

UNCLASSIFIED



## (U) **WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report, 22 November–20 December 2023**



20 December 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 last 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.

#### 3. (U) **Summary:**

**A.** (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 19 December, four small boats with as many as five persons onboard each boat approached a vessel 80 NM northeast of Djibouti.

**B.** (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 18 December, two unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) approached a vessel to within 50 meters approximately 84 NM east of Djibouti.

**C.** (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 18 December, five small boats with armed personnel onboard approached a vessel approximately 63 NM northeast of Djibouti.

**D.** (U) RED SEA: On 18 December, armed persons on one small craft approached a vessel approximately 14 NM southwest of Mokha, Yemen.

**E. (U) RED SEA:** On 18 December, a Cayman Islands-flagged tanker experienced an explosion on its port side approximately 24 NM northwest of Mokha, Yemen.

**F. (U) RED SEA:** On 18 December, the master of a vessel reported a possible explosion 2 NM off one of the vessel's quarters approximately 30 NM southwest of Mokha, Yemen.

**G. (U) RED SEA:** On 15 December, a ballistic missile struck a Liberia-flagged container ship in the vicinity of the Bab el Mandeb Strait, approximately 30 NM southwest of Mokha, Yemen.

**H. (U) RED SEA:** On 15 December, a UAV struck a Liberia-flagged container ship on the port side approximately 60 NM southwest of Hodeida, Yemen.

**I. (U) RED SEA:** On 15 December, a small craft with ten persons onboard claiming to be Yemeni authorities approached a vessel approximately 50 NM northwest of Mokha, Yemen.

**J. (U) ARABIAN SEA:** On 14 December, unknown assailants hijacked a bulk carrier approximately 700 NM east of Bossaso, Somalia.

**K. (U) INDONESIA:** On 7 December, a Singapore-flagged bulk carrier reported a robbery onboard while underway in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS).

#### **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:** No current incidents to report.

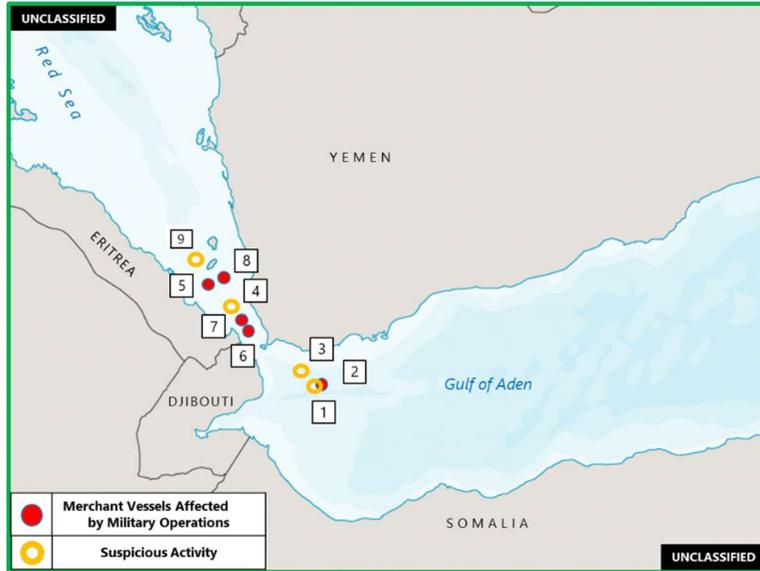
**E. (U) MEDITERRANEAN – BLACK SEA:** No current incidents to report.

#### **F. (U) WEST AFRICA – GULF OF GUINEA:**

1. (U) NIGERIA: On 2 December at 1305 UTC, armed suspects fired upon a group of fishing vessels 8 NM offshore south of Brass, near position 04:10N – 006:20E. The perpetrators killed one fisherman and injured another before stealing engines and fishing equipment. (MDAT-GoG; Clearwater Dynamics)

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

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



(U) Figure 1. Red Sea – Gulf of Aden Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea



(U) Figure 2. Indian Ocean – East Africa Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea

1. (U) RED SEA: On 19 December at 0530 UTC, four small boats with as many as five persons onboard each boat approached a vessel 80 NM northeast of Djibouti (exact location not specified). The master described the boats as blue and grey in color. The closest small boat approached to within 0.5 NM of the vessel before moving away. The

vessel's crew did not observe any weapons and the vessel was not hailed. The vessel cleared the area and reported both crew and vessel as safe. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 18 December at 1650 UTC, two unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) approached a vessel near position 12:08N – 044:18E, approximately 84 NM east of Djibouti. The UAVs came within 50 meters of the vessel and circled several times before disappearing, (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

3. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 18 December at 1028 UTC, armed personnel on five small boats approached a vessel approximately 63 NM northeast of Djibouti (exact location not specified). The approach was likely deterred by nearby coalition forces. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

4. (U) RED SEA: On 18 December at 0645 UTC, armed persons on one small craft approached a vessel near position 13:09N – 043:03E, approximately 14 NM southwest of Mokha, Yemen. The vessel's armed security team fired warning shots to the side of the approaching craft, resulting in the craft changing course away from the vessel. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

5. (U) RED SEA: On 18 December at 0600 UTC, the Cayman Islands-flagged tanker SWAN ATLANTIC experienced an explosion on its port side approximately 24 NM northwest of Mokha, Yemen (exact location not specified). U.S. CENTCOM subsequently reported that the tanker was attacked by a one-way attack drone and an anti-ship ballistic missile launched from Huthi-controlled territory in Yemen. Through a spokesperson, Huthi forces claimed responsibility for attacking SWAN ATLANTIC and stated that the attack was carried out after the tanker failed to respond to calls from the group. Crew and vessel reported safe. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; U.S. CENTCOM; Maritime Executive; Reuters)

6. (U) RED SEA: On 18 December at 0435 UTC, the master of a vessel reported a possible explosion 2 NM off one of the vessel's quarters approximately 30 NM south of Mokha, Yemen, in the vicinity of the Bab el Mandeb Strait (exact location not specified). (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

7. (U) RED SEA: On 15 December at 1000 UTC, a ballistic missile fired by Huthi forces struck the Liberia-flagged container ship MSC PALATIUM III, in the vicinity of the Bab el Mandeb Strait, approximately 30 NM southwest of Mokha, Yemen (exact location not specified). The explosion resulted in a fire that has been extinguished. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; U.S. CENTCOM; BBC News)

8. (U) RED SEA: On 15 December at 0618 UTC, a UAV launched from Huthi-controlled territory struck the port side of the Liberia-flagged container ship AL JASRAH approximately 60 NM southwest of Hodeida, Yemen (exact location not specified). The impact resulted in a fire onboard and the loss of one container. Following the incident, the fire was extinguished and the crew and vessel were reported safe. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; U.S. CENTCOM; BBC News)

9. (U) RED SEA: On 15 December at 0440 UTC, a small craft with 10 persons onboard claiming to be Yemeni authorities approached a vessel, approximately 50 NM northwest of Mokha, Yemen (exact location not specified). The craft was described as small with a white hull and black top. The persons onboard the craft ordered the vessel to alter course toward Yemen. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

10. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 14 December at 1200 UTC, unknown assailants hijacked the Malta-flagged bulk carrier RUEN near position 12:03N – 061:20E, approximately 700 NM east of Bossaso, Somalia. Initially, the crew secured themselves in the citadel, but the hijackers subsequently managed to break into the citadel and take the crew hostage. By 17 December, RUEN was 9 miles off Puntland, Somalia, and, as of 19 December, the bulk carrier remained in the vicinity of Puntland. On 18 December, an injured crew member requiring medical attention was released by the hijackers and evacuated to the Indian Navy ship INS KOCHI for initial treatment. Efforts to resolve the incident are being coordinated among partners from Japan, Spain, India, the European Union Naval Force, as well as with local Somali authorities. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; IMB; vesseltracker.com; gCaptain; Maritime Executive; Reuters; US Maritime Administration)

11. (U) RED SEA: On 14 December at 1146 UTC, a vessel reported an explosion 50 meters off its port quarter while underway near position 13:41N – 042:38E. Authorities are investigating. Vessels are advised to transit with caution and report any suspicious activity to UKMTO. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

12. (U) RED SEA: On 14 December at 1145 UTC, an entity claiming to be the Yemeni Navy ordered a vessel underway in the Red Sea to alter course to Yemen, near position 14:54N – 042:01E. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

13. (U) OMAN: On 13 December at 0500 UTC, between five or six small boats followed a vessel underway approximately 90 NM south of Al Duqm, Oman, near position 18:30N – 058:44E. Each boat had up to three persons onboard, a machine gun mounted on the bow, and powerful outboard engines. The boats followed the vessel for 90 minutes and approached to within 0.7 NM of the vessel before leaving the area. (Clearwater Dynamics; UKMTO)

14. (U) RED SEA: On 13 December at 0400 UTC, a Malta-flagged bulk carrier was approached while underway 50 NM west of Hodeidah, Yemen, near position 14:48N – 042:04E. AIS data indicates that the vessel continued its voyage north through the Red Sea. (Clearwater Dynamics)

