The Process of National Maritime Security Strategy Development in Africa[1]

RATIONALE

Africa's future—both in terms of opportunities and challenges—is tied to the maritime space which surrounds it. The vast African maritime domain contains immense resources that, when fully tapped, will provide African societies with significant additional resources to strengthen their ongoing development efforts, including food and energy security. Development is, in turn, an essential foundation for stability and sustainable peace on the continent. This process of development is all but impossible to achieve in the absence of security—both on land and offshore.

While considerable attention and resources have been directed toward achieving security on land, similar efforts to secure Africa's maritime domain have been feeble mainly because the maritime dimension was historically ignored in most local, national, subregional, and continental strategies. This is not, however, a uniquely African phenomenon.

Coastal, island, or archipelagic states around the world face varying degrees of challenges in securing their maritime territories. Similarly, most of these states have yet to fully realize the development potential associated with exploiting the maritime domain in a sustainable fashion. These two pursuits—security and development—are at the heart of why states and international organizations around the world are constantly developing, implementing, assessing, and revising maritime strategies.

A strategy recognizes the existing state of affairs, provides a vision for what the future should look like, and devises a plan of action for how to get from the present to the future. It starts with an honest self-assessment and a concerted effort to improve one's understanding of the terrain. In other words, successful strategy development involves understanding who and what may threaten the status quo.

Governments and organizations around the world, and particularly in Africa, are turning their attention to the maritime "terrain" and beginning the process of strategic maritime engagement. The aim of this document is to help African governments understand the process of developing a maritime strategy that will both address maritime challenges and help them seize maritime opportunities. No coastal, island, or archipelagic state can afford—in terms of either security or economics—the consequences of ignoring its maritime domain. Maritime strategy, therefore, has become a vital and necessary component of national strategy for states around the world and certainly around the continent of Africa.

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[1] *This document is intended as a planning toolkit for policymakers and practitioners as they navigate the process of developing maritime national security strategies in Africa. Compiled by the Africa Center for Strategic Studies in 2016, the toolkit reflects the contributions and experiences of dozens of African maritime security professionals who have undertaken maritime security strategy planning processes.*

The last few years have seen the development of a number of maritime strategies in Africa. The Africa Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIMS) 2050 sets forth the maritime vision for the entire continent. Similarly, regional and interregional strategies and codes of conduct provide direction for how that African vision should be realized within regions and subregions. Many states are seeking to ensure that this strategic engagement with the maritime domain effectively interlinks the continental to the interregional to the regional and now, to the national levels. States are the primary actors in both securing and developing the maritime domain. Consequently, they must accept their individual strategic responsibilities to realize the continent's collective vision.

THE PREDRAFTING PROCESS

While it may be tempting to proceed immediately to drafting the vision for the maritime domain, the pre-drafting process is perhaps second only to implementation in terms of importance. There are three assessments that must occur before a maritime strategy is drafted—a self-assessment, a domain assessment, and a threat assessment. In any context, to set a credible direction for the future requires: first, knowing where one is; second, knowing what is possible, good and bad; and third, knowing what challenges are likely to arise.

Similarly, to establish a vision for its maritime domain, a country must understand the status quo, must be realistic about the possibilities, and must be aware of the likely difficulties.

1. Self-Assessment

Self-assessment for a maritime security strategy requires a state to address a number of issues pertaining to its national interests, capacity, and capabilities vis-à-vis the maritime domain. Some of the key questions, for example, include:

- What national agencies have maritime responsibilities?
    - What are those responsibilities?
    - Where does the mandate for those responsibilities originate?
- What processes and mechanisms exist for interagency cooperation and coordination on maritime matters?
- What non-maritime agencies are most affected by the maritime domain?
    - What processes or mechanisms exist for them to voice concerns or needs regarding maritime matters?
- What international maritime laws have been signed?
    - Have they been incorporated into domestic law?
- Can an outsider reasonably access the country's maritime laws, regulations, and policies?
- What do the existing maritime laws, regulations, and policies cover?
    - Are there known gaps or inadequacies?
- How is maritime law enforcement intended to work?
    - Are there known gaps or inadequacies?

- What institutions have naval or maritime law enforcement responsibilities?

    o   What is their manpower?

    o   What equipment do they have?

    o   How have they been trained?

    o   Are there known gaps or inadequacies?

