



UNCLASSIFIED

(U) **WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report 2 – 29 July 2020**



30 July 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: 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:**

A. (U) **MARAD ADVISORY 2020-013-Sulu and Celebes Seas-Piracy/Armed Robbery/Kidnapping/Terrorism:**
 This revised advisory cancels U.S. Maritime Advisory 2020-003. Issue: So far in 2020, there has been one reported kidnapping in the Sulu and Celebes Seas, reportedly linked to the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), a violent Islamic separatist group operating in the southern Philippines. Maritime security centers in this region have issued warnings as recently as July 2020 that members of ASG continue planning to conduct kidnapping operations targeting foreigners. Guidance: U.S. flagged vessels are advised to remain vigilant and adhere to the counter-piracy annex of their approved Vessel Security Plan when transiting the Sulu and Celebes Seas in light of boardings and kidnappings for ransom that have taken place in those areas. The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia's (ReCAAP) Information Sharing Center advises all ships to avoid anchoring outside port limit areas and to exercise enhanced vigilance, maintain strict look-outs (particularly during hours of darkness), and report all incidents to the relevant authorities immediately. For more information about U.S. Maritime Alerts and Advisories, including subscription details, please visit <https://go.usa.gov/xETEA>.

3. (U) **Summary:**

- A. (U) **MEXICO:** On 29 July, armed criminals arrived via small skiffs at an equipment yard in the city of Ciudad del Carmen. The robbers stole equipment and robbed employees.
- B. (U) **MALAYSIA:** On 26 July, robbers from two small boats boarded a barge under tow by the Singapore-flagged tug BS AYRES approximately 4.4 NM from Tanjung Piai, Johor, Malaysia.

- C. (U) MEXICO: On 24 July, robbers boarded the Mexico-flagged offshore supply vessel NATALIE while conducting operations in the vicinity of the ODIN offshore platform 12 NM northeast of Coatzacoalcos, Veracruz State.
- D. (U) NIGERIA: On 24 July, one Ghanaian and five South Korean nationals, kidnapped last month by an armed group in waters off the West Africa country of Benin, were released.
- E. (U) INDONESIA: On 22 July, Indonesian officials announced the arrest of two Vietnamese fishing boats after what it described as a dramatic high-seas brawl with sailors desperate to avoid arrest.
- F. (U) NIGERIA: On 12 July, an attempted robbery occurred on a car carrier while berthed at the Five Star Logistics Terminal, Lagos.

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 29 July at 2045 UTC, armed criminals arrived via small skiff-type vessels at an equipment yard used by Mexico's state-owned petroleum company, Pemex. The equipment yard is situated in the city of Ciudad del Carmen, which is in Mexico's Southeast near position 18:38N - 091:50W. During the incident, workers at the facility also reported being robbed. (Dryad Global)

2. (U) MEXICO: On 24 July at 0400 UTC, robbers boarded the Mexico-flagged offshore supply vessel NATALIE which was conducting operations in the vicinity of the ODIN offshore platform 12 NM northeast of Coatzacoalcos near position 18:18N - 094:16W. Reporting indicates the robbers stole personal belongings. (Dryad Global)

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

1. (U) PERU: On 27 June at 1910LT, three robbers boarded a bulk carrier anchored in the Callao Anchorage near position 12:01S - 077:10W. A duty crew member during routine rounds spotted the robbers, informed the duty officer, and started shouting at them. The robbers fled after seeing the crew's response. Authorities responded and conducted a search for the robbers. (IMB, Clearwater Dynamics)

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:

