

CROSS BORDER COOPERATION AS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW TO CONVERGE SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE MANO RIVER UNION



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Introduction

- MRU Declaration on October 3, 1973
- Guinea joined in 1980
- Ivory Coast joined on 1st April, 2008
- In the 90's, Liberia and Sierra Leone engulfed in war
- The war eroded the much needed trust and confidence
- Common security threats across MRU countries
- Revitalization of MRU became compulsory in post war

Aim

The aim of this presentation is to enable the participants understand how cross border cooperation can enhance security and development in the Mano River Basin.

Scope

- Outbreak of Civil War in the MRU Basin
- Post War Revitalization of the Mano River Union
- Current State of Security in the MRU
- Strategies to Enhance Cross Border Cooperation in the MRU
- Cross Border Cooperation and the Security-Development Nexus in the MRU
- Conclusion

Outbreak of Civil War in the Mano River Union

- In the 90's, two members engulfed in civil war
- The wars were reinforced by identical, socio-economic and security challenges
- MRU countries suffered from porous and badly managed borders
- Guinea played host to Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees
- RUF received support from the Liberian Government
- Guinean financed disparate armed factions in the Liberian conflict
- Mercenaries of fortune from within the MRU were involved in all the conflicts

Post War Revitalization in the MRU

- Member states increasingly committed to revitalizing the Union
- On 19th May 2000, 15th Protocol signed
- Protocols provide for social integration and economic development
- On December 10, 2008 Mini Summit in Freetown to address security, agriculture and financing of the MRU Secretariat
- Joint Security Committee and Joint Border Security and Confidence Building Units were activated
- Efforts were aimed at consolidating peace, security and stability

Current State of Security in the Mano River Union

- Security challenges inhibiting collective commitment
- Growing concern to Liberia and Sierra Leone in maritime security
- Potential discovery of oil in both countries
- Transnational organized crime poses serious challenges
- Security sector in Sierra Leone and Liberia subject to extensive reform
- Ivory Coast and Guinea likely to follow suit
- Relative security and stability reigning in the MRU

Strategies to Enhance Cross Border Cooperation in the MRU

- MRU borders are porous and vulnerable to security threats
- Development and harmonization of common policies on organized crime
- Joint assessment of security threats in the MRU
- Joint cross border security meetings
- Joint border patrols
- Intelligence gathering and information sharing
- Establishment of integrated border posts
- Joint use of security assets in the MRU

Cross Border Cooperation and the Security-Development Nexus in the MRU

- Security is a critical precondition for economic development
- Both are mutually inclusive issues
- Stability has attracted investors
- Sustained efforts made to implement security and economic reforms
- The development component of the nexus lags behind security
- Good governance and social service delivery are key to support the security-development nexus
- The MRU remains vulnerable to socio-economic challenges
- Security and development nexus to be looked at from aviation security industry
- Cross border cooperation is key to enhancing security and development in the MRU

Conclusion

- ① Cross border cooperation has delivered relative security in the sub-region
- ① The stage is now set for development to take off
- ① Compelling imperative that member states provide the required leadership
- ① The security-development nexus will move the sub-region to economic development, social integration and stability