- What bilateral, regional, or international obligations exist regarding maritime activities?

    o   Are there known deficiencies in meeting those obligations?

- What resources are at the state's disposal for use in the maritime domain?

This should not be viewed as an exhaustive list of the questions a state should address in conducting a self-assessment under the pre-drafting process of its maritime strategy development. Rather, it is just a sample of the many considerations (e.g., agency and interagency matters, legal issues, law enforcement capacity and capability, etc.) that should be at the center of a state's attempt to understand its starting point for maritime strategy development.

2. Domain Assessment

Maritime domain awareness is a critical step to achieve maritime security. Even as states more intentionally turn their attention to the maritime domain, those that do not proactively assess that domain may remain unaware of what the sea could offer. As noted, a maritime strategy should support the economy and stability of a state. But to effectively do so, the state must be aware of its actual, not assumed, maritime economic potential. In other words, it must know the maximum value of its maritime domain if effectively exploited in a sustainable fashion.

To this end, several areas should be explored:

- What is the maximum sustainable exploitation of the local fishery at the artisanal, semi-industrial, and industrial levels?

    o   What is the economic value of the fish at each of those levels?

- What, if any, potential does the state have for offshore mineral or oil and gas extraction?

    o   Where are those minerals?

    o   Is it cost-effective to extract them?

- Is there any potential use of the marine environment for green energy including wind, wave, and hydroelectric?

- What how could port and shoreside infrastructure be most effectively used?

- What onshore agriculture requires maritime transport and how could its connectivity be improved, and value increased?

- What onshore manufacturing requires maritime transport and how could its connectivity be improved?

- What onshore natural resource extraction requires maritime transport and how could its connectivity be improved?

- What shoreside storage facilities could add economic value to the maritime domain?

- What shoreside fish processing and packaging infrastructure could increase maritime economic activity?

- What is the local market reliance on maritime goods and how could value be added to the supply chain?

- What maritime-related tourist infrastructure could be developed or enhanced?

- What recreational and luxury maritime activities could be marketed?

Overall, the goal is to ascertain the maximum sustainable economic and social benefits of the maritime domain.

3. Threat Assessment

The maritime domain is a space of evolving geostrategic importance. As populations migrate toward the coasts and littoral areas, seas and inland waterways have ever-increasing importance for the security and development of states and their citizens. In Africa, which has been particularly affected by maritime threats and challenges—both new and old—this is especially true. To address maritime threats and challenges in African states through the development of a maritime strategy, it is critical to assess and prioritize those threats and challenges.

Threats include specific operational issues across the spectrum of maritime activities that can be measured in real losses and opportunity costs. These types of threats include: illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing; resource theft, including oil bunkering; trafficking of both humans and goods, including arms, narcotics, stolen antiquities, and diverted natural resources; piracy, armed robbery at sea, and insecurity of navigation routes; terrorism; money laundering and illicit financial activities; climate change and coastal erosion; and environmental degradation, which includes illegal dumping (including toxic waste), pollution, and oil and chemical spills, among others.

Beyond these tangible operational threats, there are also institutional threats and challenges to the state, which are more often of a structural nature. These include endemic poverty and high unemployment, food insecurity, political instability, conflict, and corruption. Though these issues may seem removed from the immediate maritime domain, like their counterparts in the spectrum of maritime activities described above, they have a very real and tangible effect on maritime safety and security.

Addressing these threats challenges must overcome other obstacles: the expansion of the maritime domain through the creation of Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and the chronic under-surveillance by states of their territorial waters and EEZs; the inability of many states to outfit and sustain a maritime force in terms of human resources and physical resources which can be expensive; international obligations like maritime safety and search and rescue capabilities; poor coordination and communication between stakeholders in the maritime domain; vested interests reinforced by corruption; and a lack of political will in government to prioritize and commit resources to this undertaking which competes with other national and

regional priorities for scarce resources.

The threats and challenges listed above, both operational and institutional, are numerous and yet not exhaustive. They encompass a broad list of issues, some of which affect all coastal and many inland states, and others of which are geographically and situationally specific. It is critical that individual threat assessments prioritize threats in a national maritime strategy.

