

Grand Africa Nemo 2022: the fundamental role of the YARIS platform in the Gulf of Guinea

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The 2022 edition of the multinational maritime exercise Grand Africa Nemo (GANO 22) took place between 11 and 16 October 2022. The exercise, organised by the French Navy, the two Regional Centres for Maritime Security in West and Central Africa (CRESMAO and CRESMAC) and involving 17 of the 19 countries bordering the Gulf of Guinea and 8 partner nations represents a major step up of Yaoundé Architecture, with the arming of the Multinational Maritime Coordination Centres of Zones G and A for the first time. In addition, the role of the two regional centres, in terms of analysis and surveillance, has been affirmed in order to better anticipate crises and detect suspicious activities. GANO 22 highlighted the need for a framework for the YARIS platform users and, more broadly, a guide for good practices in conducting joint operations.

The YARIS platform was used for the second time throughout the Gulf of Guinea as part of the annual GANO 22 exercise. The YARIS platform was designated as the essential tool of the Yaoundé Architecture member states and the partners involved, whether in the context of GANO 22 scenarios or actual operations. Moreover, the platform was confirmed to be the structuring tool that allows the strengthening of the operationalisation, both for the Yaoundé Architecture centres and for the national administrations.

In addition to the involvement of the different countries, both CRESMAO and CRESMAC demonstrated their ability to conduct a major exercise and use YARIS as a tool for the analysis and the sharing of information.

The GoGIN+ project, funded by the EU and implemented by Expertise France, deployed nine YARIS trainers to support zonal or national centres for the use of the tool on information sharing and maritime situation analysis: the MMCCs of Zone E (Cotonou), Zone F (Accra) and Zone G (Praia) and

Zone D (Douala), as well as the Maritime Operation Centres (MOCs) of Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire and Gabon. In addition, the project supported the exercise management team with the expertise of the Head of YARIS Operations, and the support of the IT expert of the team. CRESMAO mobilised its operational team to co-pilot the exercise with the Maritime Prefecture for the Atlantic, and its GANO Flag Officer. CRESMAC also deployed an analyst to DIREX.

Three actual operations were conducted in YARIS during GANO 22 : two search and rescue operations off the coast of Sierra Leone and one anti-narcotics operation off the coast of Côte d'Ivoire. Led by CRESMAO in close interaction with the centres in Zone F and the French Navy units, fishermen in distress were rescued and the vessel was taken under control. The switch from an exercise situation to an actual operational was performed very easily and in real time, thus demonstrating the flexibility of the YARIS tool.

The appropriation of a network such as YARIS, which has enormous capacities not yet all exploited, develops over the long term.

It requires the implementation of training courses dedicated to information management and analysis both within the Yaoundé Architecture coordination centres and within the training institutes dedicated to maritime security.

Multinational exercises are an excellent way to put into practice the interaction between the air and naval assets present in the Gulf of Guinea (be it the national navies but also the external navies, such as those of the European CMP system), with great flexibility thanks to the use of a common platform such as YARIS.

Beyond the exercises, each country can strengthen or develop its maritime surveillance and crisis response system, with a permanent use of the YARIS platform.

For more information on YARIS and the use of the platform during GANO 2022, click [here](#).

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