UNCLASSIFIED

(U) WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report, 14 April – 12 May 2021

12 May 2021

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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:** No active warnings or advisories.

3. (U) **Summary:**

A. (U) INDONESIA: On 9 May, five robbers attempted to board the underway Greece-flagged tanker ASTRO PERSEUS in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait Traffic Separation Scheme.

B. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 7 May, a U.S. Navy cruiser stopped and searched a stateless dhow in the northern Arabian Sea. According to a U.S. Navy 5th Fleet spokesperson, a large weapons cache was found during the search.

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 that 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) PERU: On 3 May, four robbers boarded an anchored product tanker at Callao Anchorage, near position 11:59S – 077:12W at 19:30 local time. The robbers were armed with knives and took a duty crewman hostage, tying him up before stealing the crew member's personal belongings and ship's properties. The robbers then made their escape. The tied-up crew member was later found and the alarm was raised. The owners and port authorities were informed of the incident. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) SAINT MARTIN: On 26 April, a robber boarded an unlocked yacht in Marigot Bay and stole a variety of personal electronics. It is not known if a police report was made. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

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

D. (U) **NORTHERN EUROPE** – **BALTIC:** No current incidents to report.

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

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

1. (U) LIBERIA: On 2 May, at least one robber boarded a container ship moored in Monrovia Port, near position 06:20N – 010:48W at 03:30 local time. A duty crewman discovered one intruder jumping overboard. A search revealed that some ship's properties had been stolen. (Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) ANGOLA: On 29 April, two robbers boarded a container ship anchored in Luanda Anchorage, near position 08:41S – 013:17E at 02:00 local time. Ship's horn was sounded, crew was mustered and a search of the ship was conducted. The Incident was reported to port authorities and a patrol boat was dispatched to investigate. Nothing reported stolen. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics)

3. (U) SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE: On 23 April, pirates boarded a container ship underway approximately 132 NM northwest of Neves, near position 01:27N – 004:38E. The alarm was raised and all crew mustered in the citadel. Owners and authorities were notified and an Italian Navy frigate proceeded to intervene. The pirates boarded the ship but left after a few hours as they were unable to gain access to any crew. The Italian Navy frigate escorted the ship towards its destination. All crew are safe. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics)

4. (U) NIGERIA: On 21 April, a tanker reported a suspicious approach by a small vessel approximately 202 NM southwest of Brass Port, near position 01:10N – 004:57E at 12:05 local time. (Clearwater Dynamics)

5. (U) NIGERIA: On 21 April, MDAT-GoG reported that a suspicious vessel was sighted 165 NM south of Lagos, near position 03:41N – 003:33E at 09:39 local time. Naval assets in the area reported that one small boat with eight persons and ladders onboard is suspected of being involved in piracy operations. (Clearwater Dynamics)

6. (U) NIGERIA: On 20 April, a single skiff approached a container ship approximately 200 NM south of Lagos, Nigeria, near position 03:01N – 003:16E at 18:58 local time. The skiff closed to within 0.5 NM of the vessel but was unable to carry out a boarding due to evasive maneuvers carried out by the master. (Clearwater Dynamics)

7. (U) NIGERIA: On 15 April, pirates released the 15 crew members of oil tanker DAVIDE B, who were kidnapped 11 March off the coast of Benin. The crew could have been held for as many as 35 days in captivity. According to the Dutch shipping company De Poli, the crew members are "in a relatively good health considering the difficult circumstances they have been in the past few weeks." They have undergone medical checks and are being repatriated to their home countries. (www.swzmaritime.nl; Clearwater Dynamics)