Identification of Stakeholders

These threats affect, and consequently must be addressed with consideration for, a broad and diverse group of public and private stakeholders. Their inclusion can help facilitate the development of and collaboration on a national strategy.

From the individual citizen—whose well-being must be at the center of any maritime (indeed, any security) strategy—to national, regional, and international bodies with responsibility for the maritime domain, to private organizations with specific interest in maritime issues and security: the possible stakeholders are numerous. Yet, they are particular to individual states, so a comprehensive list of stakeholders cannot simply be applied wholesale to maritime domains across the continent. The following list represents many, if not all, classifications of maritime stakeholders to consider when being inclusive in a maritime strategy.

- Local populations

- Private entities, both local and international (including fisheries, trade merchants and shipping companies, ship building and maintenance industries, oil industry companies, tourism operators, private security companies, and the insurance industry)

- Experts and practitioners (including environmental scientists, consultants, think tanks and nongovernmental organizations, academics, lawyers, research institutions, and educational institutions)

- State institutions (including navies, coast guards, marines, customs and border patrols, port authorities, state legislative bodies, judiciaries, law enforcement, fisheries, trade, environment, and other applicable government ministries)

- International partners (including neighboring maritime and landlocked states, as well as partners in maritime cooperation—such as maritime zones, regional bodies, and interregional institutions—and alliances in other parts of the world)

- The African Union and the Regional Economic Communities

- The United Nations, the International Maritime Organization, and other international organizations.

DRAFTING OF ENDS

At the outset of developing any strategy, it is critical to first determine the desired aim. The aim, or vision, which can be a broad statement like "Ensure effective maritime safety and security," provides singularity of focus. Once this aim has been determined, it can and must be supported by objectives, or ends. These are informed by the three assessments of a particular country or organization's situation, as well as by the areas of interest of all the relevant stakeholders involved. They should strive to achieve balance among the interests of the economic, social, legal,

environmental, and security sectors of society, as well as work within the available resources. In designing a maritime strategy, these ends must be actionable, tangible, and measurable. They describe the desired goal of implementing a maritime strategy while allowing the ways and means to describe how best to achieve and resource that goal. When implementation begins, every action taken in the maritime domain should be attributable to supporting one or more of the expressed strategic aims. In other words, the answer to the question of "why" any maritime-related activity is taken should refer directly to the strategy.

A given maritime strategy may well have multiple objectives that require prioritization dependent on the needs of the country, subregion, or region. These can be grouped under maritime pillars, which reflect broader segments of society and are prioritized like objectives. Similarly, maritime objectives reflect the situation of the state or organization writing its strategy. Despite the individual nature of this task, however, it is possible to identify examples of key maritime objectives and their pillars (below, in bold) that hold importance in nearly all maritime contexts, and to supplement these with potential ways and means. The following list provides general samples of objectives a state might have across a range of different pillars.

Governance

- Improve the effectiveness of governance of the maritime sector by ensuring ministries perform their roles.

- Foster maritime domain awareness through increased political will and education of policymakers.

- Ensure adequate mechanisms exist to prevent possibilities for corruption within maritime security institutions.

Economic

- Foster development, promote economic growth, and encourage free movement of people and trade in the maritime domain.

- Promote legal and regulated trade and commerce in the maritime domain.

- Identify funding mechanisms to effect maritime security programs.

Environmental

- Protect the maritime environment and preserve marine ecosystems and maritime communities.

Legal

- Improve compliance with international treaties and obligations and national laws.

Information

- Design integrated communication processes that allow effective information sharing regarding maritime safety and security.

Military

- Defend state sovereign rights including national use and exploitation of maritime resources for domestic and international priorities.

- Support subregional and regional security.

PLANNING WAYS

The mechanisms for accomplishing such objectives, or ways, are linked invariably with the ends. They describe a specific path of action to the desired end result, and they bridge the gap between the objectives and the current realities of the maritime domain. To do this, appropriate ways must consider the breadth of maritime sector activities in which stakeholders participate and adopt a collaborative approach in which all relevant parties can participate. Such an approach could, but need not, involve the institution of a multiagency, and potentially multinational, body for the coordination of maritime safety and security. Poor communication among the maritime stakeholders is consistently identified as an obstacle to comprehensive maritime safety, security, and development. Better coordination articulated in the ways of a maritime strategy makes strides in addressing that challenge.

