

# Sea Piracy and Maritime Security Challenges in The Gulf of Guinea, 1999 - 2018

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## Abstract

This study has examined sea piracy and maritime security challenges in the Gulf of Guinea, 1999 – 2018. Available literature and secondary data confirms that Gulf of Guinea continues to remain an area of high concern in the area of sea piracy and maritime security challenges. High profile attacks in the Gulf of Aden, off the Horn of Africa waters, and in the Gulf of Guinea (GG), are mostly caused by Nigerian pirates and thus have elicited renewed international attention to the problems of piracy in the waters of Africa. This study was carried out to ascertain the extent to which hostage taking, oil theft and armed robbery at sea affected the security of vessels in the Gulf of Guinea. The data was analyzed using the quantitative descriptive method; also logical data framework was inclusive that shows the entire study at a glance. Consequently, empirical literature and various analyses in this study revealed that hostage taking, oil theft and armed robbery at sea, have affected the security of vessels in the Gulf of Guinea. The study also found that maritime insecurity in the region have adversely affected investment in the area particularly Nigeria; such as shipping of cargo goods, fishing trawlers, crude oil tankers among other; this allows the development of illegal offshore trade in crude oil and refined petroleum; consequently. Therefore, on the basis of the above analysis, the study concludes that hostage taking, oil theft and armed robbery at sea have significant effect on the security of imperative for Gulf of Guinea states to elect a proactive and pre-emptive leadership that would leverage on their oil affluence to address the problems of unemployment, poverty and deprivation especially in riverine communities, which incubate maritime afflictions.

**Keywords:** Sea Piracy, Maritime Security, Gulf of Guinea.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Gulf of Guinea is a vast and diverse region stretching from Senegal to Angola, including approximately 6,000km of coastline. The Gulf of Guinea is an important geo-political choke point for shipping, transporting oil extracted in the Niger delta, as well as goods to and from the central and the southern Africa.<sup>[1]</sup> Extant literature has also described the Gulf of Guinea as the 11 coastal countries along the West and Central African countries that lie between Ghana and Angola. This sub-region has a coastline of some 5,500 kilometers, roughly the size of the Gulf of Mexico. The maritime domain may be described as “all areas and things of, on, under, relating to, adjacent to, or bordering on a sea, ocean, or other navigable waterway, including all maritime related activities, infrastructure, people, cargo, and vessels and other conveyances.”<sup>[2]</sup> (The National Strategy for Maritime Security, 2005). According to European Union (2018), Piracy, armed robbery at sea, illegal fishing, smuggling and trafficking, pose a major threat to maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea and ultimately to the economic development of the entire region. Sea piracy has been a global phenomenon with a chequered history. According to Fattah (undated), the first international notation of piracy occurred in the 1958 Geneva Convention on the High Seas (Article 15) and the later in the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) (Article 101). According to these piracy consists of: a) Any illegal acts of violence, 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: I. On the high seas, against another ship or aircraft, or against persons or property on board such ship or aircraft; II. Against a ship, aircraft, persons or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any State; b) Any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or of an aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft; c) Any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b) of this article. Ofosu-Boateng<sup>[3]</sup> stated that piracy is commonly visualised through images of 18th century privateers searching for ships projected to have large payouts. The 18th century privateers were armed with guns, swords, knives, and cannons. Today's world still has privateers, albeit armed with more advanced weapons, such as automatic weapons and grenades, as well as more advanced ships. Because of the advanced tactics used by modern privateers, there have been headline cases of piracy, especially since the early 2000s particularly in 2005.

Mandanda and Ping<sup>[4]</sup> noted that maritime piracy in African waters started to flourish in 21st century when Pirates focus their activities in the two sides of the Continent.

<sup>[4]</sup> Between 2005 and 2012 piracy activities were rampant in the Horn of Africa and the East Africa Coastal waters. Thereafter, piracy activities prospered in West Africa Gulf of Guinea States. To date the same are still persisting in the

Gulf of Guinea Coastal States. The impact brought by African piracy to the shipping industry and maritime transportation at large, have touched a range of nations from developed countries to the developing countries. Piracy became rampant from 2008; although in Somali waters the acts were eliminated in 2012. Piracy in Africa has been termed to be unique due to its nature compared with piracy acts happening in other areas of the world. The uniqueness of it comes from the causes, nature and modus operandi. This uniqueness has also been caused by different features of piracy between Gulf of Guinea and off the coast of Somalia.

