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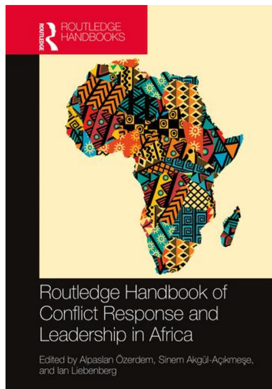

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Maritime Security off Africa

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MARITIME SECURITY OFF AFRICA

Perspectives on East and West Africa

Francois Vreÿ

Introduction

Renewed focus on the world's oceans has brought about a shift that one can broadly frame as a rivalry between competitive no-limits exploitation and cooperative or collaborative endeavours towards the responsible and sustainable use of ocean territories. The competition portrays a growing sense of international concern with keeping the world's oceans productive, safe, and sustainable (United Nations, n.d.). The aforementioned does not take place in isolation from vested interests of countries, business communities, coastal communities, and criminals, as well as other sub-state political rivalries.

Africa is not isolated from the larger debate on preserving, protecting, and securing the oceans. African maritime threats and vulnerabilities such as piracy off Somalia, oil theft in the Niger Delta, drug smuggling in the Western Indian Ocean, and illegal fishing in the Gulf of Guinea reside at the forefront of endeavours to roll back threats and mobilize international, African, and business imperatives to use the continent's ocean resources productively under safe and secure conditions. This latter aspiration entails a prominent role for African leaders. Its progress resides mainly in how African political leadership views the oceans debate, in general, to use the oceans to promote the growth and prosperity of African communities. Africa's leaders stand central in bringing the continent's ocean economies at the national and regional levels into step with the continent's largely land-based political and economic cultures (Economic Commission for Africa, 2016).

African leaders play a critical role in bringing into play the optimal actor mix and resources, as well as priorities in policy programmes to secure the continent's oceans and exploit its riches responsibly and in a way that ensures sustainability for future generations. This endeavour requires a leadership style that steers away from the sea blindness so often attributed to Africa's political leaders (Feld, 2016). In addition, Africa's leaders have to recognise and build sustainable and productive partnerships and construct capacity in the critical domains of maritime security governance, in particular to mitigate maritime security threats and vulnerabilities. Although individual leadership is important, it is the ability of leaders to bring multiple actors at the national and regional levels together to address an emergent security domain of interest that is of central importance. Cooperation and shifting policies and actions to unfamiliar territory to cross new frontiers (maritime interests, cooperation, and the blue economy) reside at the heart

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of what African leaders must master. Although East and West Africa show some good progress with regional and international collaboration and partnerships to address maritime insecurity, room for improvement remains as not all the coastal countries have joined the drive for better maritime security governance.

The following chapter aims to frame the growing oceans debate requiring Africa's leadership to remain in step with exploiting an underdeveloped resource frontier without contributing to the ongoing threats to and destruction of ocean assets. The chapter first attends to explaining political leadership before addressing the oceans debate followed by an outline of threats and conflicts endangering Africa's oceans off East and West Africa in particular. The chapter concludes with a summary of leadership imperatives and capacity-building priorities off West, Central, and East Africa to secure and sustain Africa's rich maritime landscapes and economic resources.

The growing oceans debate and African leadership

Seychelles's case probably exemplifies how a political leader understands and shows political leadership in securing maritime interest by placing the ocean economy at the centre of its policy programmes. Given that Seychelles's ocean territories far outstrip its landward surface, the connection is obvious. However, this is not to be assumed as an obvious shift as embracing the oceans in such a comprehensive way entails a paradigm shift in how leaders of small island and developing states view their national priorities and the role of the blue economy (Attri, 2018).

At the continental level, the African Union launched the African Integrated Maritime Strategy 2050 (AIMS-2050) that serves as a catalyst to encourage African leaders to cooperate and also prioritize the protection and responsible use of their ocean landscapes (African Union, 2012). This drive at a continental prioritization of Africa's maritime interests within overall developmental and security programmes serves as the rationale for African leaders to show leadership in attending to their maritime interests more closely. At the regional level, leaders of West and Central Africa set up the Yaoundé Code of Conduct to take the lead in bringing regional leadership and maritime security to the fore (Ifesinachi and Nwangwu, 2015). At national level, the Seychelles and the oceans leg of Operation Phakisa in South Africa also demonstrate programmes positioned at the highest political offices in the respective countries. Irrespective of the levels mentioned, continental (African Union), regional (for example, Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS], Economic Community of Central African States [ECCAS]), and national leadership (for example, Seychelles, South Africa) are pivotal to addressing Africa's maritime security threats and vulnerabilities, as no single state can forge the required maritime domain awareness and responses to address the continental, regional, or even national maritime security.