To this end, African nations will need to involve a wide array of stakeholders to develop and implement their own national maritime strategies in line with the AIMS 2050 and the various interregional and regional strategies. Considering the breadth of stakeholders in the maritime domain, this process could be both efficient and expedient by starting with a core group of stakeholders to lead the strategy development process and then, by bringing it out to the next string of stakeholders. This tiered process allows for a comprehensive approach that is participatory while also incorporating a larger number of stakeholders. Three key resources for a maritime strategy—infrastructural, financial, and human— can be shared.

Below, the sample objectives are reexamined to include ways of reaching the proposed ends.

Governance

- Improve the effectiveness of governance of the maritime domain by ensuring responsible ministries perform their roles.
  - Build stronger institutions which institute review and audit processes.
  - Promote public awareness and knowledge to enable greater government accountability.
  - Develop African-led solutions.
- Foster maritime domain awareness through increased political will and sensitization of policymakers.
  - Promote Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) and its increased prioritization among populations and electorates as part of an ongoing education and sensitization process.
- Ensure adequate mechanisms exist to prevent possibilities for corruption.
  - Improve transparency.

Economic

- Foster development, promote economic growth, and encourage free movement of people and

trade in the maritime domain.

- o Increase patrol capabilities.
- o Increase surveillance, monitoring, and escort capabilities.

- o Establish a traffic management (ship reporting) mechanism.
- o Dredge harbor channels, survey, and chart waterways.
- o Establish the remaining agreed-upon Maritime Search and Rescue Coordination Centers (MRCCs) in Africa and implement long-range identification systems (LRITs).
- Promote legal and regulated trade and commerce in the maritime domain.
  - o Enforce licenses and monitoring framework for maritime commerce participants (including fisheries).
  - o Increase the exploration of maritime resources, including oil and gas, in an environmentally sustainable way.
- Identify funding mechanisms to support maritime security programs.
  - o Implement local taxes and levies on maritime activity.
  - o Generate funds in cooperation with other stakeholders, including foreign partners with shared global interests.
  - o Establish a budgetary baseline of funds to be allocated to maritime safety and security and increase this amount annually.
  - o Reduce costs for boats where possible (e.g., port fees, electricity, housing, etc.) and apply funds raised through port fees to support maritime safety and security.

Environmental

- Protect the maritime environment and preserve marine ecosystems and maritime communities.
  - o Intervene to curb illegal exploitation and pollution.
  - o Regulate and manage marine resources.
  - o Enforce the existing environmental protection laws.

Legal

- Improve compliance with international treaties and obligations and national laws.
  - o Strengthen existing laws and enact laws to close gaps in existing legal codes.
  - o Align domestic legislation with international statutes.
  - o Catalog maritime agreements (international and domestic) and make available to all.
  - o Develop maritime expertise in legal centers.

Information

- Design integrated communication processes that allow effective information sharing

regarding maritime safety and security.

- o Engage in a regular maritime security dialogue to share strategies and best practices.
- o Invest in communication technology.
- o Promote informal communication networks.

Military

- Defend state sovereign rights including national use and exploitation of maritime resources for domestic and international priorities.
  - o Perform delineation, delimitation, and demarcation of national maritime domains.
  - o Establish a legal framework for maritime sovereign rights.
  - o Develop enforcement capability in a supporting role to achieve other objectives.
- Support subregional and regional security through peacekeeping operations.
  - o Expand or develop national capabilities that could either directly or indirectly support regional objectives.
  - o Participate in peacekeeping operations.
  - o Integrate maritime forces into the Africa Standby Force structure.
  - o Train with ground peacekeeping forces to improve interoperability.

APPLICATION OF MEANS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A variety of resources will be required to achieve maritime objectives. These resources, or means, are not solely monetary, though finance plays an obviously critical role. A proper balance across the various types of resources must be met. An excess of physical means without the human capacity will remain ineffective no matter how sophisticated the equipment might be. The types of resources needed to accomplish maritime objectives are listed below.

Human. Human resources are a crucial piece of any effective maritime strategy. Allocating appropriate numbers of people—both civilian and military—to achieve a given objective and ensuring that they are well trained and educated are very important. The development of institutions for this training and education is also an important aspect of fully realizing this human resource.

