

UNCLASSIFIED



## (U) **WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report, 17 April–15 May 2024**



15 May 2024

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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) **INDIAN OCEAN:** On 13 May, six or seven pirates armed with automatic rifles hijacked an Iranian-flagged fishing vessel approximately 69 NM east of the Somali coast or 120 NM southeast of Eyl, Somalia.

**B.** (U) **BANGLADESH:** On 13 May, five robbers armed with long knives boarded a tanker at Chattogram Anchorage.

**C.** (U) **GULF OF ADEN:** On 10 May, a skiff with six armed persons onboard approached and open fire on a product tanker approximately 100 NM north of Bossaso, Somalia.

**D.** (U) **PHILIPPINES:** On 10 May, two robbers boarded a container ship at Manila Anchorage.

**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) GABON: On 7 May at 1630 UTC, a fishing trawler approached a tanker while approximately 89 NM southeast of Sao Tome, near position 00:15S – 008:05E. The closest point of approach was 0.9 NM. The trawler was not reporting or identifying on AIS. The tanker altered course and increased speed, which resulted in the trawler aborting the approach. The tanker's crew did not observe any weapons or ladders on the trawler. The tanker continued to its next port of call. (Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) NIGERIA: On 6 May at an unspecified time, an unknown number of perpetrators intercepted a passenger boat during its transit on the Onne River between Bonny and Onne (exact position not specified). The perpetrators robbed the boat's 20 passengers and abducted 7 before departing. (Clearwater Dynamics)

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

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



(U) Figure 1. East Africa Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea



(U) Figure 2. Arabian Sea Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea

1. (U) INDIAN OCEAN: On 13 May at 1338 UTC, six or seven pirates armed with automatic rifles hijacked an Iran-flagged fishing vessel approximately 69 NM east of the Somali coast (120 NM southeast of Eyl, Somalia) near position 06:20N – 052:05E. The pirates released the 21 crew and the fishing vessel after stealing food and logistical supplies. After the fishing vessel's release, an Indian Navy warship located, boarded and later escorted the fishing vessel to a safe location. (Clearwater Dynamics; Maritime Executive; IMB)

2. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 10 May at 0457 UTC, a skiff with six suspected pirates onboard approached the underway Marshall Islands-flagged product tanker CHRYSTAL ARCTIC approximately 100 NM north of Bossaso, Somalia, near position 12:38N – 048:24E. The perpetrators were armed with automatic rifles and RPG launchers. During the approach, the duty crew also observed a grapnel hook and ladder in the skiff. The master sounded the ship's horn and altered course. The perpetrators fired their weapons toward the tanker and the armed security team returned gunfire. During the firefight, the skiff caught fire and the perpetrators aborted their approach. The tanker continued its voyage. After the incident, a European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) Operation ATALANTA

warship, the Spanish frigate CANARIAS, in the vicinity responded, apprehended the six suspected pirates, and treated them for their injuries. On 13 May, CANARIAS reached the Seychelles to hand over the suspects to appropriate authorities. The suspects are currently in custody awaiting trial. (UKMTO; IMB; Clearwater Dynamics; EUNAVFOR; Maritime Executive; gCaptain; vesseltracker.com)

3. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 8 May at an unspecified time, a small fast boat with three persons onboard approached a merchant vessel while underway approximately 350 NM east of Socotra, Yemen, near position 11:49N – 060:32E. Following the approach, the boat turned away and returned to a 30-meter fishing vessel that had another three speedboats located at its stern. All vessels appeared to be acting together. No weapons or ladders were observed. (Clearwater Dynamics)

4. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 7 May at 0205 UTC, an attack occurred on a Panama-flagged container ship while underway approximately 82 NM south of Aden, Yemen, near position 11:23N – 045:01E. The master reported that two explosions hit the water approximately 200 meters from the vessel. The vessel and crew were reported safe. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

5. (U) RED SEA: On 29 April at 0702 UTC, three antiship ballistic missiles (ASBMs) and three UAVs launched from Houthi-controlled territory in Yemen targeted the Malta-flagged bulk carrier CYCLADES while underway approximately 51 NM northwest of Mokha, Yemen, near position 13:42N – 042:27E. The company security officer reported that the vessel had sustained damage, the vessel and crew were safe, and that the vessel was continuing its transit. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; U.S. Central Command; Maritime Executive)

6. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 28 April at 1440 UTC, a small boat with four persons onboard approached the port side of a merchant vessel underway approximately 177 NM southeast of Nishtun, Yemen (exact position not specified). After the vessel conducted evasive maneuvers, the boat ceased its pursuit and departed the area. Following the incident, the master reported the vessel and its crew were safe and that the vessel was resuming its voyage. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

7. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 26 April at 2200 UTC, a UAV targeted the Madeira-flagged container ship MSC ORION while underway approximately 300 NM southeast of the Horn of Africa, or more than 170 NM south of Socotra Island, near position 07:53N – 056:32E. The ship reported an explosion and found debris believed to be a UAV onboard. The master reported minor damage to the vessel, no injuries to the crew, and that the vessel was continuing its voyage. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; Maritime Executive)

8. (U) RED SEA: On 26 April at 1500 UTC, three ASBMs launched from Houthi-controlled territory in Yemen landed in the vicinity of two crude oil tankers, the Antigua and Barbuda-flagged MAISHA and the Panama-flagged ANDROMEDA STAR, while underway approximately 14 NM southwest of Mokha, Yemen (exact positions not specified). One missile impacted the water and two struck the ANDROMEDA STAR, causing minor damage. No other ship damage or crew injuries were reported, and the vessels continued their transits. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; U.S. Central Command)

9. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 25 April at 0715 UTC, the master of an underway merchant vessel reported that a loud bang was heard, followed by a splash and smoke coming from the sea, approximately 15 NM southwest of Aden,

Yemen (exact position not specified). The vessel was not hit and all crew were reported safe. The vessel proceeded to its next port of call. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics)

10. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 24 April at 0900 UTC, an ASBM launched from Houthi-controlled territory in Yemen targeted the U.S.-flagged container ship MAERSK YORKTOWN while underway approximately 72 NM southeast of Djibouti, near position 11:18N – 044:18E. U.S. Central Command confirmed that coalition forces engaged and destroyed the ASBM. The master reported an explosion in the water at a distance from the vessel. The vessel and crew were reported safe. (UKMTO; Clearwater Dynamics; Maritime Executive; vesseltracker.com)

11. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 21 April at 1035 UTC, three skiffs approached a Panama-flagged container ship from a distance of 5 NM, approximately 50 NM south of Socotra Island, Yemen, near position 11:36N – 054:35E. As the skiffs continued their approach, the ship altered course and, after a period of time, the skiffs stopped their pursuit. The master reported that the vessel and crew were safe, and that the vessel would proceed to its next port of call. (Clearwater Dynamics)

#### I. (U) EAST ASIA – SOUTHEAST ASIA:



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

1. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 10 May at 0520 local time, two robbers boarded a Portugal-flagged container ship anchored at Manila Anchorage, near position 14:35N – 120:51E. The duty crew observed the robbers near the forecandle and raised the alarm. Following the raising of the alarm, the perpetrators escaped the vessel with ship's property. A small boat was subsequently spotted on the ship's radar departing the area toward shore. After the incident, the ship reported all crew were safe and informed the Manila Vessel Traffic Management System and Coast Guard of the incident. (Clearwater Dynamics; IMB)

2. (U) INDONESIA: On 1 May at 0154 local time, two robbers armed with knives boarded the Madeira-flagged product tanker HAFNIA PACIFIC anchored at Belawan Anchorage, near position 03:54N – 098:45E. The crew spotted the robbers onboard and raised the alarm. After hearing the alarm, the robbers fled with ship's stores. All

crew were reported safe following the incident and the vessel did not require any assistance. (Clearwater Dynamics; ReCAAP)

