



UNCLASSIFIED

(U) **WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report** **12 March – 8 April 2020**



9 April 2020

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1. (U) **Scope Note**

1. (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 new advisories/warnings.

3. (U) **Summary:**

A. (U) NIGERIA: On 6 April, robbers boarded and stole goods from a passenger vessel 17 NM south of Port Harcourt.

B. (U) MEXICO: On 4 April, armed individuals in a boat fired upon a pipe laying vessel 13 NM northwest of Puerto de Dos Bocas, Mexico.

C. (U) VENEZUELA: On 30 March, the Venezuelan Coast Guard patrol ship NAIGUATA collided with the Portugal-flagged cruise ship RCGS RESOLUTE off La Tortuga Island.

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:



Figure 1. North America Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) MEXICO: On 4 April, eight armed individuals in a boat approached a pipe laying vessel at high speed 13 NM northwest of Puerto de Dos Bocas, State of Tabasco in position 18:37N - 093:19W. The crew sounded the alarm, locked down the accommodation area, and mustered. As the boat approached the stern of the pipe laying vessel, the armed men fired at the vessel. The master was able to use the vessel's thrusters to prevent the boat from coming alongside. The armed persons subsequently abandoned their approach and departed the area. The crew notified port control via VHF radio of the incident and a patrol boat was dispatched to the location. (IMB, Clearwater Dynamics)

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

Figure 2. South America Piracy and Maritime Crime

(U) VENEZUELA: On 20 March shortly after midnight, the Venezuela Coast Guard patrol ship NAIGUATÁ approached and contacted the Portugal-flagged cruise ship RCGS RESOLUTE via radio questioning its intentions. At the time, RCGS RESOLUTE was in international waters off Venezuela's La Tortuga Island conducting routine engine maintenance prior to its arrival at Willemstad, Curaçao. NAIGUATÁ instructed RESOLUTE to follow it to Puerto Moreno on Isla De Margarita, a Venezuelan port. While the master was in contact with the head office, gun shots were fired and, shortly thereafter, NAIGUATÁ approached at speed the cruise ship's starboard side with an angle of 135 degrees, and purposely collided with the ice strengthened (steel reinforced) hull. The coast guard ship continued to ram the starboard bow in an apparent attempt to turn RESOLUTE's heading toward Venezuelan territorial waters. NAIGUATÁ subsequently began to take on water and sank. The cruise ship informed the international Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) of the incident and offered to assist. After one hour, RCGS RESOLUTE was informed by MRCC that assistance was not required as NAIGUATÁ's 32-crew members had been rescued by the Venezuelan Navy. RCGS RESOLUTE reportedly sustained only minor damage during the incident. (gCaptain, Columbia Cruise Services)

2. (U) BRAZIL: On 17 March at approximately 0330 UTC, robbers boarded an anchored bulk carrier in Macapa Anchorage at 06:55N - 050:52W. A crewman on routine rounds noticed a small boat near the bow and notified the officer on watch (OOW). When the crewman went to investigate, robbers took him hostage. The OOW noticed movement near the forecastle, was unable to reach the crewman on his walkie-talkie, and raised the alarm. The crew mustered to respond. The robbers subsequently fled with the crewman's walkie-talkie and ship's stores. (IMB)

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:

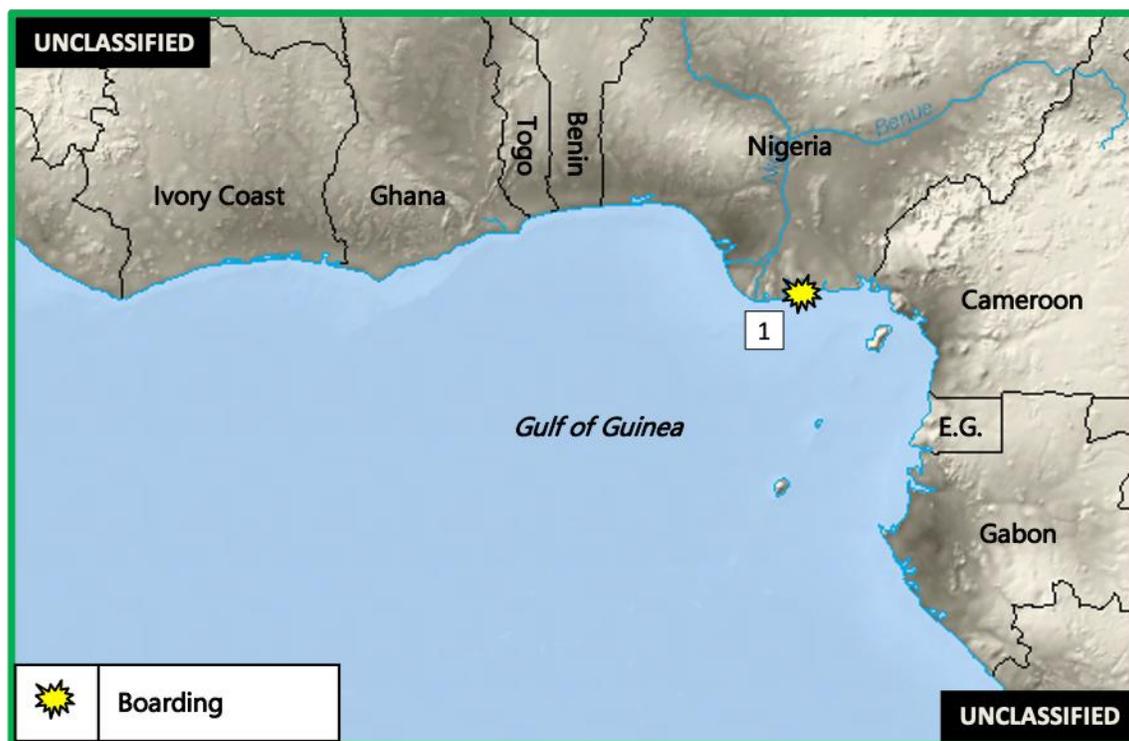


Figure 3. Gulf of Guinea Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) NIGERIA: On 6 April at 1230LT, armed robbers from a speedboat boarded an underway passenger vessel 17 NM south of Port Harcourt near 04:28N - 007:03E. The robbers stole goods worth millions of Nigerian naira. All passengers are safe. (Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) NIGERIA: On 27 March at 0700 UTC, ten pirates armed with AK47s in a speedboat fired upon a cargo vessel approximately 98 NM south of Bonny Island at 02:45N - 006:55E. When the cargo vessel's armed guards responded, the pirates departed the area. (Clearwater Dynamics, MDAT-GoG)

3. (U) BENIN: On 26 March at 0820 UTC, a speedboat with up to five individuals onboard approach an underway tanker approximately 21 NM south-southwest of Cotonou at position 05:59N - 002:21E. The tanker crew observed no weapons on the speedboat, but did see some hooks. The tanker increased speed and undertook evasive maneuvers. After 30 minutes, the speedboat ceased its pursuit. (Clearwater Dynamics, MDAT-GoG)

4. (U) NIGERIA: On 25 March at 1630LT, an unidentified craft suspiciously followed a merchant vessel approximately 180 NM southwest of Brass at 02:27N - 004:01E. (MDAT-GoG)

5. (U) NIGERIA: On 25 March at 1005 UTC, seven pirates in a black speedboat attempted to board a bulk carrier in position 03:07N - 005:35E approximately 75 NM southwest of Brass Nigeria. Master activated SSAS alert, increased speed, and commenced evasive maneuvers which resulted in the pirates abandoning their attempt to board. (MDAT-GoG, IMB)

6. (U) GABON: On 22 March at 1115 UTC, pirates kidnapped seven Ukrainians from the Portugal-flagged container vessel MSC TALIA F approximately 62 NM west of Libreville at 00:33N - 008:25E. The remaining 10 crew members are believed to have taken refuge in the vessel's citadel. The vessel was transiting from Lomé, Togo, to Libreville at the time of boarding. (MDAT-GoG, Maritime Executive, Maritime Bulletin, IMB)

7. (U) GABON: On 21 March, pirates attacked and hijacked the Equatorial Guinea-flagged coastal RO-RO passenger vessel ELOBEY 6 approximately 22 NM from Port Gentil. Pirates forced the crew to sail to Nigerian waters and fled with three hostage crew members (2 Moroccans, 1 Equatorial Guinean) when approached by a Nigerian Navy vessel. The ELOBEY 6 was subsequently escorted to Equatorial Guinean waters. (Maritime Bulletin, Fleetmon)

8. (U) NIGERIA: On 19 March at 0045 UTC, a robber boarded a tanker 7 NM off Lagos at 06:18N - 003:21E. The robber fled with stolen cargo when a security team member fired warning shots and raised the alarm. A Nigerian Navy patrol boat was dispatched to investigate. (MDAT-GoG, IMB)

9. (U) CAMEROON: On 19 March at 2345 UTC, eight pirates in a boat attacked a merchant vessel approximately 22 NM from Douala at 03:40N - 009:25E. The pirates fled after exchanging fire with the security team. (MDAT-GoG)

10. (U) ANGOLA: On 15 March, two skiffs with four and six individuals onboard approached a supply vessel at anchorage 4 NM from Soyo at 06:04S - 009:25E. The alarm was raised and SSAS was activated. The skiffs subsequently changed their course and headed toward the Congo River. The port authorities were notified and a patrol boat was dispatched to the area. (MDAT-GoG)