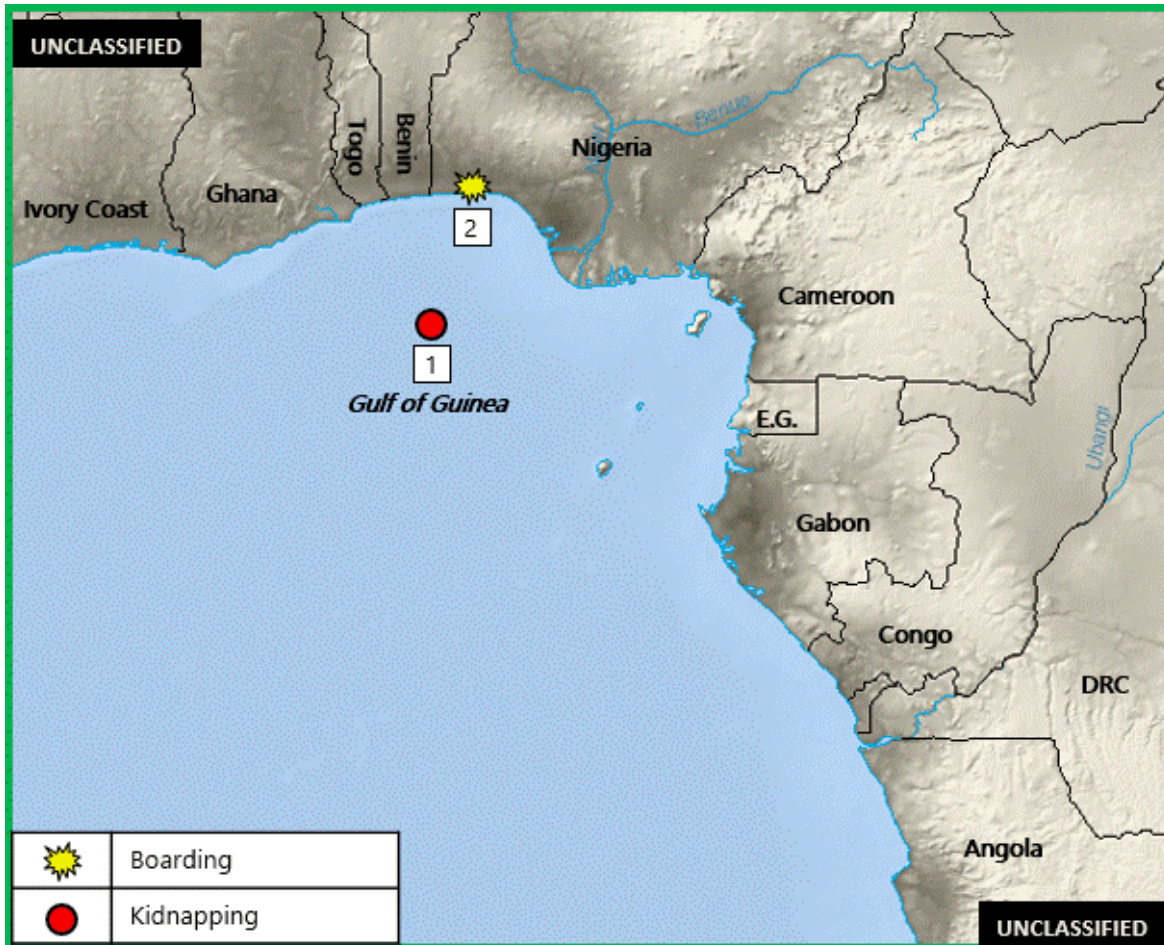


Figure 2. West Africa Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) NIGERIA: On 24 July, pirates released five South Koreans and a Ghanaian who were kidnapped from the Ghana-flagged fishing vessel PANOFI FRONTIER off Benin on 24 June. The captives were held for 30 days before their release. The South Koreans were in good health. (Dryad Global)

2. (U) NIGERIA: On 12 July, an attempted robbery occurred on a car carrier while berthed at the Five Star Logistics Terminal, Lagos. A robber was spotted onboard by Nigerian Navy personnel, which resulted in an arrest being made. (Clearwater Dynamics)

3. (U) GULF OF GUINEA: On 17 July at 1100 UTC, eight pirates armed with rifles boarded the Liberia-flagged chemical tanker CURACAO TRADER underway near position 02:57N - 002:46E, 223 NM south of Cotonou, Benin. They held all crewmen hostage, stole documents and valuable items, and kidnapped at least 13 but as many as 15 Russian and Ukrainian crew members before escaping. The tanker was left drifting with limited crew onboard. A nearby merchant vessel rendered assistance which allowed the tanker to be sailed to a safe port. Regional authorities notified. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics; Dryad Global, www.fleetmon.com; www.splash247.com)

