UNCLASSIFIED

(U) WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report 8 October – 4 November 2020

5 November 2020

(U) **Table of Contents:**

1. (U) **Scope Note**
2. (U) **Warnings and Advisories**
3. (U) **Summary**
4. (U) **Details: Monthly Incidents by Region**
5. (U) **Appendix A: Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea Statistics and Trends**
6. (U) **Appendix B: Definitions and Sourcing**

1. (U) Scope Note

(U) The Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) message provides information on threats to merchant vessels, the shipping industry, and other maritime stakeholders worldwide in the last 30 days. This report is produced primarily to inform merchant mariners and naval forces.

2. (U) **Warnings and Advisories:** None

3. (U) Summary:

A. (U) NIGERIA: On 4 November, perpetrators boarded Panama-flagged product tanker NAFELI II approximately 95 NM south of Brass.

B. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 3 November, seven alleged members of Abu Sayyaf Group in a speedboat were intercepted by Joint Task Force Sulu and killed during a clash with government troops in the Sulu Sea.

C. (U) MOZAMBIQUE: On 2 November, five robbers armed with long knives boarded an anchored bulk carrier in Nacala Anchorage.

D. (U) NIGERIA: On 31 October, two Russian sailors, captured by pirates off the coast of Nigeria in early September 2020, were released.

E. (U) VIETNAM: On 30 October, robbers boarded the Singapore-flagged bulk carrier HANYANG while underway near Ho Chi Minh City.

F. (U) INDONESIA: On 25 October, the master onboard an underway bulk carrier received a call from the Vessel Traffic Information System which indicated that the vessel may have been boarded by armed robbers in the Malacca Strait.

G. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 16 October, customs authorities in the port of Manila intercepted a consignment of luxury cars being smuggled into the country inside a shipping container.

4. (U) **Details: Monthly Incidents by Region**

(U) This section lists reports of active violence against shipping, credible threats to shipping, or the potential for a situation to develop into a direct threat to shipping over the last 30 days. Every effort is made to ensure that incidents are not double-counted. In the event double counting is detected, or an incident is later found to be different than initially reported, an explanation of the cancellation of the inaccurate report will be made in at least one message prior to dropping the erroneous report.

A. (U) **NORTH AMERICA:** No current incidents to report.

B. (U) **CENTRAL AMERICA - CARIBBEAN - SOUTH AMERICA:**

1. (U) VENEZUELA: As of 20 October, Venezuela sent two vessels to the Gulf of Paria to begin removing up to 1.3 million barrels of crude oil from FSO NABARIMA, moored in the Corocoro Oil Field. Recent photos show the vessel listing approximately eight degrees to starboard and trimmed by the head. Other photos of the interior of the vessel from August 2020 show up to nine feet of water in some areas. The Panama-flagged tanker ICARO and the Venezuela-flagged barge INMACULADA are headed to the stricken vessel to begin offloading operations. (www.gcaptain.com; www.maritime-executive.com)

2. (U) PERU: On 17 October, robbers boarded a tanker anchored near position 12:01S - 077:13W, Callao Anchorage. The duty officer saw a suspicious light near the forward storeroom and asked the duty crew to investigate. As the duty crew approached, they were taken hostage and tied up by robbers. The robbers stole personal belongings and released the duty crew before escaping. The duty officer and the master were informed, the alarm was raised, and a search was carried out. The incident was reported to the port authorities and local agent. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics)

3. (U) HAITI (LATE REPORTING): On 5 October, three armed robbers boarded a drifting bulk carrier near position 18:39N - 072:37W, 5.4 NM north-northwest of La Salle, and escaped with stolen ship's stores. The alarm was raised and the crew mustered. The incident was reported to the port authorities. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics)

4. (U) BRAZIL: On 8 October, three persons in a small fishing boat came alongside a bulk carrier anchored near position 00:00N - 051:00W, Macapa Anchorage. Two of the robbers boarded the ship and broke into the forecastle storeroom. When the duty officer spotted the robbers, he raised the alarm and sounded the ship's horn. Seeing the crew's response, the robbers fled empty-handed. (IMB)

C. (U) **ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA:** No current incidents to report.

D. (U) **NORTHERN EUROPE - BALTIC:**

1. (U) UNITED KINGDOM: On 26 October, members of Britain's elite Special Boat Service boarded the Liberia-flagged tanker NAVE ANDROMEDA near the Isle of Wight and took custody of seven Nigerian stowaways after they made threats against the crew. (www.gcaptain.com)

