ONI
OFFICE OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE

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(U) WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report
9 July – 5 August 2020

6 August 2020

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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 current warnings or advisories

3. (U) **Summary:**

A. (U) NIGERIA: On 4 August, armed men in a speedboat fired upon and boarded a passenger boat transiting between Kula and Port Harcourt in the Rivers State Waterways.

B. (U) LEBANON: On 4 August, an explosion took place at the Beirut Port Complex.

C. (U) NIGERIA: On 1 August, robbers attempted to board a tanker berthed at the Apapa new oil jetty in Lagos.

D. (U) HAITI: On 28 July, two robbers boarded a bulk carrier that was drifting 3 NM northwest of Carrefour.

E. (U) BRAZIL: On 28 July, robbers boarded a bulk carrier anchored at Macapa Anchorage.

F. (U) INDIAN OCEAN: On 21 July, a security guard threatened the Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier JAEGER and its crew.

G. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 20 July, robbers boarded the Liberia-flagged container ship NEWARK anchored in Manilla Bay

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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:

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:

Figure 1. Caribbean and South American Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) HAITI: On 28 July at 2310LT, two robbers boarded a bulk carrier that was drifting 3 NM northwest of Carrefour at 18:35.9N - 072:27.2W. The robbers confronted and threatened a duty crew member on routine rounds. When the alarm was raised, the robbers fled in a waiting boat with two mooring lines and some crew members' property. (Clearwater Dynamics, IMB)

2. (U) BRAZIL: On 28 July, robbers boarded a bulk carrier anchored at Macapa Anchorage #2 at 00:02.3N - 050:59.0W. The robbers managed to steal ship's stores undetected. The theft was later discovered during rounds by a duty crew member. The crew reported the incident to Port Control. (Clearwater Dynamics, 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:**

1. (U) LEBANON: On 4 August at 1800LT, an explosion took place at the Beirut Port Complex in vicinity of 33:54.03N - 035:30.82E. The blast, which shook the whole city, killed at least 113 people and injured more than 4,000 others. Four vessels in the vicinity of the blast likely incurred damage. Of note, the Sierra Leone-flagged MERO STAR reported its hull being breached and crew members injured. The Bangladesh-flagged BNS BIJOY also reported being damaged and 21 injured crew members. Lebanese President Michel Aoun said the blast was caused by 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate stored unsafely in a warehouse. The ammonium nitrate was originally confiscated in 2013 from the Moldovan-flagged cargo vessel RHOSUS, which failed Port State Control Inspections. (Dryad Global, BBC, CNN)
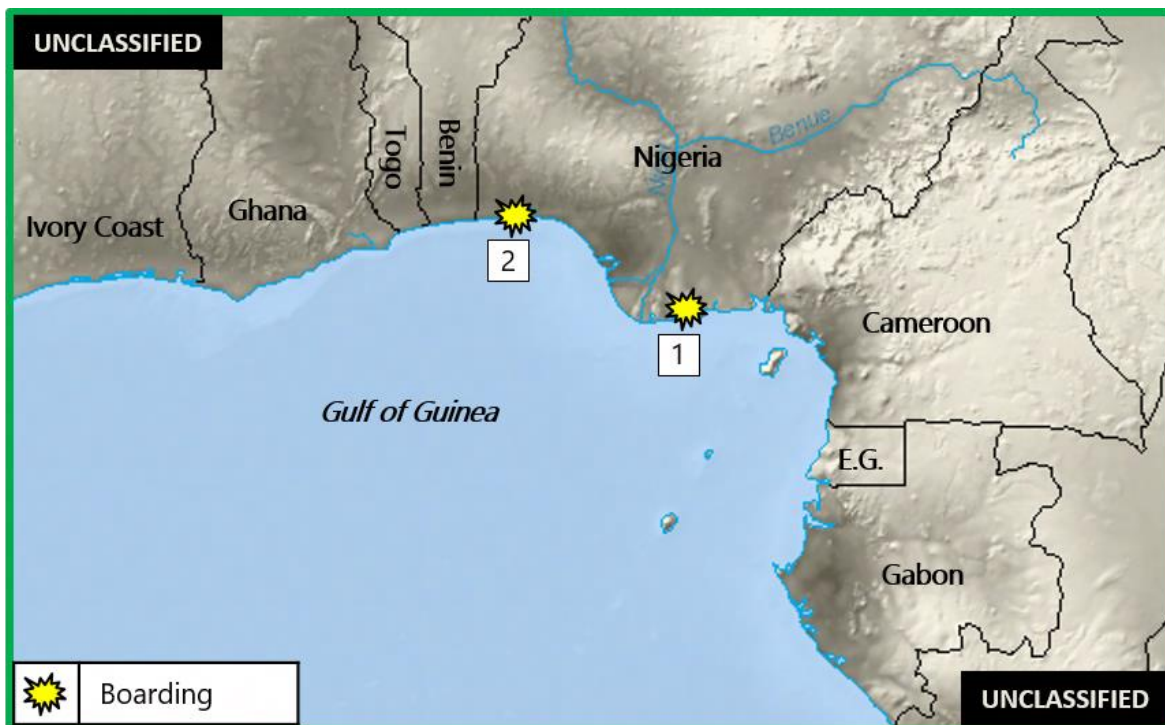
F. (U) **WEST AFRICA:**

