



On August 29, 2012 the US Navy Secretary Ray Mabus and Ambassador Robert P. Jackson spoke to the media, business leaders and the military of Cameroon aboard the HSV2 or High Speed Vessel Swift that has been militarized for the US Navy to serve the Africa Partnership Station (APS). At 98 meters long and 27 meters high, the vessel can sustain speeds at 35 knots and can carry up to 500 metric tons including more than 300 people.

The APS is an international security cooperation initiative facilitated by the Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Europe/ Africa. 2012 marks the 5th year of APS with over 30 participating African partner navies, European North and South American countries. The aim of APS is to strengthen maritime safety and security in the west and central Africa region through the following focus areas:

- Deterring piracy
- Illicit trafficking
- Energy and resource security
- Intelligence training
- Combat medical
- Oil platform protection
- Anti-terrorism and force protection
- Diesel mechanics and repair
- Construction training



Expertise is shared in both classroom settings and real world scenarios to help build African partners' expertise. While not all courses are offered to each nation; the activities are specifically tailored for each country based on their training requirements. Primarily the exercises are meant to raise maritime domain awareness, but the APS also works closely with NGOs, churches and charities to deliver humanitarian aid.

Secretary Mabus said exercises have led to a dramatic decline in counter terrorism, counter trafficking and piracy off the coast of the Gulf of Guinea, a crucial seaway for the coastal and interior countries of Africa. He concluded that common concerns and common enemies make

this partnership an important one and by standing together we will be victorious for safe sea travel, the development, economic prosperity, and security ashore within Africa.

***Article by CP***