The focus of this study is on the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) which has different features of piracy from the coast of Somalia. The coast of Somalia focus was on hijacking vessels and its crew members for ransom purpose. The practices are that, after the hijack, pirates will anchor the vessel and hold its crew hostages pending negotiations for ransom amount in exchange of the vessel, cargo and crew. The central focus of pirates in the Gulf of Guinea on the other hand, is not kidnap for ransom. As they are operating in the area where there are stable central governments and in port policing, they lack the capacity of the hijacked vessels and crew for a long time. Also because of the wide area of their operations where the targeted waters are used for the international voyage as well as voyage within the region unlike Somalia where the targeted waters are only traversed routes for international voyage. Pirates in the Gulf of Guinea invade the vessels enroute as well as vessel anchored for un-loading of the imported refined petroleum or awaiting for the loading of the crude oil for export. So their style only involves few kidnaps and ransoms. The wider operation is focusing on robbery and oil theft particularly oil cargo aboard the vessel in order to be sold in the black market. They are not much interested in holding hostage crew members for ransom. Crew members can be detained aboard the hijacked vessel for some few hours or days pending the siphoning of oil cargo and other valuables and equipment. Few of them can be held hostages for ransom as an exchange for their release. Their style involves robbery, kidnap and theft as hereunder discussed.

In order to address the teething problem of high incidents of piracy and other maritime crimes in the region, several national, bilateral, regional, and extra-regional engagements to improve maritime security was initiated. According to Onuoha at the national level, for instance, the Nigerian government in January 2012 transformed its Joint Task Force Operation Restore Hope, which was initially established to combat militancy in the Niger Delta into an expanded maritime security framework, known as Operation Pulo Shield. The Operation Pulo Shield was established to eliminate, among others, pipeline vandalism, crude oil theft, illegal oil refining, piracy and all forms of sea robbery within its area of responsibility. Some other Gulf of Guinea (GoG) states like Republics of Benin and Ghana are also taking measures in the form of increased policing, provision of detection and surveillance systems, creation of Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) capabilities and acquisition of requisite platforms to suppress piracy.

Mansaray Stated that piracy in Gulf of Guinea has disrupted shipping lanes,<sup>[5]</sup> affected international trade, and endangered the lives of seafarers. Pirates have threatened the activities of fishermen, the oil trade, mineral exploration, and the shipment of goods. They have also intensified their activities and networks beyond the borders of the continent. The effect of their illicit trade or activities on any one country resonates across other countries in the region, thus the impact of their illegal acts of violence, detention, or any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship on the

maritime security in the region could be ascertained, coupled with the perceived low capacity and negligence on the part of security apparatus in the region to combat piracy in the region.<sup>[6]</sup> These therefore create a literature gap to be filled and thus warrant an empirical probe to examine sea piracy and maritime security in the gulf of guinea. With the foregoing in mind, the following research questions have been posed, aimed at guiding the research: To what extent have hostage taking, oil theft and armed robbery at sea affected the security of vessels in the Gulf of Guinea?

## 2.Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to examine the effect of sea piracy on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. Specifically, the study intends to ascertain the extent to which hostage taking, oil theft and armed robbery at sea have affected the security of vessels in the Gulf of Guinea.

## 3.Related Empirical Literature

Related empirical literature was reviewed in order to give us insight into the topic under consideration. For example,<sup>[7]</sup> carried out a study on tackling piracy and other illegal activities in Nigerian waters. The study was based on extensive literature review of previous researcher and secondary documents obtained from relevant agencies. The study found that a major factor that is responsible for increased pirate attacks and illegal activities on Nigerian waters can be traced to underdevelopment and poverty in the Niger Delta area. The failure of successive regimes to timely address underdevelopment, poverty and environmental degradation in the Niger Delta enabled the emergence of several ethnic militant groups as self help mechanisms for environmental and political agitation and also for a more equitable distribution of Nigeria's oil revenues in favour of the oil producing areas. However, to a great extent, the objectives of these militant groups have been eroded by corruption and greed. Militant groups now engage in organized criminal activities that cause maritime insecurity such as pirate attacks, armed robbery, hostage taking, armed extortion of vessels, oil bunkering and oil theft. The study however fails to give an empirical analysis with tables and figures of how militant groups now engage in organized criminal activities that cause maritime insecurity such as pirate attacks, armed robbery, hostage taking, armed extortion of vessels, oil bunkering and oil theft.

