of dietary protein (Kassah & Asare 2022: 99). Fisheries in Ghana accounts for roughly 263.2 million U.S. Dollars of its GDP. In essence, fisheries in Ghana contribute about four and a half percent of its annual GDP, while its small-scale fishing industry supplies approximately 70 percent of the total marine fish caught locally (Kassah & Asare 2022: 99). Furthermore, Ghana's Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector Development Plan 2011-2016, the fisheries sector supports about 2.2 million people (10 percent of the country's population).

Thus, with such high dependence on fisheries, the consequences of IUU fishing are far-reaching. At present, IUU fishing is widely recognised as one of the biggest challenges in the Gulf of Guinea. According to an Aljazeera (2023) report, IUU fishing costs West African economies roughly 2.3 billion USD annually. Besides the economic cost, the environmental impact is vast, particularly regarding the depletion (scarcity) of fish stocks. Okafor-Yarwood (2019: 414) attributes this issue to the pervasive and unsustainable practices that harm the marine environment; these include pollution, illegal fishing and overfishing. Similarly, Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 521) note that pollution, habitat degradation, and climate change, coupled

²³ See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwMrQl4XYxg> Aljazeera film (documentary), 'Widows of the Sea' released 27 May 2023, accessed 31 May 2023.

with IUU fishing and associated criminality in the fisheries sector, constitute the main drivers of fish scarcity.

As a direct result of the depleted fish stocks in the Gulf of Guinea, several fisherfolks have lost their livelihoods, resulting in widespread poverty, unemployment, and food insecurity. Okafor-Yarwood et al (2022) point out that depleted fish stocks as a result of IUU fishing engender “precarity of fishing-dependent livelihoods”. This, in turn, engenders the conditions where small-scale fishers are ‘susceptible to engaging in illicit activities such as piracy and armed robbery at sea, among other such activities (Okafor-Yarwood et al 2022: 1). In the same vein, Mavrellis (2018) argues that once fish stocks are depleted and the industrial fleets have moved on, the local people are compelled to partake in illicit activities like piracy, narcotics and arms trafficking as well as smuggling. With such far-reaching and disastrous implications, countries in the Gulf of Guinea have taken measures to combat IUU fishing and its subsequent effects.

This chapter argues that what has occurred in the Gulf of Guinea is the broad securitisation of the fisheries sectors of several countries. The following section examines the varying modalities of the securitisation of IUU fishing in Gulf of Guinea countries, specifically in Cameroon and Ghana.

4.3 The securitisation of IUU fishing in the Gulf of Guinea

The Gulf of Guinea is a somewhat complex case, due to the range of maritime security issues, the sheer number of actors involved, and the securitisation of the region as a whole. The nature and scope of securitisation in the Gulf of Guinea are first and foremost evident in the number of both local and foreign actors involved, as well as the resources, namely naval, they have brought to bear.

Oirere (2021) confirms that countries in the Gulf of Guinea have taken prompt action in an effort to combat IUU fishing and related crimes. It may be argued that some countries in the Gulf of Guinea have securitised IUU fishing with the aim to advantage their blue economies, however, this has occurred at the expense of local fishing communities. Rosello (2020: 40) argues that some regions have developed “securitisation policy narratives”, where IUU fishing has been “explicitly identified as a risk”. This is the case in the Gulf of Guinea, where often to

the detriment of the coastal (littoral) communities, IUU fishing has been perceived and subsequently designated a threat.

4.3.1 Threat and referent object

Okafor-Yarwood and Onuoha (2023: 950) denote the initial step of securitisation as affirming a threat (risk) to a particular referent object. Firstly, it should be noted that the Gulf of Guinea is recognised as the main hotspot for IUU fishing, globally (FCWC 2021). This is confirmed by the UN (2022), in its Resolution 2634, in which the Security Council calls on the Gulf of Guinea countries to criminalise piracy, and armed robbery at sea under domestic law. Despite the document's predominant focus on piracy and armed robbery, it acknowledges the "destabilising and negative impact ... of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing", among other issues in the Gulf of Guinea. However, the emphasis is on piracy and armed robbery, as the main issues in the region. This chapter argues that IUU fishing and its subsequent effects pose a greater challenge to the livelihoods of littoral communities.

According to the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2011) as a means of alternative livelihood, fisherfolk in West Africa have been involved in the trafficking of narcotics and arms as well as migrant smuggling. Consequently, the local people have become victims of their circumstance. This is further worsened by the response of the respective authorities who sometimes perceive the local people (acting in the defence of their livelihoods) as the main threat to the country's vested interests. Essentially, this has not only meant that local communities are robbed of their livelihoods, but their dignity as well. What has culminated in the securitisation of fisheries, began as measures to protect the national security and fishery interests of countries in the Gulf of Guinea. This is particularly evident in Cameroon.

Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 518) argue that since the late 2000s, Cameroon's maritime environment, and specifically its fishery sector has emerged as national security concerns. The key issue identified was IUU fishing and the associated criminality as posing a threat to not only national security, but also broader regional security in the Gulf of Guinea (Beseng & Malcolm 2021: 524). In this regard, Beseng and Malcolm point out that declining fish stocks in the region have engendered tension between local fishers, resulting in clashes between the naval forces of Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea to protect artisanal fishing rights. Similarly,

it is evident that fisheries-related conflicts have also occurred in Ghana. Ameyaw et al (2021) identify the different types of fisheries conflicts that have materialised in Ghana, these include spatial conflicts, conflicts over fishing gear, resource competition, as well as governance and inter-agency conflicts. Ameyaw et al (2021) argue that the conflict between fisherfolk have adverse consequences for both economic development and social well-being.

In both the cases of Cameroon and Ghana, the overarching issue identified and perceived as a threat has been IUU fishing and its associated crimes.

4.3.2 Securitising actors and action

Before honing in on the securitisation of IUU fishing, it is necessary to consider the broader landscape, specifically the securitising measures enacted by a range of actors in the Gulf of Guinea. Okafor-Yarwood and Onuoha (2023: 950) describe the act of securitisation as the action where “an actor (government or corporate body, or both acting in consort) institutes measures to enhance their security when they perceive that referent object is existentially threatened, often without public debate or democratic process”. This is a common characteristic of securitisation with its perceived invasive, enigmatic, and unaccountable processes. Where the Gulf of Guinea is concerned, securitisation has been a multi-layered and multi-stakeholder approach, consisting of interventions by regional actors as well as extra-regional actors and organisations, including the EU. However, over and above, the process remains top-level, in essence dominated by elites and decision-makers.

In 2010 the EU adopted a card system to pressure countries, particularly developing countries to take action to curb IUU fishing. Under its IUU Regulation system, the European Commission identifies non-EU states that fail to carry out their duties in accordance with international law to tackle IUU fishing, and subsequently initiates dialogue with them (EPRS 2022: 1). Hereunder, the varying cards (designations) and their criteria as defined by the EU are outlined:

Green card:

Dialogue remains open throughout the procedure. When a pre-identified, identified or listed country makes concrete progress in resolving EU concerns, the Commission lifts the pre-identification status or proposes to the Council to delist the country.