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

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

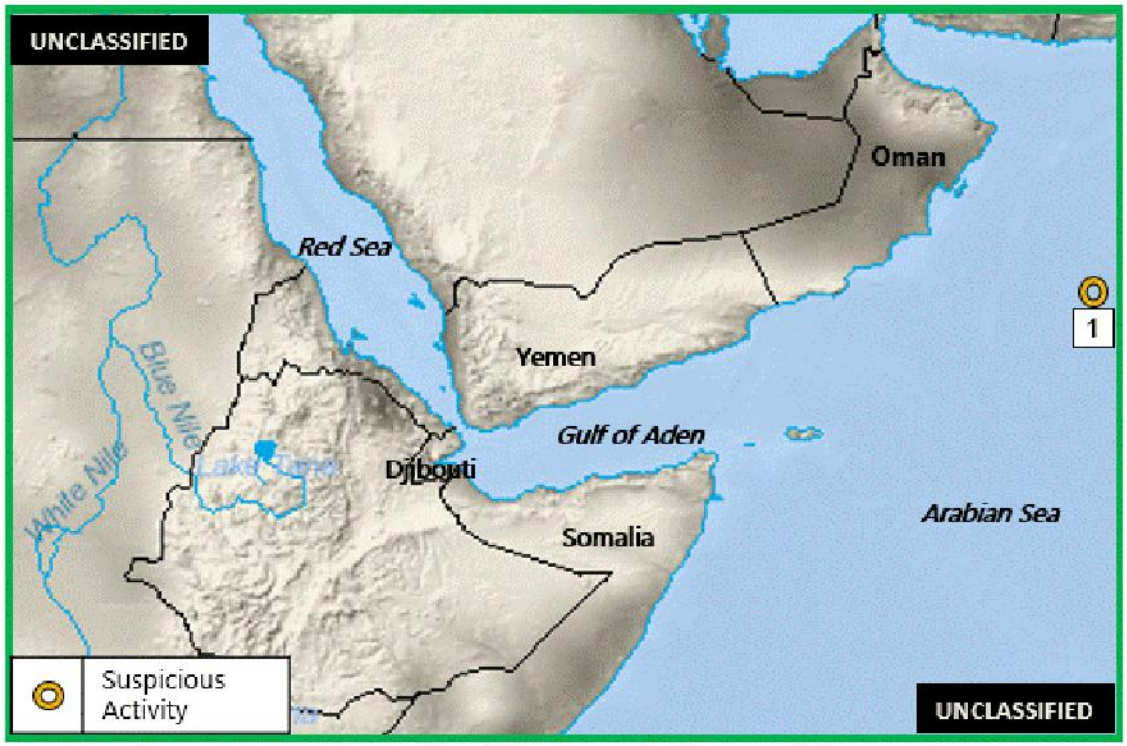


Figure 1. Indian Ocean – East Africa – Red Sea Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 7 May, a U.S. Navy cruiser stopped and searched a stateless dhow in the northern Arabian Sea. According to a U.S. Navy 5th Fleet spokesperson, a large weapons cache was found during the search. "The cache of weapons included dozens of advanced Russian-made anti-tank guided missiles, thousands of Chinese Type 56 assault rifles, and hundreds of PKM machine guns, sniper rifles and rocket-propelled grenade launchers. Other weapon components included advanced optical sights," (Reuters)

2. (U) RED SEA: On 3 May, a vessel reported a suspicious approach approximately 60 NM west of Al Hudaydah, Yemen, near position 15:04N – 041:56E. The vessel was approached by two small crafts with six people onboard and came to within 15 meters of the vessel. All crew are reported as safe. (Clearwater Dynamics)

3. (U) RED SEA: On 27 April, Saudi forces reported that a bomb boat had been intercepted and destroyed near the port of Yanbu. The spokesman for the Saudi Ministry of Defense said that Saudi marine units had destroyed a "remotely piloted and booby-trapped boat" in the Red Sea near Yanbu. United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) said in a brief statement that it was aware of reports of an incident about two nautical miles off Yanbu and was investigating, but did not provide further details. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; www.maritime-executive.com; www.english.alaraby.co.uk/english)