Treves<sup>[8]</sup> investigated piracy, law of the sea, and use of force: developments off the Coast of Somalia. The study revealed that attacks against ships off the coast of Somalia have brought piracy to the forefront of international attention, including that of the Security Council. SC Resolution 1816 of 2008 and others broaden the scope of the existing narrow international law rules on piracy, especially authorizing certain states to enter the Somali territorial waters in a manner consistent with action permitted on the high seas. SC resolutions are framed very cautiously and, in particular, note that they 'shall not be considered as establishing customary law'. They are adopted on the basis of the Somali Transitional Government's (TFG) authorization. Although such authorization seems unnecessary for resolutions adopted under Chapter VII, there are various reasons for this, among which to avoid discussions concerning the width of the Somali territorial sea. Seizing states are reluctant to exercise the powers on captured

pirates granted by UNCLOS and SC resolutions. Their main concern is the human rights of the captured individuals. Agreements with Kenya by the USA, the UK, and the EC seek to ensure respect for the human rights of these individuals surrendered to Kenya for prosecution. Action against pirates in many cases involves the use of force. Practice shows that the navies involved limit such use to self-defence. Use of force against pirates off the coast of Somalia seems authorized as an exception to the exclusive rights of the flag state, with the limitation that it be reasonable and necessary and that the human rights of the persons involved are safeguarded. This study relied more on the legal and regulatory standpoint in their analysis which thus, fails to avail us with the actual and attempted attacks of vessels in the Gulf of Guinea and African waters by extension.

Mandanda & Ping (2016) examined the differences and similarities between Gulf of Guinea and Somalia Maritime Piracy: Lessons Gulf of Guinea Coastal States Should Learn from Somali Piracy. The study stated by tracing the high point of piratical activities in African waters. They stated that maritime piracy in African waters started to flourish in 21st century when Pirates focus their activities in the two sides of the Continent. Between 2005 and 2012 piracy activities were rampant in the Horn of Africa and the East Africa Coastal waters. Thereafter, piracy activities prospered in West Africa Gulf of Guinea States. To date the same are still persisting in the Gulf of Guinea Coastal States. The impact brought by African piracy to the shipping industry and maritime transportation at large, have touched a range of nations from developed countries to the developing countries. Because of that, the International and Regional communities set up strategies to fight and repress piracy activities within the Continent. Maritime piracy is a crime and was firstly considered as crime by the customary international law even before codification of the same in 1958 Geneva Convention on the High Seas and later the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) has not set for the punishment of pirates but it has rest to the individual countries to prosecute and punish piracy offenders according to the laws of a particular country. In defining what constitutes acts of piracy, the UNCLOS does not consider acts committed within the territorial waters of a State to be piracy, instead, it considers only those acts that are committed on the high seas for the private ends. The International law perception of what constitutes acts of piracy lead the governments of Gulf of Guinea coastal states to be solely responsible for maritime security of their countries as well as eliminating piracy acts happening in their area. Different from piracy off the coast of Somalia, a stateless country, Gulf of Guinea countries have stable governments and thus the principle of sovereignty applies. Despite the differences in nature for the acts of piracy that are happening in the two regions of the African continent, the same are still falling under the same umbrella of criminality of the acts of piracy. So whatever the differences there are still some similarities which basing on the same, the other part of the continent (West Africa) should draw the attention from, and copy the strategies of combating and eliminating acts of piracy in their region. This study focused more on the differences and similarities between Gulf of Guinea and Somalia Maritime Piracy which did not touch on the effect of sea piracy on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.