Yellow card:

*If the dialogue does not resolve the shortcomings, the Commission notifies the country of the risk of being identified as non-cooperating. This notification is known as '**pre-identification**', or a '**yellow card**'. The Commission proposes tailored measures, which the non-EU country is expected to address by a specified deadline. If the pre-identified country makes progress in line with the proposed measures but more time is needed to conclude the reforms, the yellow card status may be extended.*

Red card:

*In cases where the pre-identified country fails to resolve its IUU fishing problems, the Commission identifies it as a non-cooperating country, in what is called the 'identification' step, or the '**red card**', and proposes to the Council to place the country on the list of non-cooperating countries, i.e. the '**listing**' step. Listing involves trade-restrictive measures—the prohibition of imports of fishery products from the listed country, associated with a prohibition on EU vessels operating in its waters.*

There have been several other initiatives and measures implemented by the EU in order to address IUU fishing and the broader maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.²⁴ In 2014, the EU

²⁴ In addition to Cameroon and Ghana, other countries that have been issued either yellow or red cards include Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone (IUU Watch n.d.).

adopted the EU Strategy for the Gulf of Guinea as well as the EU Gulf of Guinea Action Plan. The former as described by the EEAS (2021), is intended to “lend support to the objectives of the Yaoundé Architecture”, while the latter was subsequently initiated to support and implement the former Strategy. Besides the EU, countries within the Gulf of Guinea have established and to some extent implemented broader regional maritime security frameworks.

Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 517) argue that as a key regional actor, Cameroon played a significant role in shaping (influencing) the emerging maritime security architecture in the Gulf of Guinea. This regional security framework is embodied in the Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy, Armed Robbery Against Ships, and Illicit Maritime Activity in West and Central Africa, commonly referred to as the Yaoundé Architecture. In 2013, representatives of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC) met in Yaoundé, Cameroon, to establish this maritime security framework (Beseng & Malcolm 2021: 518).²⁵ It entailed laying the foundation for a “common regional strategy to prevent and prosecute illicit activities” in Gulf of Guinea. The outcome of the 2013 Yaoundé Summit was the creation of three mechanisms: (1) the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, (2) the Heads of States Declaration and (3) the Memorandum of Understanding between regional organisations (ICC 2023). Together, these instruments embody the Yaoundé Architecture.

Arguably, this framework constitutes a pre-emptive move to enhance regional security, prior to the enactment of securitisation measures. In this case, the instituting (and securitising) actors were state and regional actors. Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 518) note that the Yaoundé Code of Conduct (YCC) recognised IUU as a transnational organised crime that threatens the sustainable development of countries in West and Central Africa. The language of the official document bears undertones that hint at the securitising actions, informed and perhaps prompted by key UN Resolutions.

Paragraph four of the YCC document employs language which aligns with the Speech Act of securitisation, it reads:

²⁵ More recently, the PSC commended the commitment of “all member states of the Gulf of Guinea region, the regional bodies particularly ECCAS, ECOWAS and the GCC for their proactive engagement and collaborative efforts undertaken to address and prevent maritime crimes and offences...”

*Noting in particular that resolution 2039 (2012), recognises the **urgent**²⁶ need to devise and adopt effective and practical measures to counter piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea....*

Drawing from a UN resolution and the use of the word ‘urgent’ arguably serves to demonstrate the severity of the situation in the Gulf of Guinea and the necessity to respond promptly. The YCC is one of many frameworks which indicate the transnationality of maritime security issues, and the necessity for collaboration between regional actors. Another similar framework is the FAO International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IPOA-IUU). Articles 25 to 27 of the IPOA-IUU (2001: 8) encourages states to develop their national action plans on IUU fishing in consultation with key sectoral actors. This is to some extent precisely what Cameroon has done.

According to Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 519) Cameroonian state agents, occasionally supplemented by civil society organisation (CSO) actors, “employed a range of linguistic, institutional and structural mechanisms to securitise the fisheries sectors within the broader framework of maritime security governance” implemented nationally and regionally. To emphasise the importance of the maritime domain as well as the fisheries sector to Cameroon’s national and human security, Beseng and Malcolm state that securitising actors made use of media platforms such as political radio and television shows, official Facebook pages of the government (military) departments. During interviews conducted by Beseng and Malcolm, to demonstrate the severity of the threat posed by IUU fishing, senior officials in Cameroon’s Ministry of Fisheries (MINEPIA) pointed to the ‘**conflict amongst artisanal and industrial fishers**’. This point served to effectively highlight the severe competition over fishing grounds. Furthermore, the authors note that during these interviews customs officials referenced a ‘**drastic drop in revenue to state coffers**’, while marine research officers from the Institute of Agricultural Research for Development (IRAD) pointed to a ‘**rapid decline of fish stocks**’.²⁷

This kind of emotive and highly descriptive language demonstrates the manner in which state officials in Cameroon perceived IUU fishing as a severe problem posing challenges to national and economic security, thus warranting an urgent response, i.e., securitisation. Furthermore, Beseng and Malcolm argue that the participation of “influential political and security actors”

²⁶ In this chapter, similar to chapter three, the bolded text in the indented quotation is included by the author to add emphasis and draw attention to specific linguistic tools of securitisation.

²⁷ Certain words and phrases in the text, namely “conflict”, “drastic drop”, and “rapid decline”, have been written in bold by the author to flag the language used by state agents to securitise IUU fishing.

in formulating and adopting maritime security strategies like the YCC, provided “legal and political credence to support the elevation of IUU fishing threats” above the realm of normal politics.

In a recently published article, Okafor-Yarwood et al. (2022) explore the case of Ghana as an apt example of a country that has employed legal and political frameworks “in the form of securitisation” to manage the country’s fisheries sector. Ghana’s Fisheries Management Plan is one such instrument. The FAO (2023) describes this plan as a “sectoral instrument which aims to ensure the long-term conservation of fish stocks in Ghana”, whilst concurrently contributing to the improvement of food and nutritional safety nationally. Through the implementation of a ‘formal harvest strategy’, the Plan has seven objectives (Republic of Ghana 2015: 1):

- to reduce the excessive pressure on fish stocks;
- to ensure that fish stocks within the fisheries waters of Ghana are exploited within biologically acceptable levels;
- to ensure that the fisheries legislation is implemented to protect the nation's fish resources;
- to protect marine habitats and biodiversity;
- to contribute to enhancing export opportunities and strengthening value addition;
- to strengthen participatory decision-making in fisheries management (co-management);
- to meet Ghana's regional and international fisheries management obligations.

To some extent, the institutional, structural, political, and legal instruments employed to portray and designate IUU fishing as a threat, by several actors, provide an idea of the kind of response(s) that will be initiated.

4.3.3 Response

In response to the widespread maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea, a number of international initiatives have been established, like the EU Coordinated Maritime Presence in

the Gulf of Guinea (EEAS 2021). Evidently, some of these initiatives and strategies have placed more emphasis on piracy, armed robbery at sea, and maritime terrorism; this has borne substantial consequences. For example, Ujeke (2009: 21) notes that the nexus between the fight against terrorism and energy security prompted a different kind of securitisation. Obi (2005: 38) describes this as the ‘rapid securitisation of development in West Africa’, which manifested as the protection of the market using military measures. This is inherently driven by extra-regional actors. For Ujeke (2009: 22), this kind of securitisation has the ability to further undermine both the security and stability of West Africa vis-à-vis the Gulf of Guinea. Ujeke argues that the externally-driven process of securitisation is not motivated by the “genuine desire to support the aspirations of countries in the Gulf of Guinea, but rather the self-interests of Western countries”. These externally-driven approaches have had major implications for human security.