E. (U) **MEDITERRANEAN - BLACK SEA:** No current incidents to report.

F. (U) **WEST AFRICA:**

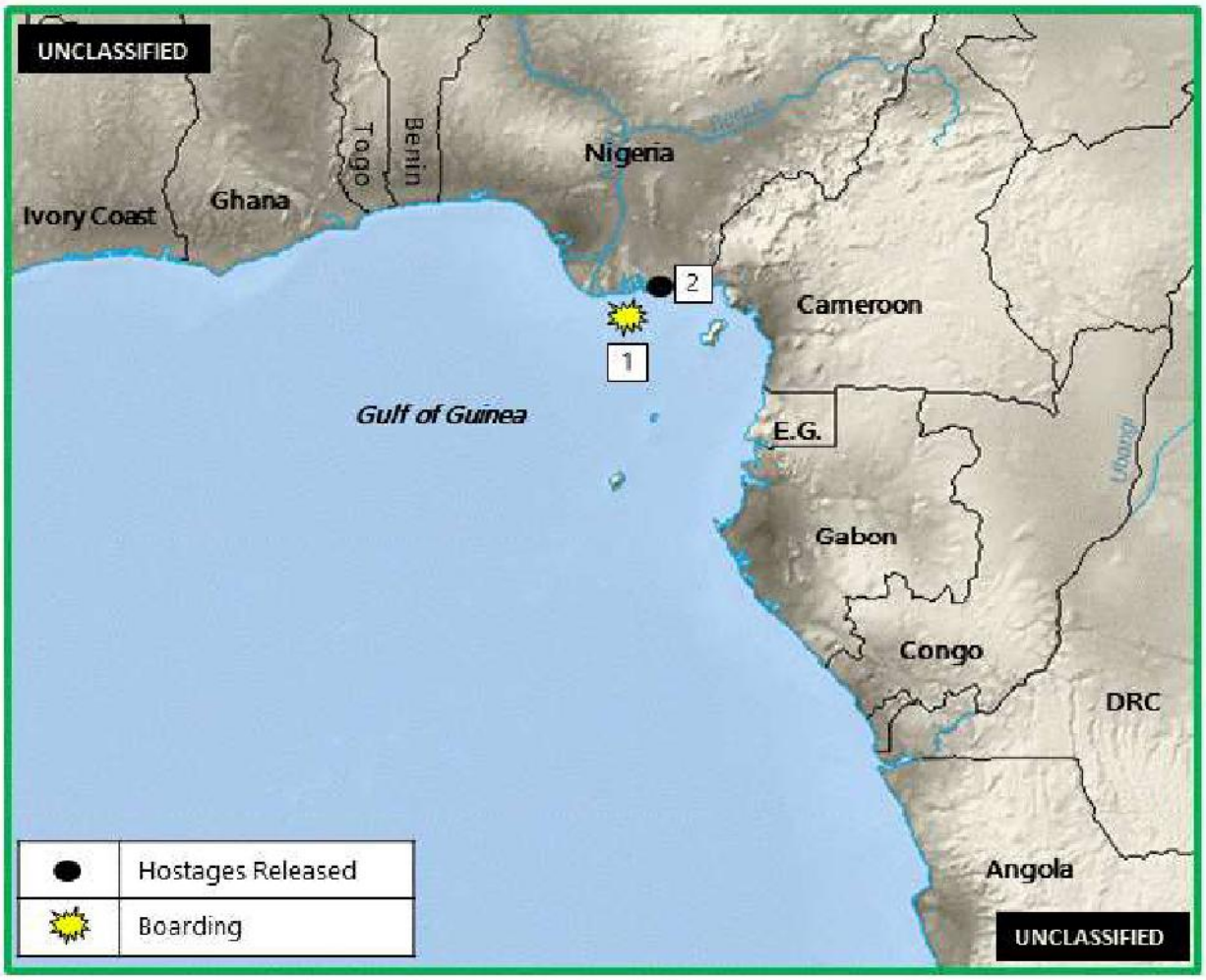


Figure 1. Gulf of Guinea Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) NIGERIA: On 4 November, five persons boarded a Panama-flagged product tanker NAFELI II approximately 95 NM south of Brass, near position 02:43N - 006:03E. Reporting stated the vessel was drifting. The shipping Company Security Officer and regional organizations were unable to communicate with the vessel. Local authorities have been informed of this incident. An updated report indicated pirates boarded the tanker and crew members were able to retreat to the citadel. The pirates disembarked the tanker after destroying bridge equipment. The tanker is continuing to her next port of call. (Clearwater Dynamics, Dryad Global)

