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(U) **WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report, 4 October–1 November 2023**



1 November 2023

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1. (U) **Scope Note**

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

2. (U) **Warnings, Advisories and Alerts:** See Appendix C for active advisories.

A. (U) U.S. Maritime Advisory 2023-014: Eastern Mediterranean Sea – Regional Conflict

Issued on: 26 October 2023. Issue: In light of current tensions and hostilities in the Eastern Mediterranean, there is an increased risk to commercial vessels operating in the region. Vessels operating in the Eastern Mediterranean are advised to exercise caution; conduct a risk assessment; review security measures; review current NATO Shipping Centre and coastal broadcast warnings; and incorporate appropriate protective measures into their vessel security plans. Vessels should ensure AIS is transmitting at all times (except when the master believes that continuing to operate AIS might compromise the safety or security of the ship) consistent with provisions of the International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and monitor VHF Channel 16. For maritime industry questions about this advisory, contact GMCC@uscg.mil. This advisory will automatically expire on 23 April 2024.

3. (U) **Summary:**

A. (U) MALAYSIA: On 27 October, five perpetrators armed with knives boarded a tanker underway in the Strait of Malacca.

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4. (U) 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 past 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: No current incidents to report.

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

D. (U) NORTHERN EUROPE – BALTIC:

1. (U) GERMANY: On the night of 6–7 October, an unknown number of robbers boarded the moored Switzerland-flagged passenger ship OLYMPIA on the Moselle River close to its confluence with the Rhine River in the city of Koblenz, near position 50:21N – 007:35E, and took the ship's 50-kg copper bell, secured with a lock, from the upper deck. Further damage occurred when the perpetrators broke into the ship's interior and stole other ship's properties. The Koblenz water police are investigating the incident. (vesseltracker.com)

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

F. (U) WEST AFRICA – GULF OF GUINEA: No current incidents to report.

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

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

1. (U) YEMEN: On 5 October at 1200 local time, as many as 10 small craft approached an underway merchant vessel to within 50 to 100 meters in the Gulf of Aden, approximately 59 NM southeast of Aden, near position 11:57N – 045:25E. The vessel's crew observed ladders onboard two of the boats. The ship raised the alarm and notified authorities. The small craft continued to follow for 15 minutes, then turned away. Crew and vessel were reported safe. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

I. (U) EAST ASIA – SOUTHEAST ASIA:



(U) Figure 1. East Asia – Southeast Asia Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea

1. (U) MALAYSIA: On 27 October at 0430 local time, five perpetrators armed with knives boarded the underway Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier MERCHIA in the Strait of Malacca, near position 01:24N – 103:03E. The master was stabbed in the chest after discovering the perpetrators. Crew members sounded the alarm and attended to the injured master. A search of the ship following the incident found no perpetrators onboard and nothing was reported as stolen. The Singapore Police Coast Guard boarded the ship upon its arrival in Singapore. The injured master was sent to a hospital in Singapore for treatment and is in stable condition. (Clearwater Dynamics; ReCAAP)

2. (U) INDONESIA: On 24 October at 0113 local time, four perpetrators armed with knives boarded the underway Liberia-flagged bulk carrier ETOILE in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS), near position 01:09N – 103:27E. The duty crew observed the perpetrators in the engine room. All crew were accounted for and safe following the incident and nothing was reported stolen. The bulk carrier did not require assistance and continued its voyage to Singapore. (ReCAAP; Clearwater Dynamics)

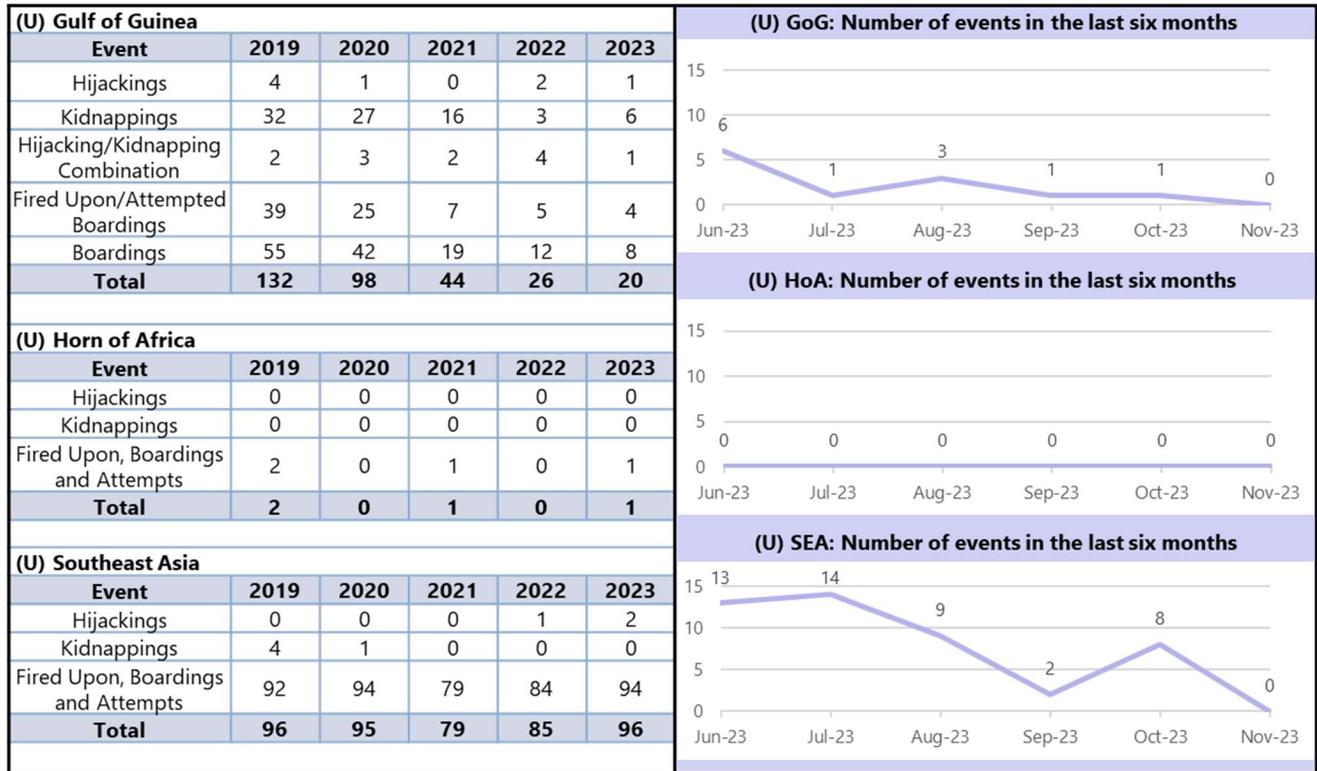
3. (U) INDONESIA: On 23 October at 0100 local time, as many as five robbers armed with knives boarded the underway Panama-flagged bulk carrier NAVIOS HELIOS in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait TSS, near position 01:04N – 103:36E. After crew members sighted the robbers and discovered a ship's engineer tied up in the engine room, the captain mustered the crew. The captain reported that all crew were safe. The robbers had stolen a generator and spare parts. The vessel continued its passage to Singapore. (ReCAAP; Clearwater Dynamics)