At the outset of the maritime security debate triggered by shipping attacks off the Horn of Africa, a general perception of sea blindness amongst Africa's political leadership reigned. This perception sat alongside a further notion of weak political leadership where governments fail to extend good governance and the rule of law over their landward and maritime territories. Subsequently, offshore domains regressed alongside growing insecurity on land and insecurity at sea, becoming the general state of affairs. This interconnection brought about by liminality is visible off Somalia, Nigeria, and, more recently, Libya as weak political leadership – the maritime instability nexus with their ocean territories unfortunately also exhibits the bulk of threats to good order at sea off Africa (Bueger et al., 2019). To the contrary, however, many African leaders did respond to the call of getting their maritime houses in order with much international support and cooperation from institutions such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

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(UNODC), the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the European Union (EU), and partner countries such as Denmark, France. Cooperation with international partners as in the case of setting up the Djibouti Code of Conduct for the Western Indian Ocean and the Yaoundé Code of Conduct for the Gulf of Guinea with African partners offsets much of the lingering perception of sea blindness and of African leaders disinterested in their ocean landscapes (Africa Centre for Strategic Studies, 2019). In parallel, African leaders in coastal states, in particular, must also remain in step with progress in the wider oceans debate and its dependence upon safe and secure oceans. Maritime initiatives on economic growth based on secure oceans require a high political office. In South Africa, Operation Phakisa's oceans leg resides in the presidency, in Mauritius under the prime minister; in Seychelles, both its national development and sustainable development strategies mainly turn upon blue economy initiatives; and in Kenya, maritime matters fall under the newly established Department for Fisheries and Blue Economy, together with a presidential Blue Economy Implementation Committee (Rustomjee, 2018).

For the countries of Africa, the UN, and business entities, as well as societies, the oceans debate is important but holds different meanings as to the envisaged benefits from a turn to better use of the world's oceans. Some call it the maritime century largely because of the revenue tied up in the oceans (Attri, 2018). This renewed interest in the oceans as a resource frontier acted as a catalyst for an international rush to not only develop the debate but also gain a foothold in the economic landscapes of the oceans. In essence, the ultimate objective is to develop the use of the oceans under the blue economy banner informed by responsibility, cooperation, sustainability, and thought for future generations (Attri, 2018). Unfortunately, proponents of unchecked ocean-grabbing compete with those calling for responsible ocean use as both realize the importance of the oceans to the global economy. Healthy oceans are productive oceans and make for good business and thus a worthy cause to pursue as less healthy oceans don't offer the natural capital and attractiveness to foster good business (Attri, 2018). Featuring in the ambit short of blue economic practice, one finds four different debates with their own interpretations of using the oceans.

Regarding the utility of the oceans, Silver et al. framed four competing views (Silver et al., 2015).

1 *Oceans as natural capital*: The benefits vested in the oceans' natural infrastructure and ecosystems biodiversity offer natural solutions with an economic value to be capitalized upon to promote the idea of a blue economy.
2 *Oceans as good business*: Existing ocean sectors of business must continue but be held accountable for their roles through governance, marine science, and monitoring. Extraction without accountability cannot continue.
3 *Oceans as integral to small island developmental states (SIDS)*: Livelihood and developmental imperatives are closely connected to the oceans. Any threat to the oceans endangers their existence and require partnerships and funding to pursue their objectives.
4 *Oceans as small-scale fisheries (SSF) livelihoods*: Accentuating human–oceans relations, SSF is also about poverty reduction, employment, empowering woman, and development. SSF ocean grabbing through privatization is a threat, as the oceans represent the common good, public property, and common heritage and not a benefit for the few over the many.

Viewing the oceans as a new resource frontier implies that political leaders must negotiate its oft neglected political, economic, and social landscapes (Barbesgaard, 2018). Add to this the African Union's (AU) commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and leadership becomes all the more salient for the custodians of the continent's ocean landscapes and its

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security in particular. Political leaders, governments, and private industry remain prominent actors in leading the SDGs' execution. This ties back to leaders' role to show leadership as one of the most sought after responses to problems manifesting in the wider international system (University of Cambridge, 2017).

