



KING'S ACADEMY MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2026

The General Assembly

PRESIDENT RESEARCH PACKET

PRESIDENT: Tareq Oweis

**Enhancing Maritime Security to Protect Shipping
Routes from Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea**



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President's Letter:

Dear Delegates of The General Assembly,

It is my utmost pleasure to welcome you to KAMUN'26 under this year's theme of **Scale The Summit**. In the General Assembly, we will experience the exchange of diverse, yet important, perspectives while tackling global issues that affect our daily lives and the lives of others.

I am Tareq Oweis, an eleventh-grader at King's Academy, and I am this year's president of The General Assembly. The General Assembly stands out amongst the rest of the committees due to its constant relevance and the significance of the topics that arise. We will confront issues that transcend borders, and initial global cooperation. It is vital, in this committee, to understand that the output must be beneficial, not only to one single nation, but to the entire global community.

No matter if this is your first experience or your twentieth, I hold myself accountable for letting each and everyone of you gain something from this conference. Whether it is a newfound love for debate, a deeper understanding of global issues, or simply the courage to speak in front of others, I hope KAMUN'26 stays with you long after the sessions' end.

This year, we will focus on two main topics:

“Coordinated Global Efforts to Manage the Aftermath of the Syrian Refugee Crisis” where we will examine the responsibilities of global initiatives to resolve the on-going humanitarian refugee crises in Syria.

“Enhancing Maritime Security to Protect Shipping Routes from Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea ” where the main focus will be addressing the root cause of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and exploring ways to safeguard shipments and goods transported by sea.

Before your preparation for this upcoming conference, I want you to keep one thing in mind. "If the only way to get what I want is for pigs to fly, then I'll send them to the moon." Remember, determination always wins in the end.

Best regards,

Tareq Oweis

President of The General Assembly

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Introduction:

The Gulf of Guinea has, in recent years, become one of the world's most unsafe seas. Piracy is happening with disturbing frequency, making West and Central African waters some of the most treacherous for international shipping. Such shipping routes are not only crucial to the region but the world economy. Oil, gas, produce, and manufactured products all pass along the corridor, and issues have implications far beyond the African coast. Shipping companies, insurers, and governments alike view the pirating threat as both a security issue and an economic burden.

The persistence of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea has been linked with a series of contributing elements. The majority of coastal nations do not have enough naval resources, corruption, and police weaknesses. The synergy of high unemployment, political instability, and the ease of plundering poorly governed coastlines creates conducive environments for piracy. Unlike the piracy crisis in the Gulf of Somalia ten years later, Gulf of Guinea attacks are more lethal and specifically directed at crew, a sign of how such groups develop with opportunity and weakness in naval security.

Regional and international responses have emerged, but remain unequal. Actions such as the Yaoundé Code of Conduct have provided a starting point for cooperation, while combined training has been supported by some external forces. However, the size of the region, coupled with the fractured enforcement and judicial branches, has hamstrung progress. The cost of doing nothing is high, however: shipping companies are hit with increased insurance premiums, cargo is diverted or delayed, and confidence in the economic potential of the region is eroded.

For all these reasons, the improvement of maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea must be treated as a regional and international priority. Cooperation, enhanced monitoring, and more naval capacities can be used to secure shipping routes and ensure safe passage for global commerce.

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Definition of Key Terms:

Maritime Security:

Involves the protecting ports, vessels, and maritime infrastructure from threats such as piracy, terrorism, smuggling, and cyberattacks, ensuring the safety of trade routes, critical infrastructure, and the marine environment.

Piracy:

Robbery and violence at sea, committed for private gain by ship or aircraft-borne attackers on other ships or aircrafts.

Armed Robbery at Sea:

Similar to piracy but occurs within a country's territorial waters, thus falling under national jurisdiction.

Forced Demographic Engineering:

The deliberate displacement of certain populations by governments or groups to change the ethnic, religious or political composition of a territory.

Shipping Routes:

Established maritime pathways connecting ports for efficient global trade, influenced by geography, geopolitics, and weather.

Yaoundé Code of Conduct (2013):

A regional maritime security framework adopted by the Gulf of Guinea States to repress piracy, armed robbery against ships, and other illicit maritime activities in West and Central Africa

Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ):

A specific area of the ocean, generally extending up to 200 nautical miles from a country's coast, where that nation has exclusive rights to explore and exploit marine resources like fish and minerals..

International Maritime Bureau (IMB):

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A specialized department of the International Chamber of Commerce. The IMB's responsibilities lie in fighting crimes related to maritime trade and transportation, particularly piracy and commercial fraud, and in protecting the crews of ocean-going vessels.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):

Collaborations between governments, navies, and private companies (e.g., shipping firms, insurers) to improve maritime security.

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Major Parties Involved:

International Maritime Organization (IMO):

UN agency that sets global shipping safety and security standards.

Nigeria:

The largest economy in the region and most heavily affected by piracy, especially in the Niger Delta area. Its navy is central to anti-piracy operations.

West African States:

Consisting of Ghana, Togo, Benin, and Ivory Coast. States whose territorial waters are frequently targeted by pirates.

Central African Coastal States:

Consisting of Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Angola. These states are also vulnerable to these attacks.

Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC):

Established to create an environment of cooperation amongst member states on maritime security and development.

The United States of America (USA):

Through AFRICOM and other programs, the USA provides training, equipment, and naval presence for the region.