These initiatives have broad operational scopes, however arguably what is required to tackle IUU fishing are more focused strategies. In this regard, there are some notable examples. The Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) is an intergovernmental organisation that serves as a fisheries advisory body to promote cooperation in the management and protection of fisheries (FCWC 2021). Through the FCWC, Ghana, along with Benin, Cote d’Ivoire, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo launched the Regional Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Centre (RMCS) in order to monitor fishing activities in the Gulf of Guinea. Various other Gulf of Guinea countries have also enacted their own securitisation measures. Where IUU fishing is concerned, Cameroon and Ghana are among the many countries in the region that have implemented what may be classified as securitisation measures.

In February 2021, the European Commission issued Cameroon a ‘yellow card’ for failing to ensure adequate control of fishing activities occurring under its flag (Oirere 2021). The yellow card issued by the EU prompted the Cameroonian government to initiate steps to improve the management of its fisheries sector. Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 529) state that the securitisation of fisheries and fishing activities in Cameroon was formalised in 2013 pursuant to the signing of a cooperation agreement between MINEPIA and the Ministry of Defence (MINDEF). This agreement made the Cameroonian Navy the primary authority responsible for all Monitoring Surveillance and Control (MCS) activities.

According to Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 532), the decisions taken by Cameroonian authorities appear to be an “institutional strategy” to facilitate exclusively military operations

at sea. These military operations include: (1) regular drills, (2) identification checks, (3) increased surveillance through the establishment of ‘prohibited zones’ also known as ‘buffer zones’ around both offshore and coastal infrastructures, and (4) records compiled at industrial ports through detentions and arrests (without due process) of fishers suspected of violating the designated buffer zones. Beseng and Malcolm argue that these militaristic strategies have resulted in the restriction of fishing spaces, all the while the proximity of military infrastructure to fishing communities and their operations has facilitated the military’s ability to monitor fishers and their activities. The authors argue that this state-centric approach to maritime governance diminished the role of the MINEPIA at sea while enhancing the role of MINDEF. While Cameroon has adopted a state-centric (military) approach to combatting IUU fishing, it appears Ghana has done something similar, in tandem with incorporating political and legal measures, namely the formulation and implementation of certain policies.

Okafor-Yarwood et al. (2022: 4) argue that Ghana has initiated securitisation as a fisheries governance mechanism. A key example of this is Ghana’s National Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing (NPOA-IUU). The plan aims to identify inefficiencies vis-à-vis combating IUU fishing, in order to propose remedial steps to bridge these gaps. Moreover, it aims to make fisheries “more productive and sustainable”. This plan is one of the many measures Ghana has implemented. Another example is a recently established trilateral task force. In late December 2021, Ghana signed a pact with Benin and Togo to work together to reduce IUU fishing in the Gulf of Guinea (Africa Defense Forum 2022). The agreement operationalises joint at-sea patrols, as well as information sharing through the RMCSC. Moreover, it has several collaborative partners including the Regional Maritime Security Centre for West Africa, the Multinational Maritime Coordination Centre, the European Fisheries Control Agency, and a fisheries intelligence analysis company known as Trygg Mat Tracking. The agreement and its operations are funded by the EU’s Improved Regional Fisheries Governance in West Africa program (PESCAO), and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation. According to the African Defense Forum (2023), the agreement is evidence of countries in the Gulf of Guinea, specifically Ghana, Benin, and Togo, responding to the concerns of artisanal fishers, whilst committing to develop their blue economies.

Beyond this agreement, Ghana has taken additional measures to prevent the further decline of fish stocks. In order to restore and maintain a sustainable stock (level) of fish and prevent the

complete collapse of fish populations, Ghana implements mandatory closed seasons pursuant to its Fisheries Management Plan. This entails a two-month closed season for industrial trawlers and a one-month closed season for small-scale (artisanal) fishers. Okafor-Yarwood et al. (2022: 4) argue that Ghana's decision to extend the closed season for artisanal as well as inshore fisheries demonstrates the willingness of the government to "sacrifice the wellbeing of small-scale fishers who are already vulnerable to the impact of depleting fisheries".

Thus far, it appears that many of the securitising moves enacted have been undertaken unilaterally, or by small groupings of countries in the Gulf of Guinea. However, some notable maritime security initiatives, established collectively by countries in the region, are taking form. More recently, in early 2023 countries in the Gulf of Guinea, specifically the member states of the GGC have established a Combined Maritime Task Force (CMTF) (African Union 2023). This task force represents one of the most recent measures to tackle maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea. With all these measures, it is necessary to assess their effectiveness, particularly their impact on the livelihoods of the local communities.

4.4 Human security impact

The securitising measures in the Gulf of Guinea, in particular the securitisation of IUU fishing, have had a major impact on the human security and livelihoods of local communities. It may be argued that one of the most consequential aspects has been the predominant presence of external (foreign) actors. Obi (2005: 39-40) argues that the profound involvement of extra-regional actors in the Gulf of Guinea has been motivated by the desire to control "both the territorial space and the resources within", arguing that "it masks a 'new' continuity in the subordination of the region to the interests of the world's sole superpower, and its allies".

Driven by vested interests, such agendas, and measures have paid little regard to the well-being of the local populations. Okafor et al (2022: 4) argue that efforts to address piracy and armed robbery in the region have prompted the victimisation of fisherfolk, who at times have been mistaken for criminals by the navies on patrol. In a similar vein, Ukeje and Mvomo Ela (2013: 40) assert that the militarisation of the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) has worsened the socio-economic crisis along the coast, largely due to the reassigning of scarce resources to fund military programmes. Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 519) concur adding that the deployment of extraordinary measures to address IUU fishing in the GoG undermined the agency and capacity

of non-military and non-state actors like civil society organisations. Once again, it is clear that local communities not only lost their livelihoods but their dignity as well.

Where Cameroon is concerned, Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 531) argue that military actors used the “fishers-as-pirates” narrative to demonstrate the need for increased military capacity and responsibility. Arguably, this painted local fisherfolk as the threat, as opposed to the referent object. This aligns with the argument of Okafor-Yarwood et al. (2022) confirming the victimisation of fisherfolk that were targeted by navies on patrol. It bears mentioning that Cameroonian state agents, according to Beseng and Malcolm, have established a new relationship with the public which enabled the implementation of extraordinary institutional and structural measures. Further, the authors note that the military is “building a social contract with fishing communities”, whilst playing a leading role in tackling IUU fishing. In conclusion to their study, Beseng and Malcolm coin the term ‘*blue securitisation*’ as a process where activities related to the maritime domain are “increasingly framed with the logic of existential threat and imbued with urgency” subsequently enabling emergency (extraordinary) measures. They clearly stipulate that this process and “wider implications for governance and capacity-building efforts in Cameroon” and the broader region require greater consideration. The same is true with regard to the implications of securitisation on the livelihoods and overall human security and dignity of communities in the Gulf of Guinea. Ultimately, Beseng and Malcolm conclude that while the governance of fisheries in Cameroon between 2009 and 2019 benefited from the participation of non-military state actors and CSO agents, beyond this period the subsequent securitising measures undermined the agency of these actors.

In the case of Ghana, Okafor-Yarwood et al (2022: 4) argue that the extraordinary social, political and legal measures enacted to tackle the threats to sustainable fisheries and their blue economy objectives, came at the expense of small-scale fishers. This has been most evident in the ‘favouritism’ shown toward the industrial sector, over the needs of small-scale fishers (Okafor-Yarwood et al 2022: 4). Arguably, this reflects a ‘profit over people’ mentality, and prioritises the vested interest of the securitising authorities. Johnson (2019) argues that through certain governance policies which bear the elements of securitisation, Ghana has essentially undermined the livelihoods of local populations. Okafor-Yarwood et al. (2022: 4) affirm this arguing that Ghana’s policies have criminalised the activities of informal producers. Clearly and inevitably, there have been perverse and unintended consequences of policy implementation albeit well-intentioned motives.