2. (U) NIGERIA: On 31 October, two Russian sailors, captured by pirates from the reefer WATER PHOENIX off the coast of Nigeria in early September 2020, were released, a Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson said. The captain and the chief officer were abducted in the Gulf of Guinea on 8 September. "They have been brought to the city of Lagos, where they will undergo a medical evaluation," according to the spokesperson. (Analyst comment: two crew were held 53 days in captivity.) (Interfax)

3. (U) ANGOLA: On 26 October, five robbers in a wooden boat came alongside an offshore supply vessel anchored in the Luanda Anchorage at position 08:44S - 013:17E and attempted to board the vessel. When the duty officer noticed one of the robbers attempting to board the ship, he raised the alarm. The robbers subsequently departed the area in their boat. The crew reported the incident to port authorities. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics)

4. (U) NIGERIA: On 22 October, pirates boarded a tanker 105 NM south of Lagos near position 04:38N - 003:28E. Once onboard, the pirates ransacked crew cabins and destroyed bridge equipment while the crew sheltered in the citadel. The Nigeria Navy responded to the call for assistance and escorted the tanker to Lagos following the boarding. (Clearwater Dynamics)

5. (U) CONGO: On 19 October, robbers boarded a container vessel anchored near position 04:45S - 011:55E, Pointe Noire Anchorage. A number of robbers were spotted on the forecastle of the vessel by the crew, who then retreated to the citadel and alerted the authorities. A patrol vessel was then dispatched and an inspection was conducted. The crew carried out a search of the vessel and noticed that two mooring ropes were missing. It is believed that the robbers managed to board the vessel via the anchor chain. (Clearwater Dynamics)

6. (U) TOGO: On 17 October, the Hong Kong-flagged tanker PTI NILE was attacked and boarded by pirates while underway near position 04:16N - 001:24E, 112 NM south-southeast of Lome. All crew managed to retreat into the citadel. Togo Navy was notified and a patrol vessel was dispatched to the location. The Togo Navy team boarded the tanker and a search was carried out. Once deemed safe, the crew emerged from the citadel, and the tanker was escorted to a safe port. All crew were reported safe. (IMB; MDAT-GoG; Dryad Global; Clearwater Dynamics)

7. (U) EQUATORIAL GUINEA: On 17 October, pirates boarded the Marshall Islands-flagged LNG tanker METHANE PRINCESS near position 03:47N - 008:41E, Punta Europa Anchorage. The vessel was attacked shortly after completing loading operations. The alarm was sounded and all crew on deck were able to retreat to the citadel. Two Filipino nationals were on the jetty and both were taken hostage, but one of the hostages jumped off the pirate vessel and was rescued, sustaining injuries. Another person was also injured entering the citadel. Equatorial Guinea Navy assets and personnel arrived on scene and started an investigation. (Dryad Global; Clearwater Dynamics)

8. (U) GHANA: On 28 August at 0730LT, six to eight pirates in a speedboat attacked and boarded the underway Ghana-flagged fishing vessel AP703 110 NM southeast of Tema at position 04:34N - 001:31E. Pirates kidnapped the vessel's South Korean Captain and Chief Engineer. The remaining crew took the vessel to Tema, where local authorities are investigating the incident. (Clearwater Dynamics, Dryad Global, IMB) UPDATE: On 17 October, pirates reportedly released both hostages after 43 days in captivity. (Clearwater Dynamics)

9. (U) GUINEA: On 15 October, ten persons armed with guns and knives boarded a bulk carrier anchored near position 09:22N - 013:44W, Conakry Anchorage. The crew raised the alarm, activated Ship Security Alert System (SSAS) and informed authorities. The robbers ransacked all crew cabins and escaped with cash and the crew's personal belongings. A Coast Guard vessel came alongside and remained with the ship until daybreak. (Clearwater Dynamics)