G. (U) ARABIAN GULF:

1. (U) On 27 March at 1226 UTC, two skiffs with 5-6 people onboard made a suspicious approach on an eastbound tanker approximately 31 NM southeast of Kish, Iran, at position 26:11N 054:31E. The tanker took evasive measures. The tanker crew observed a raised a ladder during the incident. (UKMTO, Clearwater Dynamics)

H. (U) INDIAN OCEAN - EAST AFRICA - RED SEA: No current incidents to report.

I. (U) EAST ASIA - SOUTHEAST ASIA:

1. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 22 March in Batangas Port at 13:41N - 121:00E, a robber with a long knife boarded the berthed Panama-flagged product tanker AU LIBRA at the forecandle. When the crew raised the alarm, the robber fled. (IMB, ReCAAP)

2. (U) INDONESIA: On 16 March at 0510LT, three robbers were caught in the engine workshop of the Liberia-flagged bulk carrier SAM JAGUAR which was underway east of Pulau Karimun Kecil in vicinity of 01:08N - 103:31E. The crew turned over the three apprehended robbers to the Indonesian Navy for prosecution. No one was injured during the incident. The Singapore Navy and Police Coast Guard were also notified of the incident. (IFC MARSEC Weekly)

3. (U) INDONESIA: On 13 March at 2020LT, robbers boarded the Singapore-flagged container ship KOTA ANGGERIK while anchored at Belawan anchorage. The watchman on the forecandle detected one robber opening the bolts of the hawse pipe. Upon seeing the watchman and hearing the whistle, the robber reentered the hawse pipe and fled in a wooden boat. A second robber was observed jumping into the water from the anchor chain. A subsequent search of the vessel revealed nothing was stolen. The ship's master tried calling port control, but there was no response. (IFC MARSEC Weekly)

4. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 12 March at 0500LT, two crew members spotted robbers at the forecandle of the Singapore-flagged tanker ENDEAVOUR II anchored in General Santos Harbor at 06:05N - 125:12E. The robbers fled upon hearing the ship's alarm. The crew searched the vessel and found a broken padlock to the bosun's stores, but nothing was stolen. Port control was notified. (ReCAAP, IFC MARSEC Weekly)

J. INDIAN SUBCONTINENT:

1. (U) INDIA: On 25 March, four robbers boarded the Panama-flagged jack up barge NAASHI in-tow by the tugboat BATELEUR. The barge was destined for dismantling at Alang Anchorage at 21:24N - 072:20E. When the master raised the

alarm, the robbers fled. The crew informed the local Vessel Traffic Information Service, who in turn reported the incident to the Indian Coast Guard. The Coast Guard station at Pipavav requested a local marine police send a vessel to the location. Police and local agents continue to investigate. (ReCAAP, Clearwater Dynamics,)

L. (U) AUSTRALIA - NEW ZEALAND - PACIFIC OCEAN AREA: No current incidents to report.

5. (U) Appendix A: Further Contact Information and Resources

(U) This appendix provides contact information for the author of the WTS as well as other entities that can be contacted with maritime crime reports. It also lists other resources where the WTS is posted and where piracy and maritime crime incident information can be found.

(U) Contact

(U) Originator of this WTS report requests consumer feedback. Originator will incorporate all anti-shipping events and violence against the maritime industry into this weekly message where appropriate. To aid in our reporting, please add the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) to your normal corporate and organizational reporting requirements. The 24-hour watch can be reached at +1 (301) 669-4141.

(U) Other Resources

(U) This Worldwide Threat to Shipping Report is posted at the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency's Maritime Safety site: <http://msi.nga.mil/NGAPortal/MSI.portal>. The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) also publishes a live piracy report based on reporting from the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, listing all piracy and armed robbery incidents in the last ten days: <http://www.icc-ccs.org/>. The PAWW and WTS reports are posted weekly on the ONI Intel Portal: <https://www.oni.navy.mil/News/Shipping-Threat-Reports/>

6. (U) Appendix B: Terminology and Sourcing

(U) This appendix is provided to promote consistent use of accurate terms of reference in reporting and also identifies those references that were used to gather the information contained in this report. ONI welcomes comment and suggestions for addition or amendment.

(U) Terminology

(U) In order to promote consistent use of accurate terms of reference, the following have been adopted to describe the range of criminal anti-shipping activity and impediments to safe navigation in our worldwide reporting and analysis. Please note that these terms relate to observable activity and are independent of target vessel status and exclude actions by governmental powers in lawful pursuit of their authorities:

(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) 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.

(U) Sourcing

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

(U) ICOD: 8 April 2020

(U) The Weekly Threat to Shipping (WTS) reports are posted each week on the ONI Intel Portal and can be found at: <https://www.oni.navy.mil/News/Shipping-Threat-Reports/>