In some instances, it is not only the securitising moves that have affected local fishing communities but also certain government projects and initiatives. For example, Ghana established Safety and Security Zones (SSZs) in order to harness offshore hydrocarbons, as well as construct oil rigs, floating production storage, and gas pipelines (Okafor-Yarwood et al 2022: 4). Unfortunately, these infrastructure projects were undertaken in areas previously used as landing sites, effectively robbing local fishers of their traditional grounds. Similarly, in Cameroon, the construction of the Kribi Port resulted in the displacement of local fishers (Okafor-Yarwood et al. 2022: 4). Thus, plainly it is clear that at times, the infrastructure projects and/or securitising measures of the government, are not intended to benefit local communities.

With all this in mind, it is necessary to assess whether the securitising measures have succeeded in containing (managing) the issue of IUU fishing. The present-day situation perhaps provides a clearer picture.

4.5 Current Situation

It may be argued that the predominant focus on anti-piracy strategies has not borne positive results for the livelihoods of fisherfolk in the Gulf of Guinea. Although piracy in the region has declined (Defence Web 2023), it appears that the Gulf of Guinea remains the region most affected by IUU fishing when compared to other regions in Africa. According to Okafor-Yarwood (2019: 8), while the pervasiveness of IUU fishing in the Gulf of Guinea is known, the extent of the problem is unclear due to its obscure nature and the scarcity of data because some countries in the region lack effective MCS systems. However, despite these challenges, there is widespread recognition that IUU fishing and its subsequent effects remain a major threat.

Beseng and Malcolm (2021: 518) note that as a result of depleted fish stocks, some fisherfolk residing in littoral states lost their livelihoods, this in turn has engendered poverty, unemployment and social unrest. The extent of these issues varies from country to country in the Gulf of Guinea. With regard to Cameroon, on 5 January 2023, the European Commission issued the country a red card effectively banning imports of seafood caught in Cameroon's territorial waters (Africa News 2023). The resultant situation bears potentially adverse effects on trade (exports) for Cameroon, in the long run hampering economic growth and social

development prospects. Presently, Cameroon's fisheries sector remains plagued by a plethora of issues. Along with IUU fishing, Nkemngu (2021) identifies several other challenges which presently affect the country's fisheries sectors, these include insufficient data on fish stocks, an influx of foreign industrial fishing vessels, as well as subsidy-driven overfishing. However, contrary to the latter point, Jarrett and Gilbert (2020) state that "not all fisheries subsidies are harmful". The merit of such strategies, which potentially hold certain benefits, warrant further investigation.

Like Cameroon, Ghana was issued a warning by the EU. In June 2021, the European Commission issued a yellow card to Ghana, ultimately to warn the West African nation that it risks being labelled a "non-cooperating country" in the fight against IUU fishing (European Commission 2021). Arguably, this may have prompted Ghana to take more extreme and/or swift measures to combat IUU fishing in its waters. In response to this, Ghana's Fisheries Commission ordered companies operating in its industrial fisheries sector to reapply for fishing licenses (African Defense Forum 2023). Moreover, in March 2023, the Ghanaian government announced that it will endeavour to achieve 100 percent transparency by 2025 in its industrial fisheries sector, specifically the trawlers operating in its territorial waters. To this end, Ghana intends to monitor fishing vessels by installing electronic monitoring systems (EMS) including remote sensors, cameras, global positioning systems as well as hard drives (Africa Defense Forum 2023). These measures may contribute to preventing and deterring IUU fishing in the industrial sectors, although the immediate benefits to small-scale fishers may not be as extensive.

The actions of Gulf of Guinea countries including but not limited to Ghana to bolster their monitoring, surveillance, and enforcement capabilities, have not discouraged many Africans feeling disenfranchised and marginalised to leave the continent. A documentary released by Aljazeera on 27 May 2023, notes that several West Africans are embarking on dangerous journeys across the Mediterranean Sea, Europe because of overfishing by foreign (Asian and European) trawlers.²⁸ This documentary notes that young West Africans, primarily men, prompted by depleted fish stocks are migrating across the seas and ocean to the Canary Islands (Spain), and other European countries in search of better economic opportunities.²⁹ Given such

²⁸ See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwmrQl4XYxg> for Aljazeera film (documentary) released 27 May 2023, accessed 31 May 2023.

²⁹ The influx of migrants making the perilous journey across the Atlantic Ocean and in the particular the Mediterranean Sea has prompted European governments and authorities to institute extreme measures. Since the 2015 'migration crisis' the European Union has increasingly securitised migration in the Central Mediterranean,

instances and other major impacts, it is plain to see that the situation in the Gulf of Guinea with regard to IUU fishing has been slow to improve.

4.6 Key lessons

What is overwhelmingly clear is that despite the implementation of national and regional securitising measures to combat of IUU fishing in the Gulf of Guinea, the situation has not improved. Albeit successful in containing piracy and armed robbery, these measures have failed to adequately address IUU fishing. This is evident in several areas, such as the persistence of IUU and related crimes, as well as the continued waves of West African migrants fleeing the continent in search of better opportunities in Europe. Moreover, according to Logo (2022: 14) the ability of IUU fishing to exploit the “weakness of corrupt officials” particularly those in developing countries demonstrates the correlation between the ‘prevalence of IUU fishing and weak governance measures’.³⁰

What is particularly concerning is the persisting lack of importance given to IUU fishing as a substantial problem in the region. Observably, IUU fishing appears to be an “add-on” to broader strategies aimed at combatting piracy and armed robbery. Consequently, IUU fishing has not been elevated and treated with the seriousness it deserves. Ujeke and Mvomo Ela (2013) argue that what is required in the Gulf of Guinea, both in the medium and long term, to the establishment of “effective and sustainable maritime governance regimes” and for the countries in the region to “move quickly and decisively toward the harmonization of policies and effective implementation”.

A number of academics have put forth noteworthy recommendations for enhancing maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. Not many though, have paid attention to the securitisation

arguably portraying African migrants a threat to continental Europe, and prohibiting the search-and-rescue operations of non-governmental organisations, and labelling them as smugglers. It is common to find, EU security officials, namely navies, coastguards, and border patrols ignoring their international humanitarian obligations. In this regard, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency commonly known as Frontex, has been complicit. Additionally, the securitisation of migration in the Mediterranean Sea has been informed by a policy of externalisation, in which European countries look to Northern African Maghreb countries to prevent migrants (often through illegal push-backs) from reaching Europe’s shores.

³⁰ The inadequate technology, logistics and manpower to conduct coordinated and comprehensive MCS initiatives in developing countries is an advantage to perpetrators of IUU fishing. Thus, IUU fishing is rampant and unabated in developing countries, where Logo (2022) argues legislation lack robustness and ‘enforcement is virtually non-existent’.

processes occurring within the region, with few exceptions, such as the authors discussed in this study namely Okafor-Yarwood and Onuoha (2023) and Beseng and Malcolm (2021).

4.7 Applying the securitisation continuum – a human security approach to maritime securitisation

This section will apply the analytical framework and securitisation continuum developed in this study to the cases of IUU fishing in the Gulf of Guinea countries under assessment, namely Cameroon and Ghana.

This is done with the overarching aim of theorising an alternative outcome, an outcome favourable (benefiting) the local fishing community, to the securitisation measures enacted. Therefore, in accordance with this, the section begins by outlining the threat to the referent object(s), thereafter identifying the securitising actors and actions and finally discussing the securitisation continuum.