10. (U) GUINEA: On 15 October, an anchored tanker reported a suspicious approach near position 09:16N - 013:46W, 20 NM off Conakry, Guinea. A fishing boat with four armed persons onboard approached the tanker to within 1 NM. The Guinean naval armed guards onboard fired warning shots which resulted in the fishing vessel aborting the approach. The vessel and crew are reported as safe. (Clearwater Dynamics)

11. (U) NIGERIA: On 9 October, during heavy rain, armed robbers in two boats approached a product tanker berthed near position 03:26N - 003:22E, Apapa Bulk Terminal Ltd. Lagos Port, while engaged in cargo operations. The deck crew raised the alarm upon detecting the robbers. The discharging operations were suspended, all access doors were locked, and crew mustered in the citadel. The crew informed port control via VHF CH12. Upon hearing the alarm, the robbers fled empty-handed. A Nigerian Navy officer subsequently boarded the tanker to investigate. (IMB)

G. (U) **ARABIAN GULF:** No current incidents to report.

H. (U) **INDIAN OCEAN - EAST AFRICA - RED SEA:**

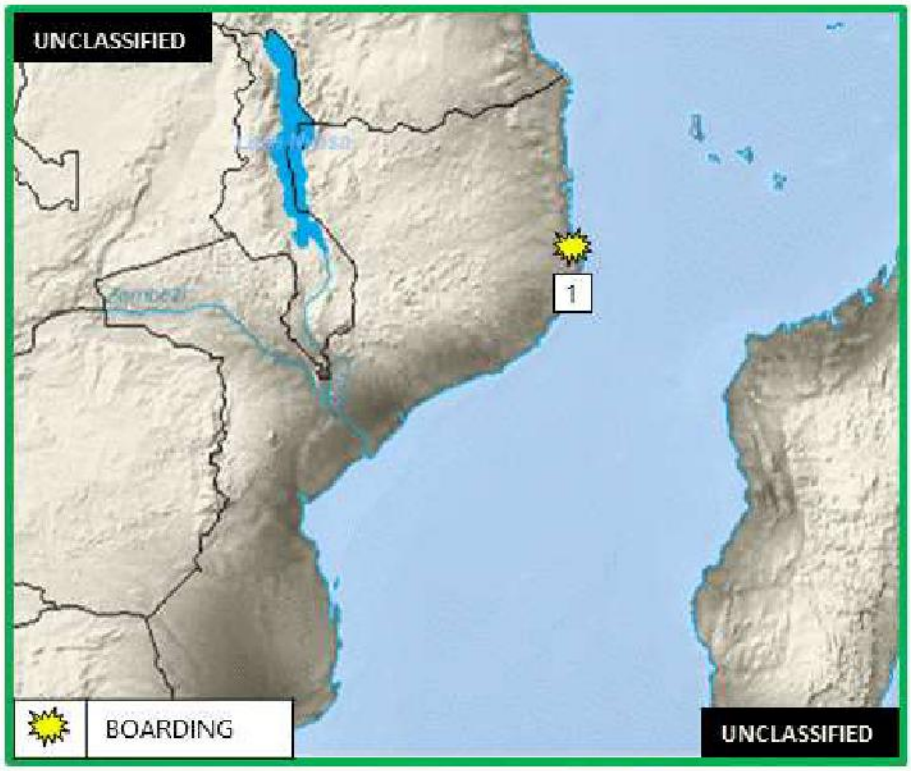


Figure 2. Indian Ocean – East Africa – Red Sea Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) MOZAMBIQUE: On 2 November, five robbers armed with long knives boarded an anchored bulk carrier near position 14:22S - 040:42E, Nacala Anchorage. They boarded the ship using hooks attached with ropes and broke into the paint locker. Duty crewman on routine rounds saw the robbers and alerted the duty officer and retreated into the accommodation area. The alarm was raised and crew was mustered. The robbers stole ship's stores and escaped. Local agents informed. (IMB)

2. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 29 October, a skiff approached a commercial vessel approximately 33 NM northeast of Point Alpha, International Recommended Transit Corridor near position 12:00N - 045:32E. When the skiff approached to within 0.8 NM of the vessel, the onboard armed security team showed their weapons. The skiff altered course and continued on a parallel course 1 NM from the vessel for 50 minutes before changing course to the south and heading towards Somalia. (Clearwater Dynamics)

3. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 14 October, Royal Navy warship HMS MONTROSE searched a stateless dhow and seized 450 kilograms of amphetamine. It is believed to be the largest haul of the drug made by the Combined Maritime Force Operation Ocean Shield, established to disrupt drug smuggling and piracy in the region. (www.middleeastmonitor.com)