Additionally, it is necessary to define and delineate the types of bodies to which these personnel will belong, be they navies, coast guards, or some other maritime force or organization. The roles and responsibilities of each of these organizations should be codified legally to maximize the use of these human resources in the achievement of maritime objectives.

Financial. Budgetary support is frequently a principal requirement for achieving an objective. This is typically controlled through the ministry of finance and, therefore, it is important to ensure that maritime strategy objectives be properly resourced, adequately provided for, and sustained in the national, subregional, or regional budget. Taxes on maritime commerce and products can be applied to raise such funds; the same is true for fines or penalties on pollution. However, one might wish to conduct a risk or impact assessment to see if trade might be significantly affected. It is important that budgetary support be well regulated, and, for this

purpose, the establishment of a financial oversight or auditing body could be useful. If these additional resources are not channeled back to maritime capacity building, the new tax does not serve the intended goal.

Physical. Physical resources encompass both the equipment necessary to secure maritime objectives as well as the physical spaces that also contribute to this goal. More particularly, this includes maritime vessels and aircraft as well as necessary supplies (including spare parts and maintenance equipment), but it also relies on good physical infrastructure. This refers to well-managed waterways and ports that comply with International Ship and Port Security (ISPS) codes, and properly dredged harbor channels. The maintenance of these important resources improves overall maritime safety and security and advances many maritime objectives.

Information and Communications Technology (ICT). ICT is critical to achieving maritime objectives, in part, because it provides information gathering and sharing capabilities. ICT should be procured with an appropriate mix of high and low technology, and with specific maritime objectives in mind. It might include search and rescue systems, integrated vessel monitoring systems, and research and design technologies. Judicious use of financial resources should be applied when deciding what technological resources are necessary to meet maritime objectives. Where possible, equipment should be low cost and easy to maintain. Families of platforms with similar characteristics create ease of maintenance when used throughout a subregion or the region.

Consultations. Consultations can be an important resource in achieving maritime objectives. It encompasses the idea of consulting with external human resources (academics, universities, practitioners, legal experts, and think tanks, for example) as well as the idea of participating in partnerships.

Intangibles. Intangible resources include things like political will for improved maritime security, reputation of concerned stakeholders, and the cultural and popular view of the maritime domain, both among maritime populations, and those who are indirectly affected by it. These resources, though by definition intangible, are critical to achieving maritime objectives, as described in the "Planning Ways" section above, addressing issues of education and sensitization.

RISK ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED STRATEGY

Risk assessment, though not necessarily in the traditional sense, is a final yet critical piece of maritime strategy. This exercise evaluates the gap between a chosen aim and its objectives, and the risk involved to close it; it examines the strategy for its suitability, sustainability, feasibility, and acceptability, all of which are important aspects of a successful maritime strategy. Once completed, the risk assessment can be used to pursue objectives through ways—it can contribute to building political will, for instance. Topics that might be addressed by risk assessment include the importance of regional conservation, competing domestic and international interests, and financial risk of relying on budgetary support from other sectors. The risk assessment can also assist with prioritization. As the general context changes, the implementation of the strategy will need to change, and the risk may need to be reassessed. Resources may become unexpectedly scarce, for example, on account of a drop in the price of key commodities, and the implementation will have to be reevaluated and top priorities reestablished.

A maritime strategy is not a static document. It requires flexibility and reevaluation in an evolving environment. Once a maritime strategy is finalized and adopted, the risk assessment

serves as a periodic monitoring and auditing mechanism to ensure its integrity.

A comprehensive maritime security strategy development process is indispensable for creating an effective national maritime security strategy. Ultimately, however, the real worth of a strategy resides in its implementation. Therefore, while embarking on the important work of developing a maritime strategy, government leaders must be committed to its implementation.

THE PROCESS SUMMARIZED

1. Assessment of:
   - Self
   - Maritime Domain
   - Threats
2. Identification of Stakeholders
3. Drafting of Ends (across as many pillars as necessary)
4. Planning Ways
5. Application of Means for Implementation—Resources and Resource Constraints
6. Risk Assessment and Reevaluation
7. Implementation Action Plan (including reassessment and amendment as necessary)
8. Implementation
9. Review and Rethinking