4.7.1 Threat and referent object

In the case of the Gulf of Guinea, the main issue which manifests as a catalyst for subsequent issues is the threat posed by IUU fishing and its associated crimes. In addition to this, government policies, such as the emphasis on military solutions, the discriminant closed seasons, and the preference afforded to foreign industrial trawlers through government subsidies jeopardise the livelihoods of local fishing communities.

In the case of piracy off the coast of Somalia, the presence and activities of foreign fishing vessels overpowered the local Somali population (see chapter 3). This constituted a motivating (push factor) for local fisherfolk to align (ally) with militias to attack vessels they deemed 'hostile'. In Somalia, the threat identified was piracy, in the Gulf of Guinea, the perceived 'threat' of IUU fishing appears to be clearcut. Unfortunately, it is not always treated (approached) with the seriousness it deserves when compared to piracy, armed robbery or maritime terrorism.

Drawing from insights provided in an interview with Dr Angela Manuekor Lamptey, a Senior lecturer in the Department of Fisheries and Marine Science at the University of Ghana, an article published by the Center for Sustainable Transformation (2023) states that both Asian and European companies engage in IUU fishing. The article noted above as well as an article by the Africa Defense Forum (2023), note that the majority of the industrial fishing trawlers operating in West Africa are Chinese-owned. However, Belhabib et al (2015) argue that both China and the EU have similar levels of illegal fishing in West Africa, in terms of their patterns of exploitation as well as the sustainability of the use of resources. The main difference Belhabib et al (2015) note is the under-reporting by the EU and the decrease in the reporting by China. Dr. Lamptey states that ‘European vessels are the worst perpetrators of IUU fishing followed by Asian and some African vessels’.

This is confirmed by other authors, like Laura Arago and Daniela Q. Lepiz. According to Arago and Lepiz (2018), Spanish tuna companies are benefiting from a legal loophole that allows some multinational corporations to “bypass internationally agreed fishing restrictions by reflagging” their operations. Essentially, certain Spanish tuna companies with fishing fleets operating in the Gulf of Guinea, are reflagging their vessels to misrepresent them as vessels (operations) from South American countries (Arago & Lepiz 2018). Several other authors including Kamara and Valentino (2021) have also shone a light on the EU’s complicity in IUU fishing. Kamar and Valentino (2021) fairly argue that the EU as a bloc and its individual member states including but not limited to Italy, France and Spain, and even Russia, are turning a blind eye to IUU fishing in the Gulf of Guinea. By failing to investigate the origins of fish catch and other related abuses, European authorities are violating the laws put in place to protect the fisherfolk in Gulf of Guinea countries. Thus, clearly, despite the biased portrayal of China as the primary perpetrator, it appears that Europe is also complicit (Okafor-Yarwood & Belhabib 2020), despite issuing its “regulatory IUU fishing cards”. Were it not for the prevalent asymmetries of power between Europe and Africa, ideally, it should be the AU issuing its own ‘cards’ on behalf of African countries.³¹

However, beyond the EU’s card system and other interventions, a key problem is the fishing agreements between West Africa and the EU, agreements that favour the EU economically, at

³¹ The AU’s 2050 African Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIMS) sets the provisions for such a framework noting that in order to deter IUU fishing activities “sanctions of sufficient gravity as to deprive the offenders of the benefits accruing from their illegal activities shall be put in place as per the 2005 Rome Declaration on IUU Fishing, which might include seizure of assets and prosecution, with the toughest stand for compensation” (AU 2014: 18).

the expense of West African coastal states (Aljazeera World Film 2023).³² The findings from the Aljazeera documentary demonstrate that these fishing agreements engender food insecurity and simultaneously facilitate the unsustainable exploitation of marine resources, thus undermining the livelihoods of local communities. Thus, it would appear that the issue which warrants securitisation alongside IUU fishing, or more suitably deeper interrogation, are the policies that privilege external and powerful actors at the expense of local livelihoods and overall human security. Plainly, to the present day, Africa's natural resources both living and non-living continue to be plundered.

To reconcile this conflict, the analytical framework developed in this study strongly advocates for a human security approach to maritime security approach in which secondary security actors are acknowledged and their participation is facilitated (enabled) by the primary securitisers who purport to protect them.

4.7.2 Primary securitisers

Within the analytical framework developed in this study, primary securitisers constitute state actors, namely government and military officials. Ideally, these actors should craft measures that accommodate the participation of secondary securitising actors. However, beyond this, the national agendas enacted by these primary actors should prompt the creation and alignment of regional strategies. This has been emphasised by Rosello (2020: 40), who argues that the practices of individual states may serve as catalysts to “effective trends” in tackling IUU fishing. However, this does not do away with the importance of multilateral cooperation in transnational issues.

Noteworthy, is that this multilateral cooperation is not exclusive to state actors. Multinational corporations that are at times complicit in IUU fishing are essentially functional actors, with enough financial, and perhaps political sway to influence or prompt securitisation. Thus, as key private sector actors they should not only be working with governments, but also non-state agents, like local communities and CSOs. In accordance with a human security approach to maritime securitisation, these non-stares actors constitute secondary securitising actors. In

³² See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwmrQl4XYxg> for Aljazeera film (documentary) released 27 May 2023, accessed 31 May 2023.

essence, they have a key role to play in addressing and securitising perceived maritime security threats, especially IUU fishing.

4.7.3 Secondary securitising actors

In line with a human security approach to maritime securitisation, the secondary securitising actors are non-state actors, with a stake in the securitising process. In the case of IUU fishing, the secondary securitising actors should be the littoral and island communities, specifically those individuals and communities that rely on fish as a source of commerce as well as consumption. The first-hand experience of these secondary securitising actors is indispensable in effectively combating IUU fishing. Moreover, because they are central to the fishing and harvesting activities in the region. Therefore, collaborative securitisation is key. Furthermore, local and even international CSOs have a crucial role to play in amplifying the agency and voices of these local fishing communities. With their respective knowledge and combined influence, they could potentially place greater pressure on government officials to make their demands and needs heard. This should lead to the formulation of collaborative securitisation practices.

4.7.4 Collaborative (Co-) securitisation

Collaborative securitisation entails cooperation between primary securitisers and secondary securitising actors. As defined in the previous chapters, this may encompass the second securitising actors playing a consultative role, and advising primary securitisers. This could take the form of the initiative mentioned in Chapter Three, Pakistan's JMICC and its grassroots-level operations. This is arguably what is required in the Gulf of Guinea. A CEMLAWS (2019) report points out that small-scale fishers believe that the most feasible solution to tackling the depletion of fisheries would be to control (contain) the activities of the industrial sector in Ghana. Such insights should be taken into consideration prior to and throughout the securitisation process.

According to Kassah and Asare (2022: 99) widespread sentiments of disenfranchisement, discrimination, and marginalisation among Ghanaian fishers, prompted the government to adopt a “collaborative co-management approach” to fisheries”. This new approach differs from

the traditional top-down management of fisheries, because it promotes the participation of all relevant stakeholders in the fisheries sector and decision-making process.

Although it is not necessarily a securitising move, this decision by the Ghanaian government constitutes a collaborative approach to the management of fisheries. This approach aligns with the framework put forth in this study. Ideally, primary securitisers should consult and work hand-in-hand with the local (grassroots) communities in order to ascertain their experiences, needs, and recommendations. Such an approach is essential to communities' buy-in and policy efficacy.