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

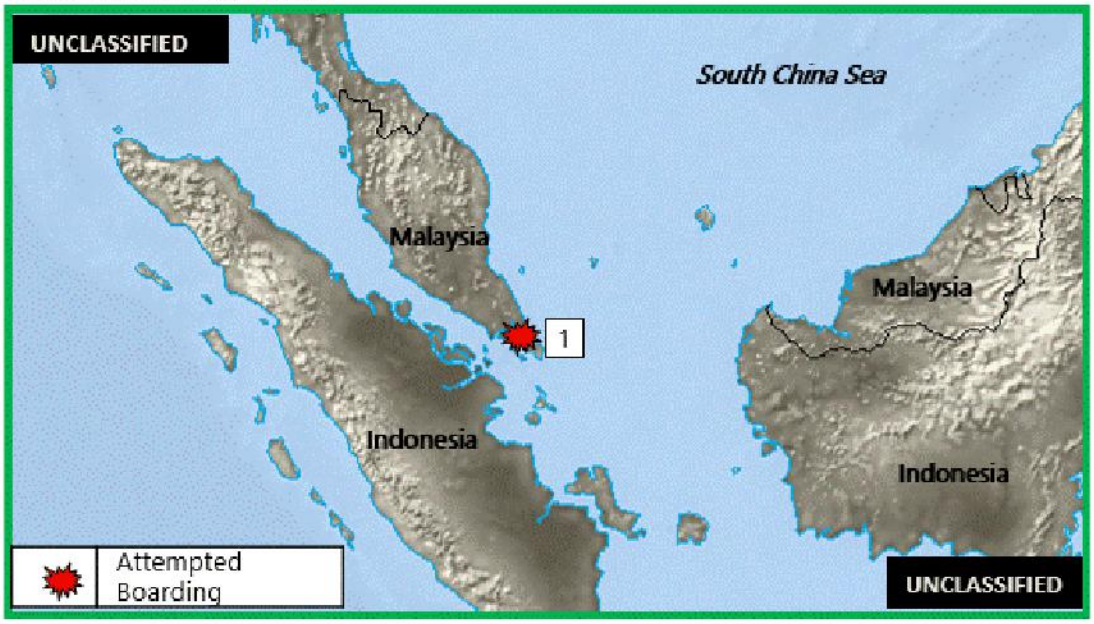


Figure 2. East Asia – Southeast Asia Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) INDONESIA: On 9 May, five robbers attempted to board the underway Greece-flagged tanker ASTRO PERSEUS in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait Traffic Separation Scheme, near position 01:14N – 104:02E. A search of the ship was conducted, which confirmed that there were no perpetrators onboard and nothing was stolen. A hook attached to a rope was found on the stern of the vessel. (IMB: Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 20 April, robbers boarded the barge BAK DA 55, towed by the Mongolia-flagged tug BAK DA 5 while anchored at South Harbor Anchorage, Manila, near position 14:33N – 014:56E at 02:55 local time. Five robbers were spotted transferring timber from the barge to a motor boat. The duty security guard raised the alarm, causing the perpetrators to jump overboard. A search was completed by the master and crew which resulted in the rescue of one robber from the water. The port state control and Philippine coast guard were informed of the incident and a vessel was dispatched to the location, resulting in the arrest of the perpetrator who had been rescued. It was reported that some cargo items had been stolen by the remaining perpetrators, including oil, and twenty-seven pieces of timber. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics)

3. (U) INDONESIA: On 17 April, robbers boarded a tanker while underway in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) in the Singapore Strait near position 01:16N – 104:12E at 01:40 local time. The duty engineer conducting rounds discovered a person attempting to gain access to the steering gear room from the poop deck. The alarm was raised, all deck and accommodation lighting was switched on, and the crew were mustered. Upon hearing the alarm, the perpetrator managed to escape empty-handed. (IMB)

4. (U) INDONESIA: On 17 April, four robbers boarded the Isle of Man-flagged bulk carrier IONNA L underway in the eastbound lane of the TSS in the Singapore Strait, 6.8 NM northwest of Bintan Island, near position 01:16N – 104:14E at 05:00 local time. The robbers boarded the bulk carrier and assaulted the fourth engineer. The alarm was raised and the crew mustered, which resulted in the perpetrators escaping with stolen engine spares. The incident was reported to the Vessel Traffic Information Service. (Clearwater Dynamics; IMB)

J. (U) **INDIAN SUBCONTINENT:**

1. (U) BANGLADESH: On 27 April, Bangladesh Coast Guard personnel rescued 30 Rohingya refugees adrift in the Bay of Bengal for two days following a pirate attack. A Bangladesh Coast Guard spokesman stated that the boat departed from near the camps in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar district on 23 April, carrying 20 women, 5 men and 5

children. According to the spokesman, pirates attacked the boat on 25 April, taking all valuables from the refugees and crippling the boat's engine before leaving. (www.channelnewsasia.com)

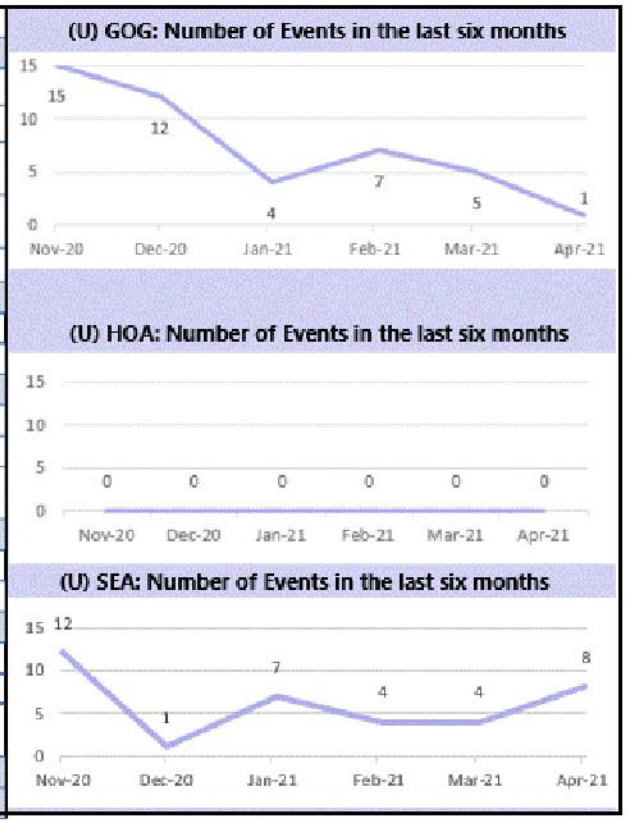
K. (U) **AUSTRALIA – NEW ZEALAND – PACIFIC OCEAN AREA:** No current incidents to report.

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

(U) Gulf of Guinea					
Event	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Hijackings	2	6	4	1	0
Kidnappings	30	28	32	27	4
Hijacking/Kidnapping Combination	0	4	2	3	1
Attacks/Attempted Boardings	35	44	39	25	3
Boardings	53	64	55	42	9
Total	**120**	**146**	**132**	**98**	**17**

(U) Horn of Africa					
Event	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Hijackings	2	0	0	0	0
Kidnappings	1	0	0	0	0
Attacks, Boardings and Attempts	3	2	2	2	0
Total	**6**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**0**

(U) Southeast Asia					
Event	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Hijackings	3	1	0	0	0
Kidnappings	4	3	4	1	0
Attacks, Boardings and Attempts	95	80	92	94	23
Total	**102**	**84**	**96**	**95**	**23**



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 antishipping 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:** 12 May 2021

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