



Date: 23th February 2021

Circular no.: 0053C/TG/02/21

To: Ship-owners / Operators, Managers, Representatives of Togo flagged vessels, Deputy Registrars, Masters, Seafarers, and Recognized Organizations.

Subject: Maritime Security of Vessels & Mariners Operating Off the Coast of West Africa including the Gulf of Guinea.

Scope: This Marine notice aims to inform the interested parties of the shipping industry on IMO's deep concern about the escalation in the number and severity of attacks on ships and crew in the Gulf of Guinea region. In a circular letter (No. 4382, issued 10 February) IMO inform all member states and organisations of actions to enhance the coordination among stakeholders as well as new initiatives to restore security and reduce the threats to the safety and security of crews and vessels operating in the region.

This Marine Notice complements our circular no. 50c/TG/12/20 - 7/12/2020 regarding the Maritime Security of Vessels & Mariners Operating Off the Coast of West Africa including the Gulf of Guinea.

References:

- a. IMO Circular Letter No.4382 (10 February 2021) Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea
- b. Our Circular: 50C/TG/12/20 - 7/12/2020 regarding the Maritime Security of Vessels & Mariners Operating Off the Coast of West Africa including the Gulf of Guinea,
- c. IMO/Resolution A.1069(28)/29.11.2013_PREVENTION AND SUPPRESSION OF PIRACY, ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS AND ILLICIT MARITIME ACTIVITY IN THE GULF OF GUINEA
- d. Code of Conduct concerning the repression of piracy, armed robbery against ships, and illicit maritime activity in west and central Africa.
- e. IMO/MSC.1/Circ.1601/8 December 2018_REVISED INDUSTRY COUNTER PIRACY GUIDANCE
- f. Industry Associations Report "Best Management Practices to Enhance Maritime Security for Vessels & Mariners Operating Off the Coast of West Africa including the Gulf of Guinea (BMP WA)".

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General

In a circular letter (No. 4382, issued 10 February) IMO informs all member states and organisations of actions to enhance the coordination among stakeholders as well as new initiatives to restore security and reduce the threats to the safety and security of crews and vessels operating in the region. For this reason is facilitating meetings with representatives of the industry, the Nigeria Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) and the Interregional Coordination Centre for the Implementation of Regional Strategy for Maritime Safety and Security in Central and West Africa (ICC).

IMO intends to convene a maritime security working group focusing on the Gulf of Guinea at the next session of the Maritime Safety Committee, MSC 103, scheduled to take place in May 2021. This will provide an opportunity for Member States and international organizations to discuss further collaboration and possible action to address the existing problems.

IMO continues to provide technical assistance to Member States in the region regarding the implementation of maritime security measures. The Organization is currently working with the Interregional Coordination Centre (ICC) to assist with the implementation of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct (YCC), a regional code aimed at enhancing maritime security and addressing piracy, armed robbery against ships, illegal fishing and other illicit maritime activity.

Finally, the IMO West and Central Africa Maritime Security Trust Fund enables the Organization's maritime security capacity-building programme to assist Gulf of Guinea coastal States as well as regional centers under the framework of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct.

The Secretary-General highlighted that ships need to implement the IMO endorsed Best Management Practices (BMP) for West Africa (WA) to avoid, deter, delay and report attacks. The BMP cover risk assessment, ship protection measures and reporting. The Secretary-General would also like to draw the attention of all Member States to Assembly resolution A.1069(28) on Prevention and suppression of piracy, armed robbery against ships and illicit maritime activity in the Gulf of Guinea.

The above highlights of the Secretary-General are already included in our circular no: 50C/TG/12/20 of the last year as strong recommendations to all stakeholders along with the coordinate of all competent and responsible Authorities in the region.



RECOMMENDATIONS REMINDER

- Masters and GSOs are encouraged to report as early as possible, events or sightings with as much detail as possible to local and regional centers and Authorities to give them time to initiate the appropriate response.
- Masters are encouraged to apply Best Management Practices to Enhance Maritime Security for Vessels & Mariners Operating Off the Coast of West Africa including the Gulf of Guinea (BMP WA) during their presence in the above Area.
- Shipowners and ship operators, shipmasters and crews are encouraged to take also into account the guidance provided in respective IMO resolutions on preventing and suppressing acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships.

For the International Ship Registry of Togo



Vera N. Medawar
Ship Registrar

For the Togolese Maritime Authority



MATCHONNAWE BAKAI
Director

Encl.:
IMO Circular Letter No.4382
10 February 2021