Figure 2. Gulf of Guinea Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) NIGERIA: On 4 August, armed men in a speedboat fired upon and boarded a passenger boat transiting between Kula and Port Harcourt in the Rivers State Waterways in vicinity of 04:26N - 006:50E. The armed men stole the passenger belongings and departed the area. One passenger was injured during the incident. (Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) NIGERIA: On 1 August, robbers attempted to board a tanker berthed at the Apapa new oil jetty in Lagos at 06:27.3N - 003:22.3E. A duty crew member raised the alarm after spotting five robbers attempting to board by pushing the barbed wire up on the seaward side of the tanker. When the alarm was raised, Nigerian Naval personnel onboard responded, causing the robbers to flee in a small boat. (Clearwater Dynamics, Dryad Global)

3. (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)

4. (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)

5. (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)

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

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

1. (U) INDIAN OCEAN: On 21 July, a disgruntled security guard involved in a pay dispute with his employer created a security incident, threatening the Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier JAEGER and its crew. After a nearly three-day standoff, the security incident was successfully resolved when the guard surrendered his weapon. During the incident, the guard fired his weapon, but did not harm any crew members. The security guard was one of three guards brought onboard to provide security during a transit in the Indian Ocean sailing towards the Red Sea. The other two guards supplied were not involved in the incident. (Marine Executive, Marine Link)

2. (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)