4.7.5 Response

In accordance with a human security approach to maritime securitisation, the response to the perceived threat, in this case, IUU fishing, should include the inputs and active participation of the local non-state actors. Beseng and Malcolm point out that between 2009 and 2019, non-military state actors and CSO agents were involved in Cameroon's fisheries governance processes. However, as demonstrated earlier in this chapter, that participation seems to have been diluted by an overemphasis on military elements of fisheries securitisation. This in no way means doing away with military approaches, rather what is required are integrated and multi-layered strategies

The strategy should be two-fold. On the one hand, it should address the crimes driving IUU fishing, namely overfishing and/or illegal fishing by foreign trawlers. This may entail the operationalisation of task forces and/or missions with the mandate to surveil and patrol designated areas. These frameworks should be carefully crafted to prevent the victimisation (ill-informed and unjustified targeting and criminalisation) of local fisherfolk.

On the other hand, the strategy should address the challenges posed by the subsidies and agreements that privilege industrial fishing trawlers over the needs of small-scale, artisanal fishers. Subsidies in general, and of the agricultural and fisheries sectors, in particular, continue to be a source of long-standing grief between developed and developing countries, these disagreements tend to arise in international trade negotiations and forums such as the WTO. The UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 Target 6 signed in 2015 by UN member states, attempts to solve this conflict. To achieve this, SDG 14.6 prohibits certain kinds of

fisheries subsidies that contribute to overfishing, overcapacity, and IUU fishing. This SDG not only tasks the World Trade Organisation (WTO) with designing an agreement aimed at ending harmful fisheries subsidies, but also one which provides “special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries”.³³ Therefore, the formulation of agreements of this nature should involve the developing and developed countries they are intended to assist.

The same can be said of other strategies, with similar purposes. As previously noted, Ghana imposes a two-month closed season for industrial trawlers and a one-month closed season for artisanal fishers (Africa Defense Forum 2022). Essentially, this means that during the closed season, both industrial and small-scale fishers are prohibited from fishing. The objectives and subsequent merits of such an approach are understandable, however where small-scale fishers are concerned, they should be consulted first. Small-scale fishers should be the ones who decide when the closed season occurs. They should also have a say in its duration, implementation, and the manner in which it is enforced.

4.7.6 Desecuritisation

Once the perceived threat has been contained, and/or managed to an acceptable level, the desecuritisation process may ensue. During this stage, the initial securitisation measures as well as their impact, particularly on human security must be evaluated. This means compiling a criterion with which to evaluate the performance of the initial securitisation measures. From this point onwards, the measures enacted should de-escalate the situation, reverting the issue to the realm of normal politics. This implies adopting the appropriate policies in order to continue the management of the issue, in this case, IUU fishing. It is vital that the central actors in this phase and the entire process be African stakeholders, both state and non-state. This is necessary in order for regional governments in the Gulf of Guinea to claim ownership of their initiatives as well as retain their agency in political decision-making and other sovereignty-related policy.

³³ See <https://indicators.report/goals/goal-14/> Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN). Indicators Report. Goal 14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

4.7.7 Resecuritisation

In the event that the initial issue (threat) re-emerges or re-escalates, it may be necessary to embark on a process of resecuritisation. This may entail re-instituting the previous securitisation measures, or initiating new measures to suit the challenge, more specifically the context, at hand. Clearly, ironically so, such a reversion would constitute an indictment that the measures employed have not worked or did transiently in addressing consequences. Yet, the root causes of the situation remain entrenched. Hence necessitating profound reflection on the political economy and structural relations of local and regional economies.

As discussed in Chapters One and Two, the process of securitisation and desecuritisation is not linear or sequential, but rather it is cyclical or interactive. With this in mind, perhaps a suitable strategy to securitise IUU fishing from a human security approach is one which there accommodates the continued application (deployment) of counteractive measures. IUU fishing appears to be an issue that will remain a constant thorn in the 21st century, particularly given exacerbating factors like illegal fishing, climate change, the rising temperature of the oceans, and habitat degradation, to name a few. Thus, a constant cycle of minimal securitisation (informed by human security) may be necessary in the short-term, until the issue of IUU fishing reaches a manageable level where development approaches can be implemented. Alternatively, and more appropriately, development approaches should be implemented in tandem (alongside) securitisation measures.

Additionally, it may also be necessary to alter the composition of the securitisers, and bring on board (incorporate) new actors, because as noted in Chapter Two, the securitiser is not a fixed agent. Thus, like the securitisers, the securitising moves must be fit for purpose. Simply put, they must suit the context at hand in order to mitigate and manage the issue.

4.7.8 Desecuritisation and developmental approaches

The final phase of the securitisation continuum entails the gradual downscaling of the resecuritisation measures enacted. Pursuant to the securitisation, desecuritisation, and resecuritisation, the final phase is to initiate development approaches. An apt example of desecuritisation was provided in Chapter Three, specifically the decision by the UN not to

extend the anti-piracy resolutions as well as the demotion of the Horn of Africa as no longer being a high-risk area.

In this phase of the securitisation continuum, what is required are mechanisms to shore up the resilience of vulnerable communities. This can be done through the formulation and implementation of a post-securitisation recovery plan. This is ultimately intended to positively influence development trajectories and community livelihoods by enhancing their capacity to respond and adapt to challenging circumstances, namely the depletion of fish stocks. Several frameworks such as the UN 2030 Agenda and related SDGs offer a good starting point. SDG 17 Target 9 aims to “enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans ...”. A key example of such plans is Ghana’s National Policy and Fisheries Management plan. Essentially, confidence-building measures can go a long way to enhance trust, much more than the military interventions of extra-regional actors, or coercive measures (impositions) like the EU’s punitive card system.

4.8 Intended outcome

A human security approach to maritime securitisation is not a panacea that can be applied with absolute certainty and success to eradicate a perceived threat, in this case, IUU fishing. Rather, it should be viewed as one of many strategies that can be applied in tandem with other development agendas. The aim of the approach is to enable greater participation of non-state actors, in order to eventually pursue strategies crafted by all the relevant stakeholders, both state and non-state. Such strategies will also serve to legitimise the implementation of securitising measures, because arguably the securitising moves adopted in Ghana, were perhaps not welcomed by the local people, especially given their victimisation. Moreover, it should have been the local people who framed and designated IUU fishing by foreign trawlers as the threat. Based on the evidence presented in this chapter, particularly the culpability of European vessels, it may be argued that African governments have yet to respond decisively to condemn the harmful fishing practices of European fishing companies. This may be due to a reluctance by African governments to fray their relationship with individual European countries and the EU as a whole. Consequently, African governments are subjected to the EU’s IUU fishing card regulation system, whilst local communities suffer even greater consequences. The list of these consequences is endless: from health insecurity and food insecurity due to the loss of

significant fish protein, to the loss of livelihoods due to the unavailability of jobs, the loss of dignity of those forced to find alternative and potentially criminal means to compensate for what they've lost and even the loss of life for those acting out of desperation and embarking on perilous journeys across the oceans and sea in search of opportunities.

The analytical framework adopted in this study is intended to bring to the fore the suffering of those most affected not only by IUU fishing and other maritime crimes but also by the prevailing exclusionary and elitist securitisation process. The intended outcome of applying a human security approach to maritime securitisation is to address the challenges affecting the so-called referent objects, who in actual fact should not be referred to as 'objects'. As mentioned in Chapter Three, this term may be more suited when referring to non-human referent objects, but it is unbecoming to refer to humans in this way, as it robs them of their agency as well as dignity. Technically and conceptually speaking, in this study, people are the referent objects, but it would be more appropriate to call them 'referent subjects' or 'referent agents'. This suggests that they are more than mere objects on whom strategies can be imposed. Rather they are subjects, obligation-bearing active agents with a stake and entitlement in making the decisions and formulating the policies that affect them.