Maritime security is a complex global problem to be tackled locally and regionally by policymakers and practitioners. National context is important as a lack of stability and good governance bring different sets of governance issues to the political table and often mask the maritime imperative from a country's leaders. This results in political unawareness of a critical security domain requiring close political attention, decisions, and resources as awareness goes hand in hand with decisions and resources to respond and bring maritime security, the blue economy, and the oceans' health into balance (Safe Seas, 2018). Conditions on land not only mask the insecurity at sea from leadership but fuels the insecurity by promoting bad order at sea through weak governance and a lack of policy and practitioner interventions to address maritime insecurity through policy and other interventions.

Given a largely continental (landward) outlook on security matters affecting Africa, turning to the maritime frontier forced a shift in leader outlooks. One way to better understand this shift is to use the approach embedded in leadership as an effective pathway in response to global threats and opportunities that manifest on ocean landscapes. Ocean landscapes of Africa and political leadership are closely entwined as such landscapes hold sovereignty and international implications regarding the rule of law, jurisdiction, and cooperation within the political ambit to deliver public goods such as security, political acme, and economic and social benefits which link back to the SDGs 14 (Life below the Oceans), 16 (Institution Building), and 17 (Building Partnerships) in particular (Economic Commission for Africa, 2016). Shifting a status quo culture requires policy changes where political entrepreneurs play a leading role (University of Cambridge, 2017). Moving from sea blindness and a strong landward fixation on delivering public goods requires policy changes to respond to threats, opportunities, and vulnerabilities in offshore territories.

Through political entrepreneurs, leadership operates along the lines of a suggested crisis to attract attention and indicate appropriate policy responses. The ideal response is to work across jurisdictions to create broad coalitions within vertical and horizontal spheres with the state, transnational, and non-state actors to realize common goals – a pattern visible in how multiple actors responded to the piracy threat off the Horn of Africa (Nelson and Fitch, 2012). They frame an issue to move it into the realm of policymaking in a way that enable policymakers to understand what is at hand. These entrepreneurs bring multiple decision-making levels into step and foster collective responses across policy spheres for lasting public values or goods (University of Cambridge, 2017). This process made an important contribution to bring piracy into national and international policy realms like the UN and the AU. The ability to learn and transfer lessons learned to adjacent domains or to see progress in addressing similar threats and vulnerabilities at sea are second-order outflows and visible in how piracy off East and West Africa benefitted from reciprocal rounds of improvements and feeding on the lessons each portrayed.

In terms of competencies, the maritime frontier requires leaders that recognize the dangers of lawless seas and foster change by pushing through policies, building coalitions to overcome political instability and corruption, promoting innovation to offset stasis, access funding, setting right inefficient government bureaucracy and absent infrastructure, and countering crime. Political leadership's attention to matters offshore is not always easy, but it is necessary. In the case of Africa, the dire threats at sea and an initial leadership disinterest converged before being checked and rolled back by intervening actors Walker and Reva, 2019). Here, leadership and distributing public value remain important for, as on land, public goods at and from the sea are

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equally necessary to serve one's society and are explicitly acknowledged in AIMS 2050 of the African Union assigned by African leadership (African Union, 2012).

In the African context, the Horn region off East Africa and the Gulf of Guinea off West and Central Africa serve as examples where liminality (the interplay between events on land and at sea) operates with conflict on land too often spilling over to adjoining ocean territories to threaten maritime security. Non-state actors such as transnational criminal syndicates exploit weak or absent governance and political leadership, particularly off the Somalia and Nigeria coasts. Piracy became the primary rallying call for international attention and a platform to mobilize African governments to join international coalitions against piracy and capacity building to mitigate maritime insecurity off Africa (Bueger, 2013).