3. (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)
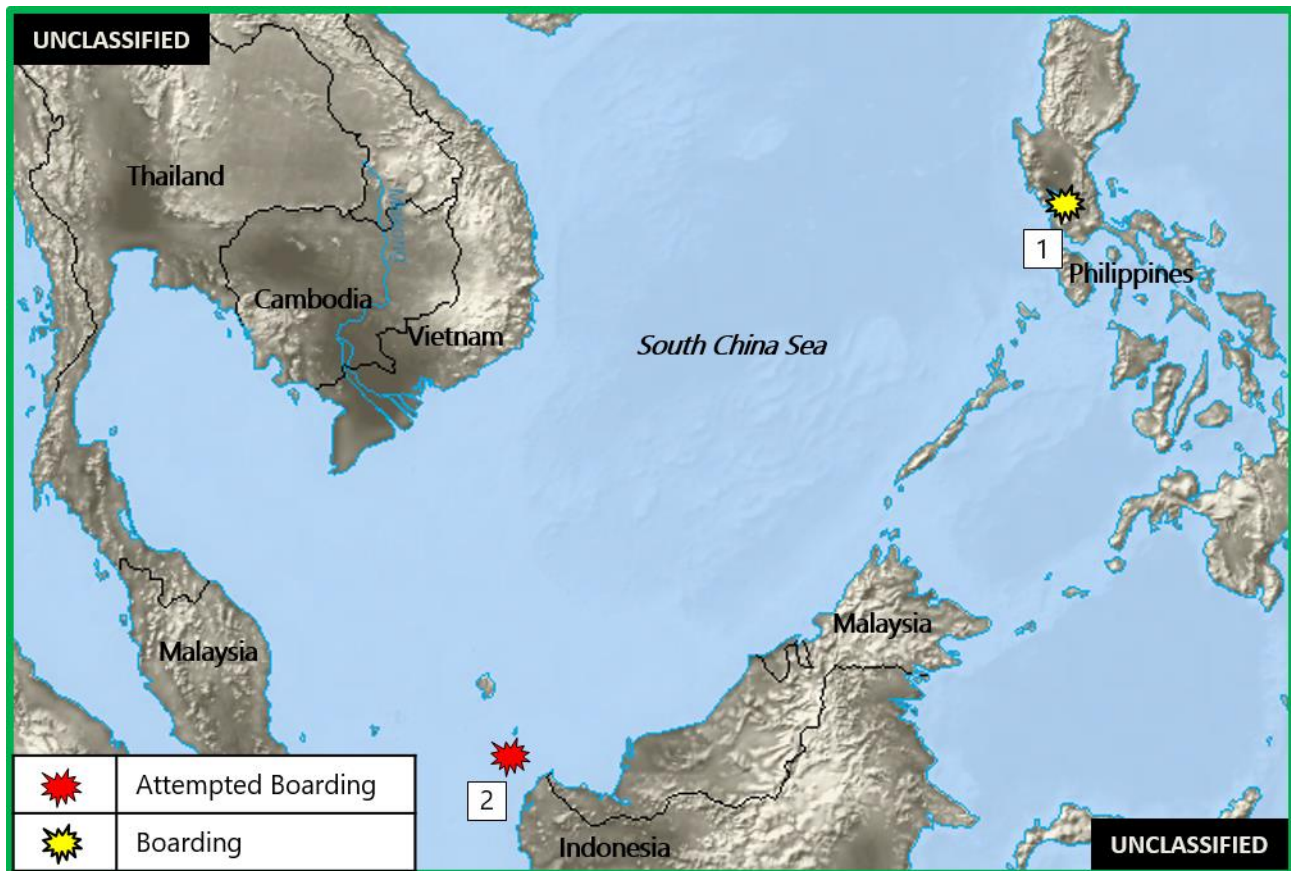
I. (U) **EAST ASIA - SOUTHEAST ASIA:**

Figure 3. Southeast Asia Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 20 July, robbers boarded the Liberia-flagged container ship NEWARK anchored in Manilla Bay at 14:32.6N -120:55.1E. The robbers broke into the paint store and bosun store and stole numerous items, including paint, welding machines, electrical drills, jigsaw electrical angle grinders, immersion suits, face shields, and a self-contained breathing apparatus. The theft was detected during routine rounds and reported to VTMS Manilla. The Philippine Coast Guard responded to the incident and conducted a survey of the area, but were unable to find the robbers. (Clearwater Dynamics, ReCAPP)

2. (U) INDONESIA: On 8 July, five individuals in a small boat attempted to come alongside and board the Panama-flagged LPG tanker GLOBAL PHENIX approximately 23 NM southeast of Natuna Island in vicinity of 03:27.5N -108:40.9E. The ship initiated evasive maneuvers while crew members directed the Aldis lights towards the approaching boat. The boat subsequently broke off its approach and departed the area. (ReCAAP, IMB)

3. (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)

4. (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)

5. (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)

6. (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)

7. (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)

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:** 5 Aug 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/