Fattah examined piracy in Gulf of Guinea causes, efforts and solutions. The study use qualitative research technique by demonstrating the current maritime security situation in west of Africa especially Gulf of Guinea supported by statistical analysis of piracy incidents through (2010-2016). The study found that there

are many factors contributing to piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. These factors include "legal and jurisdictional weakness, favourable geography, conflict and disorder, underfunded law enforcement, inadequate security, permissive political environments, cultural acceptability, and promise of reward". More specifically, maritime piracy in Nigeria is directly linked to oil development and the resulting economic, social, and environmental conditions in the Niger Delta. The culmination of years of inattention, desperation and lawlessness in the area bordering the globally vital shipping route" (Neethling, 2010). Thus, the prevalence of piracy off the coast of Nigeria can be attributed both to the country's dependence on oil production and the politicians' mismanagement of natural resources. The citizens of the region depend mainly on oil income, yet – due to government perversion and profiteering – only a small percentage of the revenue reaches the local residents. Unemployment and the lack of economic opportunities encourage many to turn to piracy as a means of livelihood. Although terrorist organizations benefit from cooperating with pirates, attacks are largely motivated by financial and not political gain, and thus do not stem from terrorist organizations (Tepp, 2012).

In the final analysis, this study has to review related literature on sea piracy and maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. Available literature in the study area is rife with varying literar1y perspectives. However, there is no identifiable literature that investigated sea piracy and maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. There is a paucity of literature in longitudinal study of this nature spanning through the period 1999 to 2018. The study is also a topical issue that has affected a lot of economies in Africa and countries within the Gulf of Guinea in particular. These therefore create knowledge and literature gaps that warrant an empirical probe that is presented in this study.

#### 4. Methodology

##### Area of Study

The area of this study is the Gulf of Guinea. The Gulf of Guinea is the north easternmost part of the tropical Atlantic Ocean between Cape Lopez in Gabon, north and west to Cape Palmas in Liberia. The intersection of the Equator and Prime Meridian (zero degrees latitude and longitude) is in the gulf. Among the many rivers that drain into the Gulf of Guinea are the Niger and the Volta. The coastline on the gulf includes the Bight of Benin and the Bight of Bonny.

The name «Guinea» was also applied to south coast of West Africa, north of the Gulf of Guinea, which became known as «Upper Guinea», and the west coast of Southern Africa, to the east, which became known as «Lower Guinea». The name «Guinea» is still attached to the names of three countries in Africa: Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Equatorial Guinea, as well as New Guinea in Melanesia. The main river shedding its waters in the gulf is the Niger River. Different definitions of the geographic limits of the Gulf of Guinea are given; the International Hydrographic Organization defines the southwest extent of the Gulf of Guinea as «A line from Cap Lopez (0°37'S 8°43'E), in Gabon, northwestward to Ihléu Gago Coutinho (Ilhéu das Rôlas) (0°01'S 6°32'E); and thence a line from Ihléu Gago Coutinho northwestward to Cape Palmas (4°22'N 7°44'W), in Liberia.

## Data Collection

The researcher explored mainly in the secondary sources of the data. The secondary data were obtained from relevant institutions like books journal articles, magazines, internet sources and government gazettes.

## 5. Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics (Frequency tables and charts).

### Analysis of Empirical Results

Hostage Taking, Oil Theft, Armed Robbery at Sea and the Security of Vessels in the Gulf of Guinea

The resurgence of pirate attacks in African waters is now a subject of serious concern to African states and indeed the international community. For the last decade, piracy in African waters is concentrated in three main regions, namely the Somali coast/the Gulf of Aden along the East African Coast; Nigeria's territorial waters in West Africa; and the Mozambique Channel/Cape sea route in Southern Africa.<sup>[14]</sup> In another study, it was noted that the two regions with the greatest incidence of maritime piracy in Africa are the Horn of Africa and the Gulf of Guinea.<sup>[15]</sup> Following a spectacular decline in the Gulf of Aden, incidents of armed robbery at sea and piracy (which legally refer to attacks beyond territorial waters) are now on the rise in the Gulf of Guinea.<sup>[16]</sup> In 2012, the International Maritime Bureau's (IMB) Piracy Reporting Centre recorded 58 attacks, including 10 hijackings. Nigeria is the most affected country, with 27 attacks in 2012 (almost three times more than in 2011), and 11 already reported for the first quarter of 2013. Most of the attacks target vessels connected to the oil industry, but they also disrupt trade and transport in the region as a whole, thereby posing a security threat to the international community as well as African states. A 'classic' case is an attack on or hijacking of a tanker that is fully loaded with oil and navigating Nigerian, Ghanaian or Cameroonian waters. The oil is stolen (ship to ship) and sold on either directly to other ships or into the black market onshore, with the attacks sometimes coordinated from mother ships or using other forms of structured off-shore organisation. Cases of sea-to-land attacks have occasionally taken place (for example, in Equatorial Guinea), and although hostages can sometimes be held for months, there is often limited reporting and follow-up on the issue.<sup>[16]</sup>