15. (U) RED SEA: On 13 December at 0343 UTC, a speedboat with three armed persons onboard approached and fired upon the Marshall Islands-flagged tanker ARDMORE ENCOUNTER underway approximately 50 NM from Hodeidah, Yemen, near position 14:48N – 041:57E. The speedboat had two outboard engines and approached the vessel at 20 knots. The embarked armed security team fired warning shots and the perpetrators fired up to 10 rounds at the tanker from a distance of 300 meters before departing the area. Following the small craft's departure, an entity declaring itself as the Yemeni authorities directed the vessel to alter course to Yemen. At least two missiles were subsequently launched from Yemen in the direction of the tanker. One missile was intercepted and the second exploded 200 meters from the vessel's stern. Crew mustered in the emergency station after the explosion. The vessel and crew were reported as safe following the incident. (Clearwater Dynamics; UKMTO; gCaptain; vesseltracker.com)

16. (U) RED SEA: On 11 December at 2245 UTC, an entity claiming to be the Yemeni Navy ordered a vessel underway in the Red Sea to alter course to a port in Yemen (exact location not specified). (Clearwater Dynamics; UKMTO)

17. (U) RED SEA: On 11 December at 2100 UTC, an anti-ship cruise missile (ASCM) struck the Norway-flagged tanker STRINDA while underway 15 NM west of Mokha, Yemen, near position 13:17N – 042:59E. The ASCM was launched from a Houthi-controlled area of Yemen. The vessel reported a fire and damage onboard resulting from the attack. The fire was subsequently brought under control and no injuries were reported. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; gCaptain; Maritime Executive)
18. (U) RED SEA: On 6 December at 0718 UTC, UKMTO received a report of a drone loitering 49 NM southwest of Hodeida, Yemen, near position 14:25N – 042:12E. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)
19. (U) RED SEA: On 3 December at 1230 UTC, an entity claiming to be Yemeni authorities ordered a vessel transiting the Red Sea approximately 52 NM southwest of Hodeida, Yemen, near position 14:22N – 042:10E, to alter course toward the coast of Yemen. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; Ambrey)
20. (U) RED SEA: On 3 December at 1230 UTC, the master of the Panama-flagged container ship NUMBER 9 reported a drone attack on the vessel near position 15:16N – 041:42E, 56 NM west of Saleef, Yemen. The vessel reported damage but no casualties. It departed the area at full speed. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; Ambrey; Maritime Executive)
21. (U) RED SEA: On 3 December at 0928 UTC, the master of the Panama-flagged bulk carrier AOM SOPHIE II reported a drone attack near position 13:25N – 042:40E, 34 NM west-northwest of Mocha, Yemen. The vessel continued its voyage following the incident. (UKMTO, Clearwater Dynamics; Ambrey; Maritime Executive)
22. (U) RED SEA: On 3 December at 0610 UTC, the master of the Bahamas-flagged, Israeli-affiliated bulk carrier UNITY EXPLORER reported drone activity and an explosion in the vicinity of the vessel, near position 13:58N – 042:18E, 62 NM southwest of Hodeida, Yemen. The master of the bulk carrier reported that the explosion was 2 NM away from the vessel. U.S. Central Command later reported that an anti-ship ballistic missile was fired at the bulk carrier and exploded near the vessel. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; Ambrey; Maritime Executive)
23. (U) RED SEA: On 3 December at an unspecified time, a Liberia-flagged oil tanker sighted an explosion in the air above the vessel while approximately 15 NM SW of Mocha, Yemen, near position 13:06N – 043:07E. The vessel confirmed no damage was sustained and no crew members were injured. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)
24. (U) MOZAMBIQUE: On 1 December at 2310 local time, an unknown number of robbers boarded a tanker anchored at Nacala Anchorage, near position 14:32N – 040:39E. Duty crew members noticed the door to the aft store was open. Upon investigating, they discovered ship's stores missing but found no perpetrators. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics)
25. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 29 November at 1106 UTC, up to eight perpetrators armed with automatic rifles and rocket propelled grenades hijacked an Iran-flagged fishing vessel operating off Quandala, Somalia, near position 11:34N – 049:55E. The fishing vessel had reportedly engaged in illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the area. (Clearwater Dynamics)

26. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 29 November at 1000 UTC, UKMTO received three separate reports from masters providing information on small craft acting suspiciously in the Gulf of Aden near positions 11:52N – 044:54E, 12:13N – 045:48E, and 12:09N – 045:44E. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)
27. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 27 November at 0643 UTC, one craft with three persons onboard approached a motor vessel to within 0.6 NM near position 12:15N – 045:02E, approximately 50 NM south of Aden, Yemen. The craft followed the motor vessel for one hour before changing direction and departing the area. The master reported the vessel and all crew safe. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)
28. (U) YEMEN: On 26 November at 0601 UTC, five armed individuals in a skiff boarded the Liberia-flagged, Israeli-affiliated product tanker CENTRAL PARK, 53 NM southwest of Aden, near position 12:09N – 044:16E, while in transit in the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC). While the attack was in progress, the crew secured themselves in the citadel and issued a distress call. The USS MASON and other allied ships from the coalition counter-piracy combined task force CTF 151 responded to the tanker's call. After unsuccessfully attempting to breach the citadel door, the gunmen retreated to their skiff and escaped. The USS MASON pursued the subjects and successfully apprehended the five individuals. The tanker and crew were reported safe. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; MARAD; Ambrey; Reuters; Guardian; Fox News)
29. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 26 November at 0600 UTC, a vessel was approached by eight persons in military style clothing onboard two black and white craft 80 NM south of Aden, Yemen, near position 11:25N – 045:03E. The craft approached to within 0.5 NM and were positioned on each quarter of the vessel. The master reported the vessel and all crew safe. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)
30. (U) RED SEA: On 25 November at 1009 UTC, UKMTO reported an entity declaring itself as Yemeni authorities had ordered an underway tanker in the Red Sea to alter course, while west of Mokha, Yemen, near approximate position 13:37N – 042:37E. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)
31. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 24 November at an unspecified time, the Malta-flagged, Israeli-managed container ship CMA CGM SYMI was struck by a drone while underway in the Arabian Sea, near position 17:38N – 069:16E. The ship sustained damage but the crew was unharmed. (Clearwater Dynamics; gCaptain; Maritime Executive)
32. (U) SOMALIA: On 22 November at 0600 UTC, a group of armed Somali clan members hijacked the Iran-flagged fishing dhow ALMERAJ 1 while underway 90 NM northeast of Eyl. The militia's reported reason for the hijacking was alleged IUU fishing by the fishing dhow. The dhow's owner stated that the hijackers have demanded a \$400,000 ransom and threatened to conduct further attacks if the ransom went unpaid. On 28 November, EUNAVFOR issued an official statement that Operation ATALANTA has deployed dedicated assets to monitor the dhow's movements and report its position to maritime traffic. UPDATE: On 1 December, EUNAVFOR confirmed that they had brought this incident to a successful resolution. Their action enabled the transfer of the fishing dhow to Somali police forces who then escorted the vessel to shore and took relevant action with the suspected pirates. (Clearwater Dynamics; Maritime Executive; Shipping Telegraph; Ambrey; EUNAVFOR)

## I. (U) EAST ASIA – SOUTHEAST ASIA:



(U) Figure 3. East Asia – Southeast Asia Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea

1. (U) INDONESIA: On 7 December at an unspecified time, the 3<sup>rd</sup> engineer of the Singapore-flagged bulk carrier KONRAD SCHULTE discovered engine spares missing while underway in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait Traffic Separation Scheme, near position 01:00N – 103:31E. The chief engineer notified the master of the incident and, upon further investigation, it was determined that perpetrators might have entered the steering gear room through the poop deck manhole. The crew conducted a thorough search and no perpetrators were located. All crew were reported safe. (ReCAAP; Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 26 November at around 0245 local time, five robbers boarded the anchored Liberia-flagged container ship G CROWN at Manila Bay Anchorage, near position 14:36N – 120:49E. The perpetrators boarded the vessel through the hawse pipe. The duty crew observed the robbers and raised the alarm. The robbers, noting the alerted crew, escaped with stolen ship's properties. The ship informed authorities and a coast guard patrol boat was sent to the vicinity. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics; vesseltracker.com)