4.9 Conclusion

Like the case of piracy off the coast of Somalia, maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea prompted a large-scale response by several actors. It may be argued that the key difference between these two cases is the actors involved. The primary actors and securitisers in the case of Somali piracy were extra-regional (foreign) actors, whereas, in the Gulf of Guinea, specifically where IUU fishing is concerned, the primary actors have been countries in the region. In a sense, the countries in the Gulf of Guinea have assumed majority ownership of the maritime security of the region.

However, even so, external actors remain decidedly involved in the maritime security affairs of African countries, in this case, the fisheries governance of the countries in the Gulf of Guinea. This is especially evident in the EU's IUU fishing Regulation system of issuing warning cards to non-EU (African) countries. Essentially, the EU has designated itself a watchdog (referee) over Africa's fisheries. Given the fact that some EU countries themselves

are guilty of IUU fishing, this framework is not primarily motivated by the desire to advantage Africa and its people.

While the securitising measures enacted have thus far been successful in stemming the waves of pirate attacks, the issue of IUU fishing remains dire. Therefore, with this in mind, perhaps now is the time to begin testing alternative strategies, specifically those that promote the agency and participation of non-state actors. Moreover, these strategies should address the root causes of IUU fishing, because merely addressing the symptoms of the issue is counterproductive and ultimately self-defeating. Despite the transnationality of maritime security issues, it is African governments and African people who must decide what is best for the continent and its surrounding waters.

In the following chapter, the study is drawn to a close, summarising the key findings to draw conclusions and recommend areas for further research on the topic of African maritime security and the application of a human security approach to maritime securitisation.

CHAPTER 5:

CONCLUSION – A HUMAN SECURITY APPROACH TO MARITIME SECURITISATION IN AFRICA

5.1 Introduction

This study endeavoured to expand the existing framework of securitisation vis-à-vis human security, in the context of African maritime security. Using the analytical framework and securitisation continuum developed in chapter two, the study applied a human security approach to maritime securitisation to pertinent empirical cases. These cases included the securitisation of piracy off the coast of Somalia and IUU fishing in two of the Gulf of Guinea countries namely Cameroon and Ghana.

While securitisation in the Horn of Africa succeeded in containing piracy off the coast of Somalia, arguably it did not address the root causes which prompted pirate attacks and associated crimes. Similarly, in the Gulf of Guinea, the securitisation measures enacted do not appear to respond to the needs of local fishing communities. What is more, in both cases, non-state actors such as local fishing communities and civil society organisations were excluded from the processes of formulating and implementing securitising measures.

It is clear that these examples are complex, and they remain crucial to understanding the African maritime security environment from a human security approach. Based on the overall study, there are five key takeaways (factors) worth noting, namely the idea of people as referent subjects as opposed to objects, the problem of ‘one-size-fits-all approaches’, the persistence of a ‘profit over people’ mentality, the predominance of ‘exclusionary approaches’, and the prevalence of ‘extra-regional interventions’ in Africa’s maritime security and securitisation efforts.

5.2 Key findings

5.2.1 People as referent subjects, not objects

As pointed out in Chapters Three and Four, the term referent object in relation to people and within the context of human security requires greater reflection and interrogation. When the

referent object is the economy, or the environment, perhaps then this term has merit. However, using the term 'referent object', in particular the word 'object' to refer to human beings, essentially dehumanises them. In a sense, it desensitises the securitiser from the so-called referent object, effectively creating a rift between the main stakeholders. Therefore, it is necessary to deconstruct this concept of a 'referent object' in order to critically analyse and reconstruct it to a more appropriate and context-specific term like 'referent subjects' or 'referent agents'. This is in line with a human security approach that gives priority and dignity to people.

5.2.2 One-size-fits-all approach

In the case of African maritime security, it seems that strategies designed primarily by external actors are employed to address African issues. It may be argued that occasionally, these strategies are not built for purpose, as they do not align with the African context, in which maritime security is inextricably linked to human security. Consequently, these ill-suited approaches only address the symptoms of the problem, whilst overlooking the root causes. These seemingly borrowed approaches place greater emphasis on military strategies at the expense of development-oriented approaches.

Ideally, where African maritime security is concerned securitisation should be uniquely tailored to suit the relevant contexts. The continent as a whole requires custom-made solutions, but so do the various sub-regions on the continent. Africa is far from being homogenous, and with wide-ranging maritime security issues subject to onshore influences across differing sub-regions, maritime securitisation strategies must speak to these diversities. Such an approach does not deny the importance of national navies, coastguards, and other law enforcement agencies. Rather, it emphasises the necessity for attuned diverse strategies which prioritise the principal commitment to the needs of people. Simply stated, the African maritime environment requires more than just military solutions, because of the complex socio-economic circumstances afflicting vulnerable communities.

5.2.3 Profit over people

In their critical examination of maritime security in Africa, using the concept of securitisation, Okafor-Yarwood and Onuoha (2023) note that in the last ten years, investments in securitisation in Africa, have increased through maritime law enforcement. In tandem with the above, they argue that international responses to maritime insecurity in Africa have favoured “distant water nations”, ultimately to the detriment of littoral communities. This kind of attitude speaks to a ‘profit over people’ mentality, where livelihoods and human security concerns are relegated to a secondary place after economic (financial) motivations such as global trade and shipping. As was discussed in Chapter Three, this was most evident in the response to Somali piracy, where UN Resolutions and even individual declarations of certain states, explicitly note the impact of piracy on global trade, as well as key shipping routes and chokepoints in the Horn of Africa. Based on this framing of the issue, it is clear that human security was not the main concern on the anti-piracy agenda.

Thus, when it comes to securitisation, and in particular the securitisation of African maritime security issues, the question should be asked, ‘whose interests are being served?’. This leads to additional questions such as ‘who is securitising and for what purpose?’, ‘how will these securitising measures be implemented and what will be their impact on the livelihoods of ordinary people?’ and ‘what measures, if any, have been put in place to mitigate the implications for human security?’ Principally, placing primacy on profit demotes the needs, safety, and security of people.

5.2.4 Exclusionary approaches

Traditionally securitisation, which is presenting an issue as an existential threat, shifts the discourse from the political realm, and thus public debate and consultation, are not prioritised nor are they required. This, however, is problematic as it relegates democratic processes to the sidelines in the name of security. This appears to be a vexed dilemma of means and ends. Granted the end goal is what is most important, then strategies aimed at achieving these objectives must be aligned with the desired values. Where people are concerned, namely as ‘referent subjects’ they should form part and parcel of the process of securitisation, not only as that which must be protected but also as securitisers. The cases assessed in this study illuminate the kind of exclusionary approaches of powerful states, but also powerful actors within African

governments and the military. These approaches tend to exclude non-state (ordinary) actors, effectively relegating them to the periphery of key political decision-making and implementation processes.

Okafor-Yarwood and Onuoha (2023: 951) observe an “exclusionary approach to securitisation, which they argue is two-fold. On the one hand, the approach marginalises ordinary people from political decision-making, undermining their agency, and ability to contribute to the securitisation process. On the other hand, Okafor-Yarwood and Onuoha argue that ordinary (non-state) actors are constrained, specifically, they are ‘intimidated and prevented from expressing their concerns’. This is counterproductive.