4. (U) MYANMAR: On 12 October, Bangladesh Coast Guard personnel detained five alleged Myanmar robbers and rescued seven kidnapped fishermen during a raid in the Bay of Bengal. During the operation, two single-barreled guns, eight rounds of ammunition, ten long knives, and one engine boat were also seized. (www.daily-sun.com)

I. (U) **EAST ASIA - SOUTHEAST ASIA:**

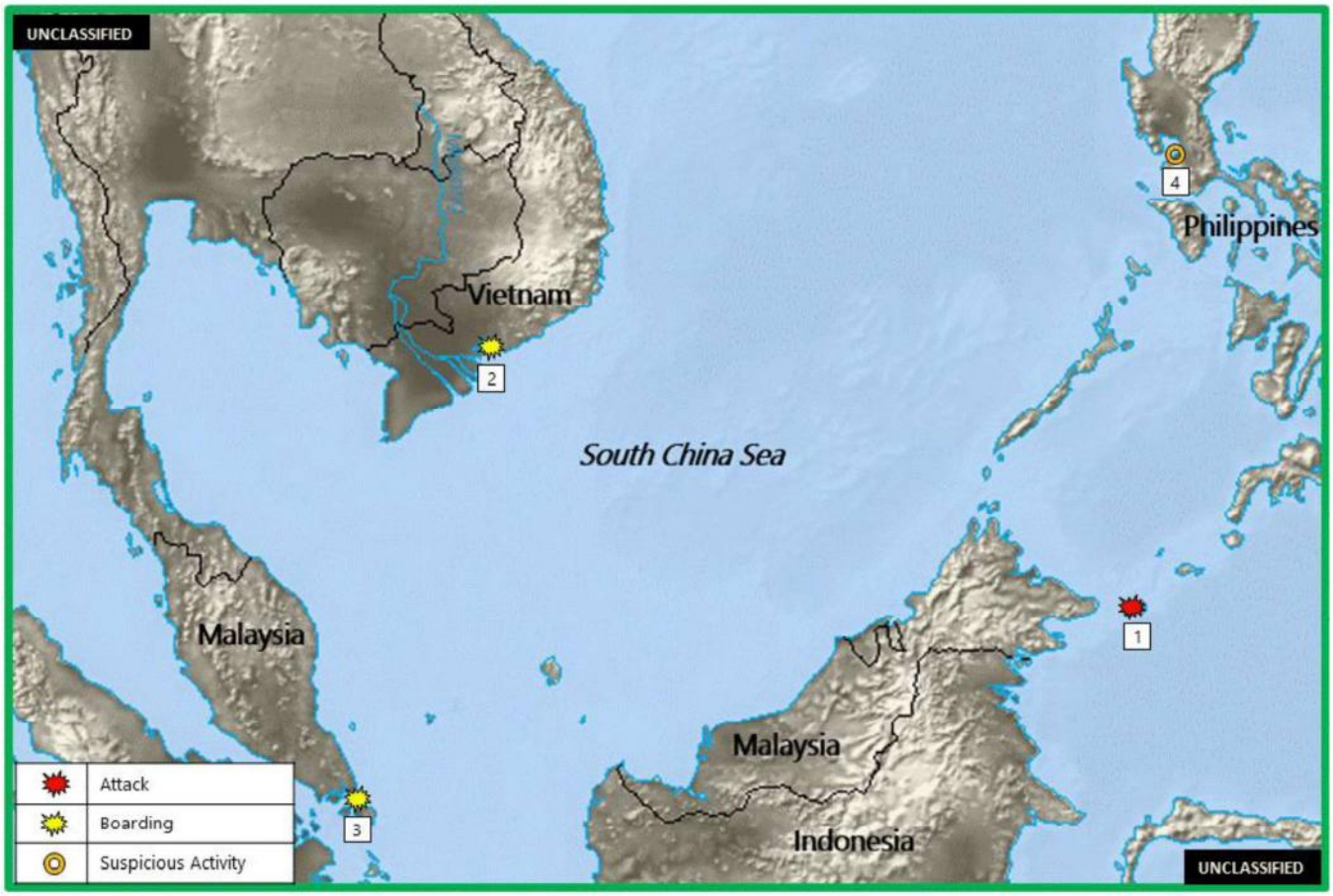


Figure 3. East Asia – Southeast Asia Area Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 3 November, seven alleged members of Abu Sayyaf Group in a speedboat were intercepted by Joint Task Force Sulu and killed during a clash with government troops in the Sulu Sea. The Western Mindanao Command said the group was conducting kidnap-for-ransom activities under the watch of Sawadjaan and Abu Sayyaf leader Radullan Sahiron. (CNN)