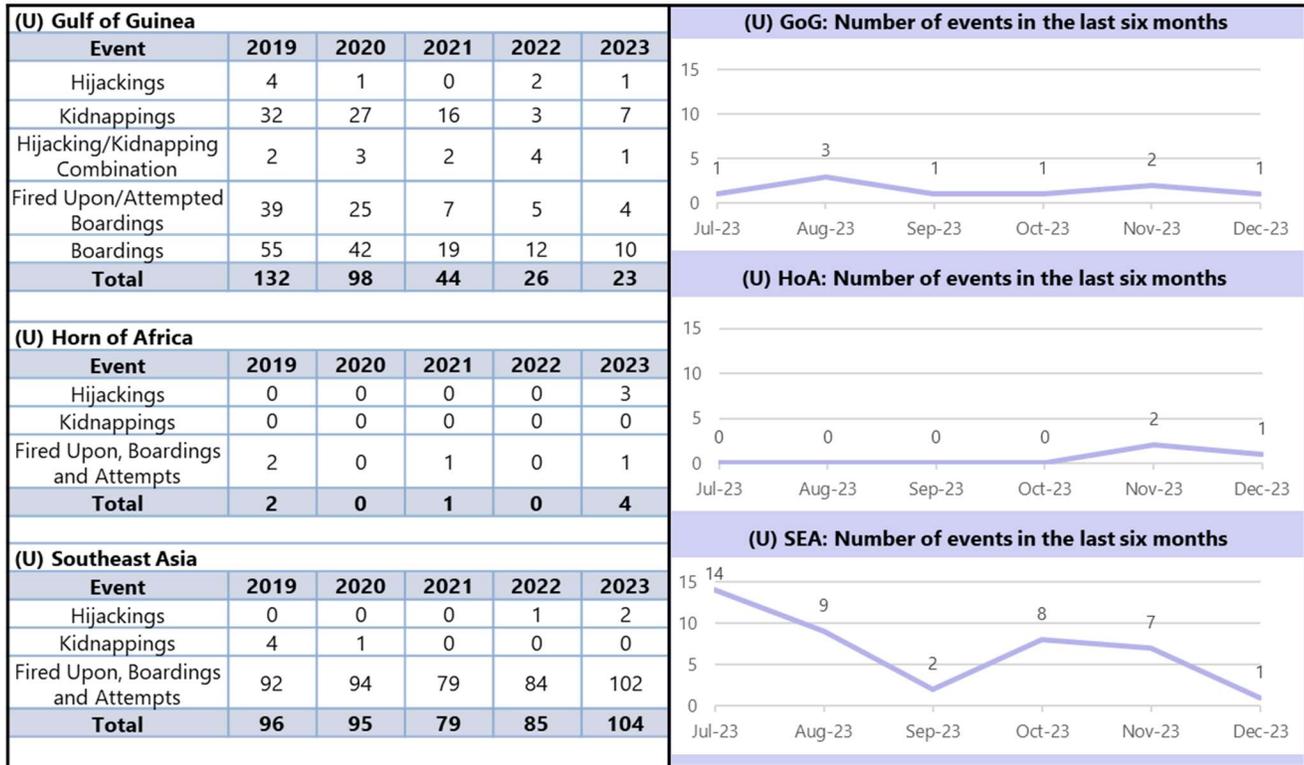
3. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 26 November at around 0245 local time, five robbers boarded the anchored Marshall Islands-flagged container ship HANSA COLOMBO at Manila Bay Anchorage, near position 14:36N – 120:49E, several hundred meters from the position of G CROWN. The duty crew noticed the robbers onboard and raised the alarm, after which they escaped with stolen ship's properties. The ship alerted authorities and the coast guard responded. (Clearwater Dynamics; vesseltracker.com)

4. (U) INDONESIA: On 23 November at 0435 local time, four robbers armed with knives boarded the anchored Singapore-flagged tanker ARGENT DAISY at Dumai Anchorage near position 01:43N – 101:26E. The robbers threatened and took hostage a crew member, while another crew member escaped, informed the duty officer and raised the alarm. Following the sounding of the general alarm, the perpetrators released the crew member and fled into a small boat. A search was conducted by the crew and nothing was found to be stolen. All crew members were reported safe following the incident. (IMB; 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
<a href="#">2023-014-Eastern Mediterranean Sea – Regional Conflict</a>	26 OCT 23	23 APR 24
<a href="#">2023-013-Various – GPS Interference &amp; AIS Spoofing</a>	2 OCT 23	30 MAR 24
<a href="#">2023-012-Global – New U.S. Maritime Alert and Advisory Subscription Process</a>	22 SEP 23	24 MAR 24
<a href="#">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</a>	6 SEP 23	4 MAR 24
<a href="#">2023-010-Black Sea and Sea of Azov – Military Combat Operations</a>	1 SEP 23	28 FEB 24
<a href="#">2023-009-Worldwide – Foreign Adversarial Technological, Physical, And Cyber Influence</a>	23 AUG 23	19 FEB 24
<a href="#">2023-008-Gulf of Guinea – Piracy/Armed Robbery/Kidnapping for Ransom</a>	30 JUN 23	29 DEC 23

(U) **ICOD:** 20 December 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/>