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(U) **WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report** **12 February - 14 March 2018**



15 March 2018

(U) **Table of Contents**

1. (U) **Scope Note**
2. (U) **Warnings and Advisories**
3. (U) **Summary**
4. (U) **Counter-Piracy and Maritime Crime Announcements and Advisories**
5. (U) **Details: Monthly Incidents by Region**
6. (U) **Appendix A: Further Contact Information and Resources**
7. (U) **Appendix B: Terminology and References**

1. (U) **Scope Note**

1. (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) **MDAT-GOG Advisory 003/MAR/2018**: Category: Suspicious Approach. Description: On 8 March 2018 at 1700 UTC, a merchant vessel was approached by three speedboats, in position 03:55N - 001:14E (155°/65NM from Takoradi, Ghana). Occupants were wearing camouflage clothing and carrying weapons. Vessels transiting the area are advised to exercise extreme caution. Source: Reported to MDAT-GoG via email. Any queries regarding this Advisory Notice ring 0033 298 22 88 88 for further information. This Advisory is not classified as a Maritime Security Event and has not been verified by MDAT-GoG. This information is provided to inform maritime situational awareness for mariners operating in the region. MDAT-GoG is not responsible for the accuracy of this reporting. MDAT-GOG Watchkeeper email: watchkeepers@mdat-gog.org, emergency Tel: +33(0) 298 22 88 88.

B. (U) **UKMTO ADVISORY NOTICE 002/MAR/2018**: Category: Suspicious Approach. Description: On 8 March 2018 at 0920, an MV in position 12:32N - 043:27E (Bab el Mandeb Strait) was approached by 3 skiffs, 3-4 POBs each. Vsl and crew are safe. Vessels transiting the area are advised to exercise extreme caution. Source: Reported to UKMTO via email and telephone. Any queries regarding this Advisory Notice ring 0044 2392 222060 only for further information. This advisory is not classified as a Maritime Security Event and has not been verified by UKMTO. This information is provided to inform maritime situational awareness for mariners operating in the region. UKMTO is not responsible for the accuracy of this reporting. UKMTO Watchkeeper email: watchkeepers@ukmto.org, emergency Tel: +971 5055 23215

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3. (U) Summary

A. (U) VIETNAM: On 11 March, Vietnamese fishermen spotted a drifting, unmanned, fishing vessel in waters off Bac Lieu, south of Ho Chi Minh City.

B. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 10 March, it was announced that HMAS WARRAMUNGA boarded her third vessel in just four days, interdicting millions of dollars' worth of heroin.

C. (U) NIGERIA: On 9 March, a pregnant woman was injured by gunfire from armed robbers that attacked a Yenagoa bound passenger boat in the coastal area of Koluama in Southern Ijaw local government area of Bayelsa State.

D. (U) GHANA: On 8 March, a merchant vessel was approached by three speedboats 65 nm southeast of Takoradi.

E. (U) COSTA RICA: On 7 March, a low-profile narco-submarine was abandoned by cocaine traffickers near Punta Burica.

F. (U) SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES: On 1 February, a charter yacht anchored in Canouan Charlestown Bay was boarded.

4. (U) Counter-Piracy and Maritime Crime Announcements

A. (U) GULF OF ADEN: Government of Japan convoy schedule for March 2018. To apply for JMSDF escort, visit http://www.mlit.go.jp/en/maritime/maritime_fr2_000000.html, please contact directly the Anti-Piracy Contact and Coordination Office, Maritime Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MILT), Japan: Tel: +81-3-5253-8932; Fax: +81-3-5253-1643. Email: INFO-PIRACY@mlit.go.jp. (MSCHOA)

B. (U) GULF OF ADEN: Korean Navy convoy schedule for March 2018. All merchant vessels wishing to join the convoy group must submit their application forms directly to the ROK naval warship carrying out the mission. The ROK MTG can be reached directly at 001-646-466-9522. Email: chunghae26@navy.mil. (MSCHOA)

C. (U) GULF OF ADEN: Chinese Navy convoy schedule for March 2018. For further information, please e-mail: planavy@navy.mil.cn or etg546cn@163.com, or call Tel 00870 773 120 772. (MSCHOA)