2. (U) VIETNAM: On 30 October, the bosun onboard the Singapore-flagged bulk carrier HANYANG discovered that the padlock of masthouse No. 1 was broken while underway near position 10:45N - 106:43E, Ho Chi Minh City. Upon investigation, spares for the ship anchor were missing. No perpetrators were found. The ship's Company Security Officer was informed. (ReCAAP)

3. INDONESIA: On 25 October, the master onboard a bulk carrier underway received a call from the Vessel Traffic Information System which indicated that the vessel may have been boarded by armed robbers near position 01:15N - 104:08E. Master immediately raised the alarm and made an announcement on the speaker system. As the crew searched the accommodation and engine room areas, the 4th engineer was confronted by the perpetrators and managed to escape. The crew secured the accommodation and engine room areas. The master was advised to drop anchor off Pulau Batam where the Indonesian Navy boarded the vessel to investigate. The vessel was searched but no perpetrators were found onboard, after which the vessel resumed its voyage. (IMB)

4. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 16 October, customs authorities in the port of Manila intercepted a consignment of luxury cars being smuggled into the country inside a shipping container. The Bureau of Customs reported that the container arrived at the Manila International Container Port on 16 October aboard a vessel from Kobe, Japan. The

importer declared the contents of the container as furniture. The container was held at the terminal and the port's Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service reported that the illegal cars were discovered upon verification through a profiling and examination effort. Officials said that the shipping container was concealing a Porsche sports car, a Bentley luxury car, a Mercedes Benz sports car, and parts from a Volkswagen. The contents of the container were seized at the MICP on 20 October. The value of the smuggled luxury automobiles was estimated at more than $400,000. (www.maritime-executive.com)

5. (U) MALAYSIA: On 28 October, a robber using a bamboo pole boarded the Panama-flagged tanker SG FRIENDSHIP anchored in the Dumai Anchorage at position 01:42N - 101:28E. The robber fled in a waiting boat with three individuals after being detected by a duty crewman. The crew reported the incident to the local agent. (Clearwater Dynamics)

6. (U) INDONESIA: On 26 October, a speedboat attempted to come alongside a bulk carrier in the Singapore Strait near position 01:14N - 104:07E. When the crew raised the alarm and turned on the deck lights, the speedboat departed the area. (IMB)

7. (U) INDONESIA: On 26 October, five robbers boarded the Liberia-flagged bulk carrier A RACER underway in the Singapore Strait near position 01:14N - 104:04E. The robbers disembarked empty-handed. (ReCAAP, Clearwater Dynamics)

8. (U) INDONESIA: On 26 October, three robbers boarded the Cyprus-flagged bulk carrier EL MATADOR in the Singapore Strait near position 01:14N - 114:10E. The crew managed to lock the robbers in the engine room and notify the Indonesian Navy. However, when the Indonesian Navy boarding team arrived, they discovered the robbers had managed to escape. Nothing was stolen during the boarding. (ReCAAP, Clearwater Dynamics)

9. (U) INDONESIA: On 25 October, five robbers armed with knives boarded the underway Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier SEAJOURNEY in the Singapore Strait near position 01:15N – 104:05.8E. The duty crewman raised the alarm after noticing the robbers in the engine storeroom. The robbers fled with engine spares after seeing the crew response. The crew notified the Singapore VTS. (IMB; ReCAAP, Clearwater Dynamics)

10. (U) MALAYSIA: On 14 October, robbers boarded the Liberia-flagged bulk carrier IAN M underway near position 01:17N - 104:20E, in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait Traffic Separation Scheme. Upon detecting the robbers, the master notified the Port Operations Control Center via VHF. A full search of the vessel was conducted by the crew, which confirmed that the robbers had escaped with a life ring and some welding rods. (ReCAAP, Clearwater Dynamics)