Fattah (undated) carried out a seemingly indebt study of piratical attacks that involves illegal acts of violence and detention covering the period 2010-2016. According to Fattah (undated), pirate activity in the Gulf of Guinea varies to that in the Indian Ocean. Somali pirates concentrate on kidnap for ransom; captivate vessels and controlling their cargo and crew in order to extortion money from a ship-owner. In the Gulf of Guinea pirates launch attacks primarily from Nigeria, with the aim of stealing cargo, equipment or valuables from a vessel and its crew. Kidnapping of crew-members happens, but is rarer than in the Indian Ocean, and hence levels of violence are high as Gulf of Guinea pirates are less concerned with maintaining the wellbeing of hostages. Piracy attacks and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea comprised average fifth of all recorded maritime incidents globally from 2010-2016 (IMB, 2018; Fattah, undated).

Anchorage and approaches to the ports of Bonny and Lagos (Nigeria), Cotonou (Benin), Lomé (Togo), Tema (Ghana), and Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) are vulnerable with large numbers of merchant ships often hang around in these areas. In the busy port of Lagos, hundreds of vessels loiter for days along the roadstead

(calm areas of water near harbours where ships can anchor) in view of limited capacity of West and Central African ports for offloading. Dominate measures in the approaches to these ports still weakened.<sup>[17]</sup> Piracy is under-reported by as much as 50 percent in West Africa, either due to victims' desire for discretion or the lack of survivors.<sup>[18]</sup> Despite these analytical challenges, a trend can be discerned from data collected by the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), a subsection within a specialized criminal division of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). Maritime crime off the coast of West Africa increased from 8.8 % of the global total in 2010 to 11.6 % in 2011, surged to 20.2 % in 2012, and has declined slightly to 19.7 % in 2013, and 15.5 % in 2014. unexpectedly in the first half of 2016 has reached to the peak of 32.7 % of attacks globally, from this percentage piracy cases were recorded on Nigeria's territorial waters represent the majority by 75% of total attack in that region. Table.1 shows Actual and Attempted attacks in West Africa (2010-2018). The apparent growing importance of West African piracy is distorted by an overall decrease in universal piracy. On the other side Piracy in the Gulf of Aden has break down since a peak of 237 incidents in 2011, to just 15 attacks in 2014 and only 3 attacks in 2015 also 3 attacks in the first half of 2016, that represent the lowest percent of attacks globally which ensured that the piracy moved actually from east to west of Africa (IMB, 2018; Fattah, undated). Table 1 shows actual and attempted attacks against ships in the Gulf of Guinea. These figures represent only a fraction of the actual attacks in the region as ship owners and governments downplay incidents to avoid increased shipping costs or a reputation for insecurity.

## 6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study has examined the sea piracy and maritime security challenges in the Gulf of Guinea, 1999 – 2018. Available literature and secondary data confirms that Gulf of Guinea continues to remain an area of high concern in the area of sea piracy and maritime security challenges. High profile attacks in the Gulf of Aden, off the Horn of Africa waters, and in the Gulf of Guinea (GG), are mostly caused by Nigerian pirates and thus have elicited renewed international attention to the problems of piracy in the waters of Africa. Be that as it is, with almost half of the worlds reported pirate attacks on waters mainly near the Nigeria's coast and especially Gulf of Guinea and off the Somalia's coast,<sup>[19]</sup> it is often said that piracy have constituted immense and profound threats to the international security architecture with ramifications in, and consequences for Africa's geo-strategic, economic, social, political, environmental, humanitarian, energy and developmental prospects. So dire and unquantifiable have these damage been that they have threatened all the present and future threads that knits the contours, permutations, rubrics, fabrics, trajectories, and architecture of, and for the continent's sustainable development. Recently, the Gulf of Guinea states are been devilled with challenges of insecurity and forms of illicit activities on its territorial waters. Indeed, this study was carried out to provide satisfactory answers to the following research question: To what extent has hostage taking, oil theft and armed robbery at sea affected the security of vessels in the Gulf of Guinea?<sup>[20-24]</sup>