4. (U) NIGERIA: On 2 July at 0420LT, pirates in two speed boats conducted a coordinated attack on the Singapore-flagged floating production storage and offloading (FPSO) vessel SENDJE BERGE and security vessel HUDSON CAPT ELENDU operating approximately 29 NM south-southwest of Bonny Island at position 03:51N - 006:59E. One of the boats distracted the security vessel HUDSON CAPT ELENDU while pirates from the other boat boarded the FPSO. The pirates kidnapped nine Nigerian crewmembers. The Nigerian Navy responded to the incident. (www.offshore-mag.com, www.seatrade-maritime.com)

5. (U) BENIN: On 2 July, pirates attacked and boarded the Singapore-flagged general cargo ship KOTA BUDI drifting and awaiting operational instructions 150 NM south of Cotonou at 03:49.3N - 002:25.0E. The pirates stole ship's properties, cash, and some of the crew's personal belongings before departing in a small boat with five Chinese hostages, leaving the remaining crew behind. (IMB, Clearwater Dynamics; www.thedefensepost.com)

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

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

1. (U) INDIA: On 16 July, one robber boarded the Singapore-flagged offshore supply vessel MWV FALCON while the vessel was anchored near position 16:58N - 082:15E, Jetty No. NRW-3, Kakinda Anchorage. A duty crewman on routine rounds saw the robber and raised the alarm. The robber fled by jumping overboard. A search of the ship was conducted with nothing noted missing. (IMB)

2. (U) YEMEN: On 9 July, the Saudi-led military coalition destroyed two unmanned, remotely-controlled, explosive-laden boats 3.2 NM south of port of Salif. Reportedly, the two remotely-controlled boats belonged to the Iranian-backed Houthi forces. (www.reuters.com, haaretz.com, Dryad Global)