East Africa: the Horn region

East Africa encompasses a landscape from South Africa in the South to Djibouti in the north and several Red Sea states such as Eritrea, Sudan, and Egypt, as well as island states to the likes of Madagascar, Mauritius, Comoros, and Seychelles. Collapsed governance on land spilling offshore, with Somalia as the main catalyst of collapsed security governance at sea and on land, informs the East African maritime scenario (One Earth Future, 2017). Governance index counts on land and at sea from the Mo Ibrahim Foundation and Stable Sea Index for Somalia depict 13.4/100 (East Africa 44.8, Mozambique 51, South Africa 68, Madagascar 49, and Mauritius 79.5). Somalia remains red flagged on land and sea governance and security (low piracy but low maritime security in general). It indicates core problem areas around the Horn region where leadership is also most fragmented and problematic, particularly in Somalia. Somali piracy registered an international threat to shipping in an international sea lane of communication that spurred on a coalition to address a global danger within an African geographic and governance setting (Bueger, 2013). These international responses guided by UN Resolutions emerged and mobilized international actions to support African leaders to address the absence of maritime security governance in the seas off the Horn of Africa. Lack of governance (Somalia, for example, still features at the bottom of the Ibrahim Index for 2018) and the absence of strong leadership in the region fuelled extremities in maritime threats, leading to land–sea spillovers and allowing for qualified international intervention into sovereign African matters – off Somalia, in particular (United Nations, 2012). As a result, interventions for maritime security capacity building, anti-piracy task groups (for example, NATO's Operation Ocean Shield and the EU's Operation Atalanta), and a declaration of a High Risk Area, the Djibouti Code of Conduct, a piracy court in Victoria Seychelles, and a semi-permanent foreign naval presence emerged in the Gulf of Aden. The manifestation of conflict resolution at sea, alongside or through interplay with ongoing conflict on land, played out in the absence of meaningful African leadership at the time (Vreÿ, 2014).

African responses: the role of African leaders

Limited African leadership is visible in countering piracy threats off Somalia in particular, even though they present a serious threat to African national and economic interests. It is, however, not all negative. The AU responded with AIMS 2050 (African Union, 2012) and with initiatives such as the Maritime Transport Charter and the Lomé Charter (a legally binding Charter regarding the aspirations of the AIMS 2050 Strategy of the AU) to enforce stipulations in terms of responses to events at sea in general. Much regulatory and policy work is done by leadership groupings (Gilpin, 2016). In the execution of the important Lomé Charter, national leadership

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seems to do the worst, with the possible failure of an Africa-wide commitment to deal with threats and vulnerabilities in their sovereign and regional maritime territories (Nel and Brits, 2018).

Operation Copper is a visible action at sea off Southern Africa in the Southwestern Indian Ocean through a South African Development Community (SADC) regional response, with South Africa alongside other SADC leaders taking the lead in a preventative operation on SADC's northern maritime border in the Indian Ocean (Nel and Brits, 2016). Copper's importance is that it is preventative in kind, an independent regional endeavour with resources from the SADC region, and demonstrates regional leadership from this Southern Regional Economic Community in sustained deployments over the past eight years. This is in contrast to initiatives off West, East, and North Africa with their explicit inter-regional and international actor profiles. Copper has been sustained since 2011 by one or more SADC member states with the explicit aim of preventing piracy and wider maritime crimes to flow south and threaten the ocean territories of SADC countries (South African Department of Defence, 2011).

African leadership along the Western Indian Ocean faces a disturbing influx of powerful actors with constructive and more aggressive maritime agendas (Melvin, 2019). Piracy remains the early catalyst for awareness and action in the piracy–anti-piracy ambit, but African leaders must be ready to respond to a wider spillover threat landscape. Here the Jeddah Amendment to the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC) comes to mind, as well as its mandate to address maritime crime transgressions other than piracy (Menzel, 2018). Piracy at the Horn of Africa exists in a broader crime landscape, interacting with such crimes and transnational syndicates that stimulate a further landward-offshore migration of its operations, their impact, and actor spectrum (Vreÿ and Fouché, 2016). Threats at sea off East Africa thus became the rallying call for Africa's leadership to bring continental initiatives, such as AIMS-2050 and the Yaoundé Code of Conduct on security, development, and cooperation, into step with threats to its large ocean territories and the socio-economic value they contain (Engel, 2014).

West Africa: the Gulf of Guinea

The Gulf of Guinea off West and Central Africa stretches from Angola in the South to Senegal in the West. In contrast to East Africa, it is a very densely populated region bordered by numerous large to very small states and island states, with its waters harbouring important oceans-based energy resources (Gonzalez, 2016). According to the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, this region's landward governance count stands at 54.3/100 and 39.4/100 for Central Africa. Average to weak governance and persistent insurgency in Nigeria's Niger Delta threatens maritime activities, resources, and beneficiaries in the Gulf of Guinea. Political insurgency is closely entwined with criminality and corrupt politicians at the local and national levels in the region. Two crimes that stand out are illegal oil bunkering and drug smuggling with their politico-criminal tentacles reaching into political hierarchies (Osakwe et al., 2016). Insurgents operating in the Niger Delta exemplify a rebel movement with a local political agenda and seeking to extend their campaign offshore against the oil industry in and off the Niger Delta and, alongside criminal entities, posturing as the major source of threat to maritime security in the Gulf (Fiorelli, 2014).