11. (U) INDONESIA: On 13 October, robbers boarded the Singapore-flagged chemical tanker FSL NEW YORK underway near position 01:16N - 104:15E, in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait Traffic Separation Scheme. Upon spotting the robbers, the master notified the Port Operations Control Center. A full search was conducted by the crew, which confirmed the perpetrators were no longer onboard and that nothing had been stolen. (ReCAAP, Clearwater Dynamics)

12. (U) INDONESIA: On 11 October, robbers boarded the Iran-flagged bulk carrier GANJ near position 01:16N - 104:13E, in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait Traffic Separation Scheme. The master of the bulk carrier reported to the Port Operations Control Centre via VHF channel 10 that robbers had been able to board the vessel. The crew conducted a full search of the vessel, but were unable to locate the robbers. Nothing was reported stolen. (Clearwater Dynamics)

J. (U) **INDIAN SUBCONTINENT:** No current incidents to report.

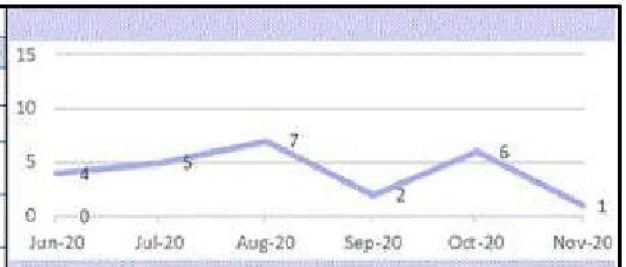
K. (U) **AUSTRALIA - NEW ZEALAND - PACIFIC OCEAN AREA:**

1. (U) AUSTRALIA: On 16 October, authorities in Sydney arrested a man for his alleged involvement in a plot to import a large consignment of cocaine into the country. The shipment was intercepted by a joint Australian Federal Police-Australian Border Force operation when it came into Sydney in September. During a search, authorities found 552 kilograms of cocaine concealed in a shipment of banana pulp from Brazil. (www.smh.com.au)

5. (U) **Appendix A: Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea Statistics and Trends**:

(U) Gulf of Guinea

Event	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Hijackings	0	2	6	4	1
Kidnappings	26	30	28	32	20
Hijacking/Kidnapping Combination	3	0	4	2	3
Attacks/Attempted Boardings	54	35	44	39	19
Boardings	39	53	64	55	30
Total	**122**	**120**	**146**	**132**	**73**



(U) Horn of Africa

Event	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Hijackings	0	2	0	0	0
Kidnappings	0	1	0	0	0
Attacks, Boardings and Attempts	1	3	2	2	0
Total	**1**	**6**	**2**	**2**	**0**

(U) Southeast Asia

Event	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Hijackings	2	3	1	0	0
Kidnappings	19	4	3	4	1
Attacks, Boardings and Attempts	96	95	82	92	82
Total	**117**	**102**	**86**	**96**	**83**

6. (U) **Appendix B: Definitions and Sourcing**:

A. (U) **Definitions:** In order to promote consistent use of accurate terms of reference, we use the following definitions to describe a range of criminal anti-shipping activity and impediments to safe navigation in our worldwide reporting and analysis:

- (U) **Attempted Boarding** – Close approach or hull-to-hull contact with report that boarding paraphernalia were employed or visible in the approaching boat.
- (U) **Blocking** – Hampering safe navigation, docking, or undocking of a vessel as a means of protest.
- (U) **Boarding** – Unauthorized embarkation of a vessel by persons not part of its complement without successfully taking control of the vessel.
- (U) **Fired Upon** – Weapons discharged at or toward a vessel.
- (U) **Hijacking –** Unauthorized seizure and retention of a vessel by persons not part of its complement.

- (U) **Kidnapping** – Unauthorized forcible removal of persons belonging to the vessel from it.
- (U) **Hijacking/Kidnapping Combination** – Unauthorized seizure and retention of a vessel by persons not part of its complement who forcefully remove crew members from vessel when disembarking.
- (U) **Robbery** – Theft from a vessel or from persons aboard the vessel.
- (U) **Suspicious Approach** – All other unexplained activity in close proximity of an unknown vessel.

B. (U) **Sourcing:** ONI derives information in this report primarily from government agencies, piracy reporting centers, maritime security companies, and open press.

(U) **ICOD:** 5 November 2020

(U) The Weekly Piracy Update (WPU) and Worldwide Threat to Shipping reports are posted weekly on the ONI Intelligence Portal: https://www.oni.navy.mil/News/Shipping-Threat-Reports/