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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
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Subject:	Council Conclusions extending and enhancing the implementation of the Coordinated Maritime Presences Concept in the Gulf of Guinea

Delegations will find in annex the Council Conclusions extending and enhancing the implementation of the Coordinated Maritime Presences Concept in the Gulf of Guinea, approved by the Council at its meeting held on 21 February 2022.

**COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS EXTENDING AND ENHANCING
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COORDINATED MARITIME PRESENCES
CONCEPT IN THE GULF OF GUINEA**

1. The Council reaffirms the strategic importance of the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) region and its long-standing determination to support West and Central African States in their efforts to address the many challenges to maritime security, including root causes of insecurity. The EU is committed to increasing its support to the region, to all levels of the Yaoundé Architecture and to the Coastal States of the GoG.
2. The Council welcomes the decrease in maritime security incidents in the GoG in 2021 compared to previous years as a result of the efforts made by Coastal States, regional actors and the enhanced and continuous presence of EU Member States' naval assets in the GoG Maritime Area of Interest (MAI) in the framework of the implementation of the Coordinated Maritime Presences (CMP) concept.
3. Nevertheless, the GoG continues to be a particularly challenging environment for seafarers, notably due to the ongoing threat of piracy, affecting freedom of navigation and thus endangering major trade routes, jeopardising the sustainable development of the entire region as well as the economic livelihood of the population, and leading to the deterioration of the maritime environment and its impact on biodiversity. The Council also notes the need to support the development of adequate arrangements for the hand over of suspected pirates, in dialogue with relevant Coastal States.

4. The Council recalls its Conclusions of 25 January 2021 and welcomes the initial achievements within the framework of the CMP pilot case and, in line with the lessons learned from the implementation of the CMP concept, recognises the opportunity for its full-fledged implementation. The CMP concept has proven to be an effective and useful instrument, contributing to maritime security in the GoG as part of the EU's Integrated Approach. The Council underlines the need to enhance and consolidate a continuous maritime presence in the region, reflecting the Union's growing role as a maritime security provider, in line with international law and UNCLOS.
5. The Council also welcomes the work done by the Maritime Area of Interest Coordination Cell (MAICC) within the EEAS in effectively facilitating coordination of the deployment of EU Member States' naval assets in the region, as well as building relevant maritime situational awareness for the EU and its Member States by facilitating the exchange of operational maritime information through the Maritime Surveillance (MARSUR) project.
6. The Council welcomes the appointment of an EU Senior Coordinator (SC) for Maritime Security in the GoG, who will facilitate in a holistic manner the overall coherence of, and coordination between, the activities of EU actors, as well as the development and strengthening of partnerships, in close cooperation with the maritime industry. The Council underlines the importance of seeking ownership by Coastal States.
7. More efforts need to be undertaken to further strengthen the CMP concept. In line with the EU's integrated approach, enhancing the complementarity with EU-funded programmes in the region, such as the GoG Inter-regional Network (GoGIN) project and its Yaoundé Architecture Regional Information Sharing (YARIS) platform, or the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) funded program, as well as potentially the off-budget European Peace Facility (EPF), will contribute to a better support to the Yaoundé Architecture and the GoG Coastal States.

8. To that effect, the Council:

- extends the implementation of the “CMP concept in the GoG” by two years;
 - will examine the possibility of applying the CMP concept in other potential MAIs;
 - will revert to the CMP concept in the GoG by February 2024 at the latest;
 - looks forward to continued close cooperation with the West and Central African States, and the organisations of the Yaoundé Architecture in taking forward this work.
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