Governance counts on land and from the Ibrahim Index and Stable Seas Index point towards a dual security deficit on security goods that fall within the ambit of the region's political leadership. International responses were initially featured more visibly with the European Union (EU), individual European countries, and the USA plying lead roles in helping governments address maritime concerns. UN Resolutions 2018 (2011) and 2039 (2012), through partner countries and organizations like the Gulf of Guinea Council and regional assistance from ECOWAS and

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ECCAS in particular, show an encouraging African leadership response (United Nations, n.d.). This response is more promising than the lacklustre role taken by political leaders along the Western Indian Ocean and, in particular, the early and active cooperation of littoral states in the Gulf of Guinea.

Leadership in the Gulf of Guinea

The security and leadership link is most visible in collective actions taken as African leaders from countries bordering the Gulf of Guinea foster actions through African-led bodies such as the AU, ECOWAS, and ECCAS. African leadership did much in securing the Gulf of Guinea as governments turned to ECOWAS, ECCAS, and the AU to set in place and operationalize the Yaoundé Code of Conduct (United Nations, 2013). Regional and inter-regional cooperation manifest through the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, its zones of responsibility supported by monitoring centres on land. Regional leadership and institution building took place under a visible African leadership initiative (Kamal-Deen, 2015). The leadership role plays out regionally, as well as nationally, with partner cooperation and the drive to acquire patrol platforms for a physical presence in the Gulf (Vreÿ and Fouché, 2017). Naval and other maritime platforms, acquired to increase their physical presence at sea, show an ongoing pattern (Osei-Tutu, 2016). Given the strategic ambit of acquiring naval platforms, West African governments appear to not only institutionalize maritime security in dedicated national and regional institutions but also acquire the means to extend the rule of law and enforcement where necessary. They therefore engage in the important business of platform acquisitions (Nigeria in particular) and setting up partnerships such as the one between Denmark and the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KAIPKTC) in Ghana to promote maritime awareness and exercises to physically enforce the rule of law at sea as demonstrated by the regular Exercise Obangame Express to operationalize cooperation and combat the escalation of maritime violence to the ecosystem in the waters of the Gulf of Guinea (DefenceWeb, 2019).

More African leadership appears to emerge in response to conflict potential at sea, with West African leaders showing a much more responsive role to deal with their offshore domains and their socio-economic importance through regional, inter-regional, and national measures (Oyewole, 2016). The leadership response is visible in promoting regional and interregional cooperation, strengthening naval and other maritime policing capabilities, and a host of state-to-state partnerships with naval and maritime underpinnings.

On leadership and maritime security off Africa

Whether maintaining a maritime culture as in the case of the United Kingdom and smaller countries like Denmark or turning (or sharing) the continental outlook to include the oceans that is now facing leaders of African coastal states, political leadership serves as a primary driving force. Whether by way of individual leadership or institutional and collective mechanisms, leadership remains pinnacle but requires a global perspective if one considers the burgeoning oceans debate (University of Cambridge, 2017). No real political, economic, or social progress in Africa took shape without leadership inputs or astute leadership on occasion (Afegbua and Adejuwon, 2012). The same rationale underpins how African leaders address the growing maritime insecurity off the continent. Individual leaders, regional groupings, and strong drives at the AU level collectively promote Africa's maritime security agenda.

Dealing with maritime security to resolve and prevent conflict by setting in place good maritime security governance ties in with the notion of contemporary leadership having to

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contend with complex global problems and new frontiers in particular (University of Cambridge, 2017). Maritime security is often labelled a wicked problem (Kiourktoglou et al., 2013) and as a typically complex and demanding sector of governance, requiring ambition and vision, the capacity building involves change and reform of policies, institutions, governance, and procedures across policy domains (Safe Seas, 2018). This in itself demands political leadership to work across such diverse policy domains. Unfortunately, governmental performances to address complexities such as the UN SDGs that include ocean health and building institutions and partnerships to address SDGs are not inspiring (University of Cambridge, 2017). For example, the Gulf of Guinea remains a dangerous shipping route; a maritime zone labelled as dangerous with the regular kidnapping of crews and attacks on shipping with the UNODC going to great lengths to assist littoral states in extending the rule of law over these waters (UNODC, 2020).