D. (U) GULF OF ADEN: Indian Navy convoy escort schedule for March 2018. To register, email: gcommcentre-dgs@nic.in; or visit ww.dgshipping.com. Telephone numbers for contact are: 91-22-22614646 or fax at 91-22-22613636. (MSCHOA)

5. (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 1 March, the U.S. embassy in Mexico issued a travel alert for a popular tourist destination in southeast Mexico. This came a little more than a week after an explosion on a ferry in Playa del Carmen injured more than 20 people, some of them U.S. citizens. The alert was issued the same day as another explosive device was found on another ferry owned by the same company in Cozumel, another tourist hub in the area. According to the alert, which advised U.S. travelers to exercise caution, purchase travel and medical-evacuation insurance, and contact the nearest embassy or consulate for assistance. (www.businessinsider.com; www.cbsnews.com/news)

2. (U) UNITED STATES: On 24 February, U.S. Coast Guard law enforcement crews interdicted a Mexican lancha boat crew engaged in illegal fishing in federal waters off south Texas. According to USCG, crews stopped one lancha with a total of four Mexican fishermen engaged in illegal fishing. The Coast Guard says, the lancha, with fishing gear onboard, was seized. The fishermen were detained. (www.kristv.com)

3. (U) UNITED STATES: On 22 February, violations were issued east of Cape Romain, South Carolina after the U.S. Coast Guard saw the crew of a fishing vessel set and retrieve pots in a prohibited area. The Coast Guard found 800 pounds of illegally caught black sea bass aboard the vessel. (www.wpde.com/news/local-and-state)

4. (U) MEXICO: On 21 February, as many as 25 people were injured in an explosion aboard a ferry docked in Playa Del Carmen. Video of the incident shows several people on the dock at the time of the explosion. Amazingly, there are no reported deaths or life-threatening injuries. Twenty Mexicans, three Canadians and two Americans are among the injured. The cause of the explosion is under investigation. (www.gcaptain.com)