4. (U) MALAYSIA: On 18 October at 1030 local time, an unknown number of robbers boarded the berthed Singapore-flagged container ship MAERSK VALENCIA at Sandakan Port, near position 05:48N – 118:05E and stole an outboard engine. The ship reported that the crew were safe. (ReCAAP; Clearwater Dynamics)
5. (U) INDONESIA: On 17 October at 0530 local time, an unknown number of robbers boarded a berthed tanker at Belawan Port, near position 03:47N – 098:41E. A security watchman reported to the duty crew that a theft had occurred onboard. The chief officer investigated and discovered ship's stores had been stolen. The ship reported the incident to the local agent. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics)
6. (U) INDONESIA: On 16 October, five robbers armed with knives and machetes boarded the underway Panama-flagged tanker PS FALCON in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS), near position 01:04N – 103:42E. The duty crew spotted the robbers in the engine room. The perpetrators tied up five crew members, and hit one of the restrained crew members on the head. The master raised the alarm, and mustered the crew. Following the incident, the master reported that no medical assistance was required, and that ship's properties had been stolen. The vessel continued its passage to Hong Kong. (Clearwater Dynamics; ReCAAP)
7. (U) INDONESIA: On 14 October, four unarmed robbers boarded the underway Marshall Islands-flagged VLCC (very large crude carrier) TRF HORTEN in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait TSS, near position 01:03N – 103:38E. The duty crew sighted the robbers at the entrance of the engine room. The master raised the alarm, and mustered the crew to conduct a search of the ship. Following the search, the ship reported all crew safe and accounted for, and that spare engine parts had been stolen. The vessel did not require assistance and continued its voyage to Singapore. Authorities boarded the vessel to investigate and confirmed no perpetrators onboard. (Clearwater Dynamics; ReCAAP)
8. (U) INDONESIA: On 8 October at 0001 local time, two perpetrators armed with knives boarded the underway Cyprus-flagged bulk carrier DIMITRIS A in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait Traffic Separation Scheme, near position 01:03N – 103:40E. The duty crew sighted the perpetrators in the engine room. The ship's master raised the alarm and the crew conducted a search. Following the search, the ship reported that all crew were accounted for and nothing was stolen. The vessel did not require assistance and continued its voyage to Singapore. (Clearwater Dynamics; vesseltracker.com; ReCAAP)

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

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



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.

7. (U) Appendix C: Active U.S. Maritime Advisories

Title	Effective Date	Expiration Date
2023-014-Eastern Mediterranean Sea – Regional Conflict	26 OCT 23	23 APR 24
2023-013-Various – GPS Interference & AIS Spoofing	2 OCT 23	30 MAR 24
2023-012-Global – New U.S. Maritime Alert and Advisory Subscription Process	22 SEP 23	24 MAR 24
2023-011-Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea, Gulf of Aden, Bab al Mandeb, Red Sea, and Somali Basin – Threats to Commercial Vessels	6 SEP 23	4 MAR 24
2023-010-Black Sea and Sea of Azov – Military Combat Operations	1 SEP 23	28 FEB 24
2023-009-Worldwide – Foreign Adversarial Technological, Physical, And Cyber Influence	23 AUG 23	19 FEB 24
2023-008-Gulf of Guinea – Piracy/Armed Robbery/Kidnapping for Ransom	30 JUN 23	29 DEC 23
2023-007-Global – Overview of the U.S. Maritime Advisory System	6 JUN 23	3 DEC 23

(U) **ICOD:** 1 November 2023

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