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS):

Founded in 1975, it was formed to act as an economic and political union, however, it also plays a huge role in the security of the region. ECOWAS helps coordinate naval patrols, the sharing of intelligence, and various legal frameworks amongst West African states (Consists of 15 West African countries, including Nigeria, Ghana, Benin, Togo, Ivory Coast, Senegal, and others).

Economic Community of Central African States(ECCAS):

Founded in 1983, it plays a similar role to that of ECOWAS in economic cooperation. However, ECCAS also has a security mandate that adds to the attempts to safeguard the region. ECCAS works with coastal states in Central Africa to fight against piracy and illegal sea activity.

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Timeline:

1975:

ECOWAS was created to suggest economic inclusion in West Africa. Later on, it became a key participant in regional security and maritime safety.

1983:

ECCAS was created by the Central African states in order to establish their own organization to manage and monitor economic activities, and, eventually, maritime issues.

1990s:

Early signs of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea occurred. Attacks on some oil platforms and vessels increased, especially in Nigeria.

2000s:

In Nigeria, militant groups and criminal networks targeted oil tankers and crew members for ransom. This transformed Nigeria into the center for piracy in the region.

2010:

The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) started identifying the Gulf of Guinea to be one of the most dangerous piracy spots in the world, alongside Somalia.

2013:

Signing of the Yaounde Code of Conduct occurred. Twenty-five West and Central African countries agreed to cooperate against piracy in the region and create centers for information sharing.

2018:

At this point, the Gulf of Guinea accounts for over 80% of world wide crew kidnappings. This reveals the severity of the crisis at hand.

2021:

The USA, France, Denmark, and other countries send naval assistance to the region. "Deep Blue Project" is also initiated by the Nigerian Navy.

2022-present day:

Maritime attacks and piracy began to decline. 2022 marks the lowest levels of Gulf piracy in decades. International powers and representatives emphasize the importance of capacity building for the region so that they can maintain maritime security independently without the need of external assistance.

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Implications:

Maritime piracy and insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea have dire consequences that go far beyond that of ships and crews. Economically, the region's maritime routes are vital to international trade, transporting many goods. Piracy disrupts these flows, forcing shipping companies to divert ships, delay schedules, or invest in costly security measures. This increases operating costs and reduces profit margins for companies relying on sea transportation.

From a security perspective, piracy represents a direct threat to the physical safety of the people, especially crew members, who are often kidnapped for ransom or violently attacked. Incidences of piracy reveal the weak naval capacity of the majority of coastal states in the region, illustrating shortcomings in maritime governance and law enforcement. Additionally, piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is frequently paired with other organized crimes, including smuggling, illegal fishing, and drug and weapon trafficking which further undermines regional security.

The character of piracy strains both regional organizations and governments. Responses need to be coordinated, but inefficiency and corruption routinely interfere with effective collaboration. The involvement of external powers, including the United States, the European Union, France, and Denmark, while introducing much-needed support, also raises concerns about sovereignty and long-term reliance on foreign naval forces.

Furthermore, piracy has social implications for coastal communities. Pirates frequently belong to impoverished communities. This strengthens the link between economic poverty and maritime crime. The human cost is also severe. Many of the kidnapped seafarers are traumatized, their families suffer financial and emotional hardship. Money that could be invested in social services, schools, or infrastructure is diverted into security measures, once again slowing down development in the troubled regions.

Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is not solely a maritime security issue. It is a global issue with economic, political, social, and security risks. Responses to these issues require collaboration, increased naval capacity, and consistent international support.

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Proposed Solutions:

1. Urges ECOWAS, ECCAS, the Gulf of Guinea Commission, and coastal states to strengthen regional cooperation in combating piracy and armed robbery at sea;
 - a. Participating states must establish coordinated systems for information-sharing and joint operations,
 - i. States must create centralized regional information centers to track pirate activity, suspicious vessels, and incidents in real-time,
 - ii. Information-sharing systems must include data from satellite tracking, radar to maximize coverage of territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs),
 - b. Calls for coordinated naval patrols across borders to cover high-risk maritime zones,
 - i. Joint naval patrols must monitor key shipping lanes, offshore facilities, and piracy hotspots to ensure rapid response,
 - ii. Coordinated patrol schedules and shared intelligence must minimize “safe zones” for pirates and maximize interdiction efficiency,
 - c. Encourages full implementation of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct and harmonization of legal frameworks,
 - i. Operational coordination centers must manage patrols, track incidents, and coordinate rapid assistance to vessels under attack,
 - ii. Coastal states must harmonize anti-piracy laws, extradition procedures, and prosecution mechanisms to ensure captured pirates face justice,

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“Food for Thought”:

- If piracy has been increasing in the Gulf of Guinea over the past two decades, why are some coastal states still struggling to implement effective naval defense and surveillance?
- Why has international support, including from the U.S., EU, and other foreign navies, not fully solved the problem despite extensive funding?
- On what legal basis do pirates exploit differences between national laws and judicial systems, and why have legal frameworks been slow to take effect?
- If the Yaoundé Code of Conduct was signed in 2013, why are there still recurring attacks, and what gaps remain in its enforcement?
- How much of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is linked directly to poverty, unemployment, and social marginalization in coastal communities, and why have development programs not been able to deter it?
- Why have technological measures such as satellite tracking, and real-time reporting not been fully integrated across all coastal states?

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