Raising awareness and setting in place ways and means to promote maritime domain awareness in order to promote conflict prevention and respond if prevention fails requires cooperation. Actions against threats at sea reflect an intricate pathway of multilateral cooperation to unilateral endeavours with collaboration, institution building, and interagency collaboration holding the most promise. Inherently, African leadership got dragged along, as in the case of Somalia, or saw the opportunities and rationality of cooperation, as with the Seychelles leadership (Seychelles News Agency, 2016), or learned from earlier progress and became engaged as learning leaders or organizations to bring their own maritime houses in order (Anyimadu, 2013).

One practice that became central to addressing maritime security off Africa is the utility of maritime capacity building (Bueger and Edmunds, 2018). Maritime capacity building must be understood in its fullest context to play a preventative role and help African leaders address maritime security governance. This relatively new endeavour calls for leading change and people and builds coalitions internally, regionally, and with foreign governments and private agencies to cover the growing landscape of maritime threats and vulnerabilities (University of Cambridge, 2017). With reference to leadership attributes, capacity building requires leaders to think long term, be globally conscious, and understand interdisciplinary connections of political maritime governance. Here the element of actor–network theory comes into play to assist leaders in coping with the variety of needs, resources, and eventual capacities required. In this vein, leaders' ability to work across domains of governance and vertically with actors ranging from international bodies to national departments is of the utmost importance.

Leadership must also learn from experiences and progress in the field. Better maritime security governance through learning from practices locally and further afield is also important and already taking place in the African maritime domain (Menzel, 2018). Given ongoing developments, this is particularly relevant to optimize the two prominent codes of conduct off West and East Africa designed to address maritime crime in the Gulf of Guinea (YCC) and the Western Indian Ocean (DCoC). Embracing and codifying the oceans for African prosperity, the partnerships and institutional coherence through leadership are entering an unfamiliar governance field, requiring political will amongst African leadership (Potgieter, 2015). Leadership in security governance prevents conflict and opens conduits to extend the rule of law as a platform for entering the blue economy of Africa, with security serving as the conduit for economic and social public goods at and from the sea (Swanepoel, 2017).

Conclusion

Dealing with maritime security through African leaders is theoretically closely interconnected with the more familiar events on land, and, in particular, an African leadership impact is called

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for in order to respond to the complexities that the oceans' landscape raises. Although African leaders regularly fell victim to accusations of sea blindness that in effect disconnected maritime security imperatives from leadership agendas, this state of affairs has taken a turn for the better since 2010 in particular. Insecurity at sea off the Horn of Africa spurred African leaders (individual and regional) and international actors (state and non-state) to foster capacity building for African coastal states bordering the Indian Ocean. At the apex of cooperation, one finds an overarching code of conduct (the Djibouti Code of Conduct and the Jedda Amment). Most African leaders along the East African littoral ascribed to a legal ambit that covers arrest to prosecution, sentencing, and incarceration.

Further South in the Southwestern Indian Ocean, SADC leaders of South Africa, Mozambique, and Tanzania have cooperated since 2011 to set up a regional programme at sea to prevent instability from its northern neighbours to spill south. Leaders from coastal states in Central and West Africa also stepped up to the rapidly deteriorating situation at sea in the Gulf of Guinea. Learning from events off East Africa, leaders from the two regional economic communities bordering the Gulf of Guinea (ECOWAS and ECCAS) set up the Yaoundé Code of Conduct to cover the wide ambit of criminal-political threats in this region's waters. In contrast to the events off East Africa, the Central and West African response shows a more dedicated African leadership profile in bringing about ways and means to make the waters of the Gulf of Guinea more secure and safer.

Regarding leadership per se, African responses to conflict on its maritime waters display both stasis and progress. Progress is reflected in leaders cooperating at the national, regional, and international levels with diverse actors to mitigate actor and threat escalation in African waters. Stasis is reflected in the slowness to ratify collective protocols and charters designed to address maritime security threats such as the tardy response to the Lomé Charter. Overall, leaders of coastal African states show entrepreneurial leadership elements in how they responded to a somewhat unfamiliar security threat domain. In this vein, they cooperate with a new range of actors to bring onto line capacities specifically designed to empower African coastal countries to slow down and mitigate threats to good order at sea in order to exploit the oceans-based economic opportunities alluded to in the AIMS 2050 objectives.

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