Whether piracy, IUU fishing, or any other maritime crime, these sorts of issues require collaborative approaches, not only because of their transnationality, but because of their plurilateral nature. In this regard, the various African regional economic communities, including but not limited to ECOWAS, ECCAS, GGC, and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have a key role to play in coordinating their initiatives and aligning them to the continental development goals. The value of cooperation between state actors, individually and through regional organisations, the private sector, and ordinary people, cannot be understated.

5.2.5 Extra-regional interventions

Extra-regional actors appear to be an ever-present (ubiquitous) feature in Africa’s maritime security affairs. These external actors may justify their presence by pointing to the need to secure global trade routes, and maintain regional security or bolster the inadequate capabilities of some African navies and coastguards. However, this constant presence may not have the desired effect where the local people are concerned. In some circumstances, the littoral and coastal communities may view extra-regional actors as imposing self-interested strategies, which are not to the benefit of the locals.

It is argued by Okafor-Yarwood and Onuoha (2023) that maritime security and securitisation in Africa are underpinned by an “elitist approach to the discourse influenced by extra-regional actors”. In the context of this study, the interventions of extra-regional actors are most evident in the externally-driven anti-piracy task forces in the Horn of Africa, but also the EU

securitisation and policing measures in the Gulf of Guinea. The former, namely the operations in Somalia, had the consent of local governments, most importantly the Somali officials, the latter is somewhat different. The EU IUU Regulation does not seem to be an initiative approved or requested by African governments. As pointed out in Chapter Three, it seems that the EU has proclaimed (designated) itself as a policeman of African maritime security affairs, for its own benefit. Arguably, these supposedly altruistic initiatives are disguised as beneficial to Africa; this may be true to some extent. However, ultimately, they rob African governments, and ordinary citizens of their agency and autonomy. Meanwhile, the EU continues to enforce its card system, all the while fishing trawlers sailing under European flags are favoured by subsidies and complicit in IUU fishing and robbing African fishing communities of their livelihoods.

It appears that the EU continues to follow a paternalism that dominates the politics, economy, and security, especially the maritime security of Africa. It is worth assessing how this framework (regulation) is perceived by African governments: does this attitude rankle with them; do they welcome such decisions, or do they view them with suspicion and perceive them as overbearing? More importantly have the EU's measures and frameworks quelled the severity of IUU fishing? These are questions and issues relevant for future research.

5.3 Areas for further study

There remains a need to thoroughly interrogate the effects of maritime securitisation on human security and the overall wellbeing of African communities. From this key theme, the study extracts four additional research areas, that are relevant to the African maritime domain. These areas include: (1) dissecting (deconstructing) the nature of maritime securitisation, (2) the motives, and interests of securitising actors, (3) assessing the dynamic between securitising actors and referent objects (subjects) within the context of African maritime security, and (4) applying the framework of a human security approach to maritime securitisation to other empirical examples that were excluded from this study.

The first area that warrants further research is the process of securitisation itself, this requires an assessment of the concepts, and processes of de-securitisation and re-securitisation, specifically in relation to human security, maritime security generally, and in particular, African maritime security. In this respect, key concepts central to securitisation theory,

including securitising actor, referent object, and functional agent should be revisited and assessed through a human security lens.

Second, it is critical to interrogate the motives, whether genuine or self-interested, of securitising actors both African and foreign, and deliberate on how, if at all, these serve ordinary people. In this regard, Christian Bueger's (2015: 159) proposal is particularly relevant. That is employing the securitisation framework to dissect the manner in which maritime threats are framed and unveiling which political interests and ideologies inform maritime threats. This would require a closer and more finetuned assessment of securitisers as individual subjects, but also as collective groupings, such as certain government departments, branches of the military, and even political parties. Chapter Two pointed out that securitisation can be used to control subordinates, deter opponents and even legitimise both past and future actions (Vuori 2022: 97). With this in mind, the necessity to understand the political motives of securitisers cannot be understated. Such a research focus is not only academically significant, but also important for checking the powers that be and safeguarding basic rights, freedoms, and democratic processes.

Third, it may be noteworthy to assess the power dynamic between securitising actors and referent objects within the context of African maritime security. In this regard, it may be useful to integrate an element of political sociology in order to dissect this relationship and it may promote broader interdisciplinary studies. For example, how do local fishing communities in the Gulf of Guinea perceive not only external (foreign) actors, but specifically African government authorities and security officials, namely the navy and coastguard? From a preliminary scoping it is clear that the relationship is asymmetrical. Critically, there is a necessity to understand whether securitisation has resulted in or contributed to reducing poverty, inequality, unemployment, or even general insecurity. That is key to answering the question of whether securitisation measures have resulted in positive development. Another aspect worth exploring is the manner in which the securitisation agenda is deliberated, and whether it takes into consideration and benefits from the concerns and participation of affected communities. In a word, how has the process empowered these communities?

An additional case worth investigating is the securitisation of irregular migration in the South-Central Mediterranean Sea. The study intentionally chose to exclude the case of migration in the Mediterranean Sea due to its complexity. This is not meant to suggest that the empirical examples assessed in this study are not nuanced, merely that the case of irregular migration of

Africans to Europe is intricate and worth focused critical assessment. In terms of the framework developed in this study, the case of irregular migration across the Central Mediterranean raises several questions. Key among them; if applied to the securitisation of migration in the Mediterranean would this framework, a human security approach to maritime securitisation, produce better results? Owing to its anchorage in human security, would it promote and protect human rights, or would it still produce the adverse practices currently occurring in the Mediterranean? Indeed, that is the fundamental inquiry requiring further investigation.

Another area that can be explored is the impact of closed-season policies on the traditional (indigenous) fishing practices of local communities. Arguably, these kinds of policies cut off the access of local communities from their traditional fishing grounds, thus severing their connections to the seas and oceans. Inevitably, the practice is bound to be disruptive to the productive-pursuit of sustainable livelihoods. Additionally, it is necessary to investigate what means of livelihoods, stocks, and social protection (security) are available to local communities during the closed seasons. Essentially, the areas for further study are many.

5.4 Concluding remarks

The analytical framework developed in this study requires further refinement and hypothesising, specifically its application to empirical cases. These cases may include the securitisation of migration, the securitisation of development, or even extra-regional actors securitising African maritime issues.

Increasingly, more scholars, particularly African academics and researchers, including but not limited to Yirga Gelaw Woldeyes, Freedom Onuoha, Lisa Otto and Ifesinachi Okafor-Yarwood, emphasise the importance of recognising and analysing the effects of maritime (in)security on human security and development. This research focus is especially important in the African context where maritime security is inextricably linked to human security and communal livelihoods.

When responding to maritime security challenges and/or perceived threats, human security must constitute the starting point, an operational foundation as well as the end objective. Ultimately, people are at the centre of maritime security challenges, both as perpetrators of blue crimes and/or as the victims of vulnerabilities emerging from the seas and the way in

which oceans are governed. Therefore, ordinary people, especially those most affected by insecurity, should play a central role in the processes and efforts to address maritime security challenges this includes maritime securitisation. Formulating such strategies (frameworks) without the input of local communities, the same people the measures claim to protect is counterintuitive. It should be these same people (the referent subjects) who decide whether or not the securitising measures truly benefit them. It should be secondary securitising actors in tandem with primary securitisers who formulate, implement, monitor, and evaluate these relevant strategies. Without such inclusive, dual strategies, approaches that do not consider the effects on human security, are counterproductive and potentially alienating, as they may produce unsustainable results. Fundamentally, what is required to address maritime insecurity are strategies anchored by human security driven by development agendas, and steered by the very people they purport to protect.

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