Furthermore, the literature review was properly guided by the aforementioned research questions, the study



was able to adduce that the issue of sea piracy and maritime security challenges in the Gulf of Guinea have been treated by extant literature from different standpoints and varying literary perspectives. However, because of the teething problem of persistent sea piracy and maritime security challenges in the Gulf of Guinea this study becomes imperative in supplementing and also providing suggestions on how to achieve lasting solution the conundrum of sea piracy and maritime security challenges in the Gulf of Guinea. To this end, the point of departure was to sea piracy and maritime security challenges in the Gulf of Guinea, 1999 - 2018. The period was the peak of rising piratical challenges and security concern within the Gulf of Guinea. [25-30]

The single case ex-post-facto research design was used to demonstrate how data were generated for the purpose of validating the hypotheses. In relation to the study, data was collated from documentary sources such as official documents from organizations likes the Wikipedia, ICC, UNCLOS, Ocean Beyond Piracy, the works of Onuoha, F.C., International Maritime Bureau (IMB), International Maritime Organisation among others, besides institutional and official documents, the study was based on other secondary sources of data such as books, journal articles, conference papers, Magazines / Newspapers and internet materials. Thus data was analyzed using the qualitative descriptive method; also logical data framework was inclusive it shows the entire study at a glance. From the foregoing, this study have examined the sea piracy and maritime security challenges in the Gulf of Guinea with cursory look at the security challenges of piracy from 1999 – 2018. This study observed that the African seaways namely; the coast of the Horn of Africa (HOA) and the Gulf of Aden (GOA); in the East coast of Africa, and the Gulf of Guinea (GOG); in the West coast of Africa dominated by Nigeria in terms of ships and cargo movement, from the year 1999 to date have become mine fields for sea pirates, witnessing

intense attacks against ships.<sup>[31-35]</sup> This threatens maritime security in the zones affecting negatively global trade flows and economic growth in Nigeria. Since 2007, African waters overtook waters off Southeast Asia of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore; of global maritime piracy with much of the global attention in African waters being on Nigeria maritime piracy as a result of the growing presence of the militancy in the area. According to United nations convention on trade and development, (2014), with 50.4 billion barrels of proven reserves, 5.4 million barrels of oil production per day, the GOG is a key hub of commercial exports of hydrocarbon and of Gulf of Guinea piracy. Nigeria thus, dominates maritime security issues in the GOG. Identified about nine coastal zones in the six coastal states of Lagos, Rivers, Bayelsa, Ondo, Akwa-Ibom, and Cross River in Nigeria where piracy attacks are frequent. Industry observers opine that recent pirate attacks in the Nigerian maritime domain take place mostly within Lagos ports (berths) and Lagos anchorage, Bony River, Forcados River, Rivers State Coastal area, Bayelsa Coastal area, Akwa Ibom Coastal area, Crosss River coastal area. The study also found that maritime insecurity in the region have adversely affected investment in Nigeria; such as shipping of cargo goods, fishing trawlers, crude oil tankers among other; this allows the development of illegal offshore trade in crude oil and refined petroleum; consequently, it is evidently clear that there is a nexus between oil bunkering and the rise of violent attacks by pirates in the region; Nigeria, is the epicentre of these activities. Therefore, on the basis of the above analysis, the study concludes that hostage taking, oil theft and armed robbery at sea have significant effect on the security of imperative for Gulf of Guinea states to elect a proactive and pre-emptive leadership that would leverage on their oil affluence to address the problems of unemployment, poverty and deprivation especially in riverine communities, which incubate maritime afflictions.<sup>[36-39]</sup>

## Appendix

**Table 1: Actual and Attempted Attacks against Ships in the Gulf of Guinea**

GG States	1999-2018
Angola	16
Benin	48
Cameroon	23
Congo DR	27
Eq. Guinea	1
Ghana	53
Guinea	47
Guinea Bissau	1
Ivory Coast	29
Liberia	9
Nigeria	379
Senegal	14
Sierra Leone	15
The Congo	28
Togo	20
Total	710

Source: Computed from IMB Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships Annual Reports, 2003-2018

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