**J. (U) INDIAN SUBCONTINENT:**

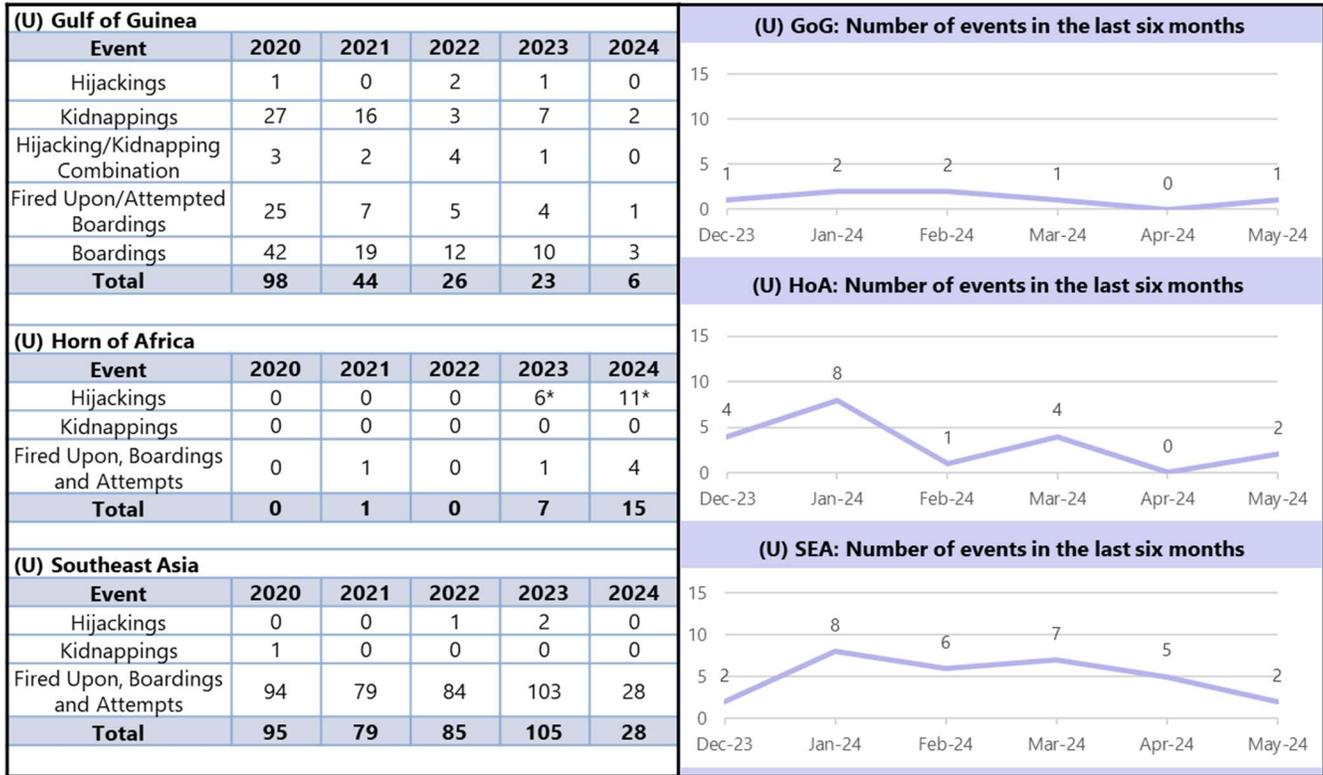


(U) Figure 4. Indian Subcontinent Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea

1. (U) BANGLADESH: On 13 May at 0345 local time, five robbers armed with long knives boarded a tanker at Chattogram Anchorage, near position 22:16N 091:42E. The duty crew noticed movement on the poop deck and raised the alarm. The master mustered the crew and they conducted a search for intruders. The crew found two watchmen tied up, the paint store lock broken, and ship's stores missing. The ship reported the incident to the Coast Guard. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics)

**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**



\*Horn of Africa hijacking numbers include Dhows and Fishing Vessels

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="#">2024-006: Southern Red Sea, Bab el Mandeb Strait, Gulf of Aden, Indian Ocean, Somali Basin, Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman, Strait of Hormuz, and Persian Gulf – Threats to Commercial Vessels</a>	18 APR 24	15 OCT 24
<a href="#">2024-005: Global – U.S. Maritime Advisory Updates, Resources, and Contacts</a>	16 APR 24	12 OCT 24
<a href="#">2024-003: Black Sea and Sea of Azov – Military Combat Operations</a>	26 FEB 24	25 AUG 24
<a href="#">2024-002: Worldwide – Foreign Adversarial Technological, Physical, and Cyber Influence</a>	21 FEB 24	19 AUG 24
<a href="#">2023-016: Gulf of Guinea – Piracy/Armed Robbery/Kidnapping for Ransom</a>	27 DEC 23	24 JUN 24

(U) **ICOD:** 15 May 2024

(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/>