I. (U) EAST ASIA - SOUTHEAST ASIA:

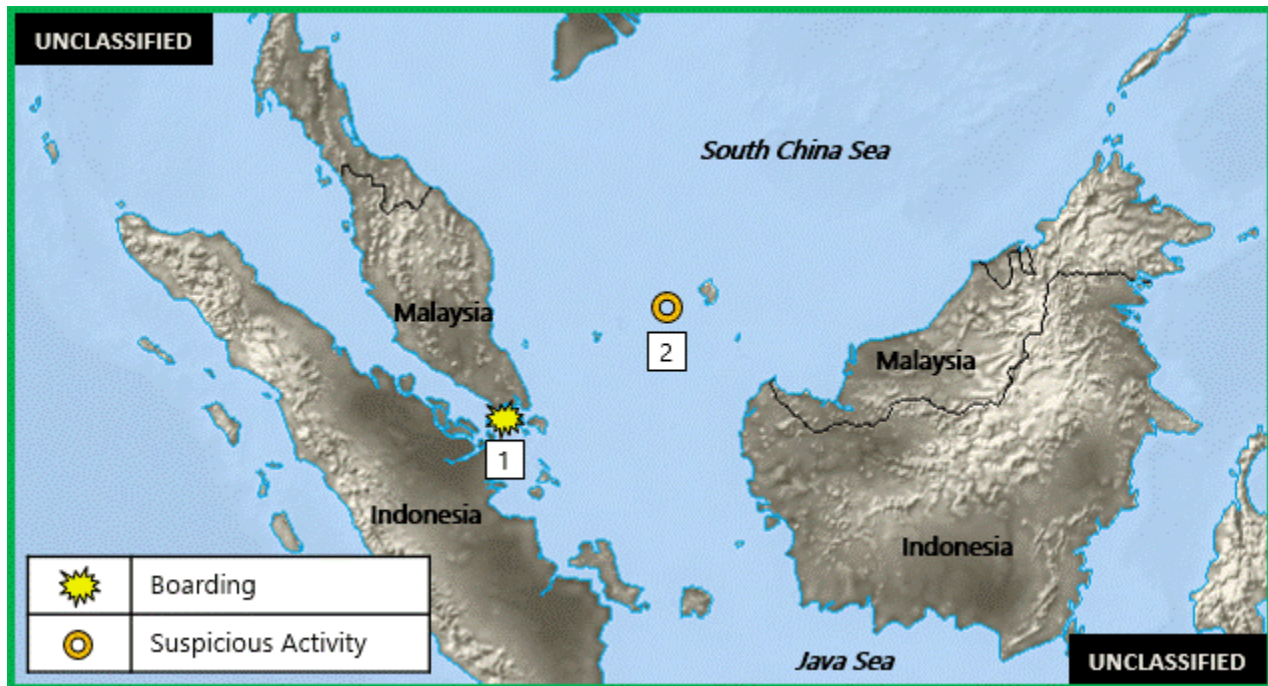


Figure 3. Southeast Asia Piracy and Maritime

1. (U) MALAYSIA: On 26 July, robbers from two small boats boarded a barge under tow by the Singapore-flagged tugboat BS AYRES approximately 4.4 NM from Tanjung Piai, Johor near position 01:11N - 103:32E. After 20 minutes onboard, the robbers left the barge with stolen batteries heading in a southwesterly direction. The Republic of Singapore Navy's Maritime Security Task Force, Singapore Police Coast Guard, and the Malaysian and Indonesian authorities were notified. (ReCAAP; Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) INDONESIA: On 22 July, Indonesian officials announced the arrest of two Vietnamese fishing boats after what it described as a dramatic high-seas brawl with sailors desperate to avoid arrest. Maritime authorities boarded the boats on suspicion the crews had been operating illegally at the edge of the South China Sea and said they had "wrestled" with the fishermen for around two hours. Some crew tumbled into the water during the bruising battle. "The captain from one vessel tried to fight back and attempted to attack us with scissors, but we managed to control the situation," said the captain of one maritime ministry ships, "We rescued the crew who fell into the sea," he added. Nearly two dozen Vietnamese and Cambodian nationals were arrested. (www.channelnewsasia.com)

3. (U) VIETNAM: On 13 July, Vietnam Coast Guard personnel intercepted the Singapore-flagged tanker DIAMOND Z while the vessel was illegally transferring fuel to a Vietnamese fishing boat. The incident occurred near Con Dao Island. Both vessels were detained and taken into port for further investigation. (www.fleetmon.com)

4. (U) INDONESIA: On 12 July at 0215LT, three robbers armed with knives boarded the eastbound Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier WOLVERINE in Singapore Strait near 01:16N - 104:15E. The robbers were spotted in the engine room. The alarm was raised, the crew was mustered, and the vessel was searched. The robbers escaped with ship's spare parts. The crew reported the incident to VTIS. (Clearwater Dynamics, ReCAAP)

5. (U) INDONESIA: On 10 July, Indonesian authorities seized the China-flagged fishing vessels LU HUANG YUANG YU 117 and LU HUANG YUANG YU 118 off the island of Batam. Following a tip off to Indonesian police, the

authorities boarded and discovered the dead body of a 20-year-old Indonesian sailor in a freezer onboard LU HUANG YUANG YU 117. The sailor was reportedly tortured by the ship's captain and crew before dying last month. Authorities detained the vessels and conducted full investigation after the families of sailors reported heard stories of violence and abuse on the vessels. (<https://asia.nikkei.com>; www.scmp.com, The Maritime Executive)

6. (U) INDONESIA: On 2 July at 0040LT, four robbers armed with knives boarded the eastbound Panama-flagged reefer FRIO OLYMPIC in Singapore Strait near 01:16N - 104:19E. The duty crew spotted the robbers and raised the alarm. Seeing the crew's response, the robbers fled with four boxes of ship's spare parts. The crew reported the incident to VTIS. (IMB, 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: 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) **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:** 30 July 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/>