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

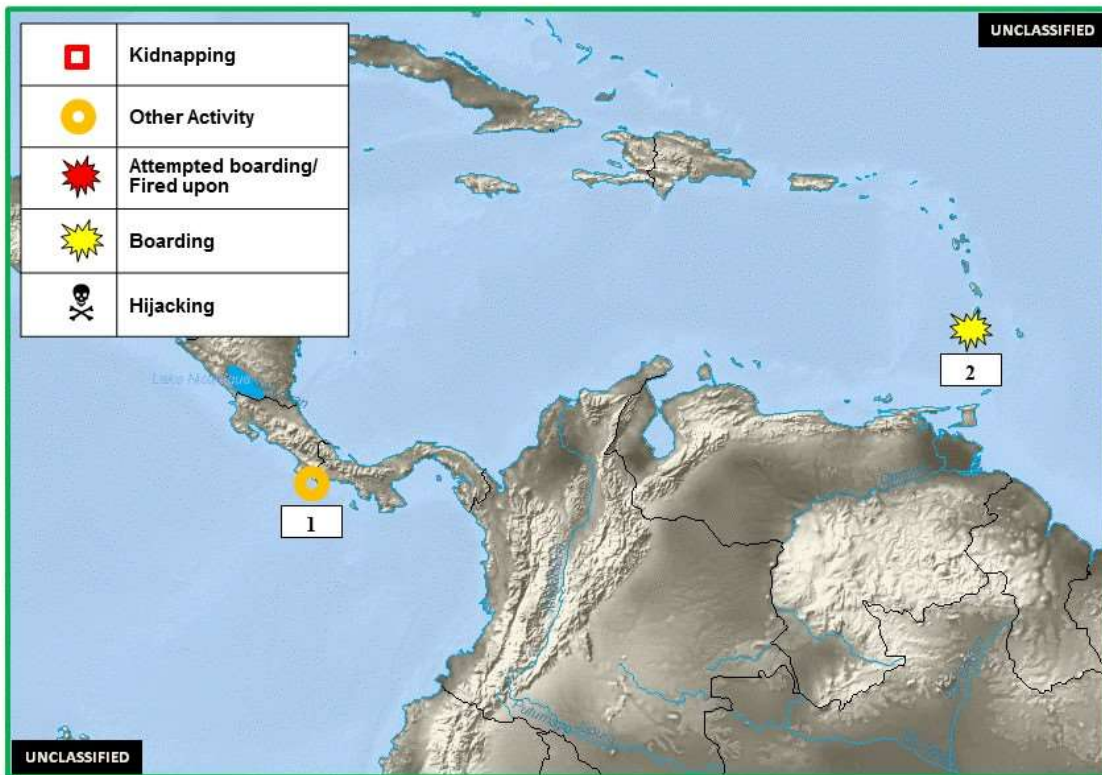


Figure 1. Central America - Caribbean - South America Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) COSTA RICA: On 7 March, a low profile narco-submarine, 10 meters long and powered by three Yamaha 75 HP

two-stroke engines, was abandoned by cocaine traffickers near Punta Burica in the South Pacific, very close to Panamanian coasts. The submersible was spotted by a private boater who notified the authorities. A patrol boat of the National Service of Guarcacostas of Costa Rica went towards the place and found the boat. The semi-submersible was flooded, a situation that made towing difficult because it was very heavy. Even so, the Coast Guard officers towed her to the main dock of Golfito. Officials of the Drug Control Police (PCD) of Costa Rica and personnel of the Public Ministry proceeded to carry out an inspection but no traces of narcotics were found. (www.maritimeherald.com)

2. (U) SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES: On 1 February, a charter yacht anchored in Canouan Charlestown Bay was boarded overnight while everyone was sleeping. The catamaran was not locked. The victims found that cash, personal electronics and clothing had been stolen from inside the yacht. (ww.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

3. (U) BRAZIL: On 3 March, police seized 907 kilograms of cocaine at the port of Rio de Janeiro. The drugs were wrapped in separate packets and hidden in duffel bags distributed between two containers offloaded at the port. Authorities found the cocaine during an operation to find guns, ammunition and drugs bound for organized crime groups in Rio de Janeiro state. (www.news.com.au/world)

4. (U) COLOMBIA: On 27 February, a dingy outboard engine and fuel tank were stolen from a sailing yacht anchored in Cartagena. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

5. (U) ST LUCIA: On 26 February, a cable locked dinghy was stolen from a sailing yacht anchored at Rodney Bay Gros Islet. Fisherman recovered it floating 3 miles offshore and it was returned to the owner. Some minor damage was noted. Apparently the thief had been unable to defeat the engine lock and left behind an extra oar. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

6. (U) ST LUCIA: On 26 February, a cable locked dinghy was stolen from a sailing yacht anchored at Rodney Bay Gros Islet. At that same time, they saw the police motor past with the dinghy in tow. They signaled the police, who came over, and after establishing ownership, the police took a report. The police indicated the dinghy had been found on the beach with some inflatable devices that had apparently been used to get to the yacht. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

7. (U) ECUADOR: On 25 February, a duty crewman on routine rounds onboard a container ship anchored near position 02:21S - 079:59W, Guayaquil Inner Anchorage, saw five robbers on the aft deck. One robber, with a gun was seen near the entrance to the steering gear room. The crewman retreated and informed the duty officer. Alarm raised and port control notified. A coast guard boat was sent to the vessel. All crew safe. Nothing reported stolen. (IMB)

8. (U) HAITI: On 22 February, a duty crewman on routine rounds onboard a tanker anchored near position 18:34N - 072:24W, Port Au Prince Anchorage, saw robbers armed with guns on the forecastle deck and immediately raised the alarm. Crew was mustered. Seeing the alerted crew, one of the robbers fired a warning shot and escaped. Crew and ship reported safe. Incident reported to local authorities. (IMB)

9. (U) ARGENTINA: On 22 February, the Argentine Coast Guard opened fire on a Chinese boat caught illegally fishing within Argentina's exclusive economic zone. The coast guard said the boat JING YUAN 626 was caught sailing within Argentina's exclusive economic zone along with four other vessels, all bearing Chinese flags. The authorities said the four vessels attempted to ram into the coast guard's boat and carried out other maneuvers putting the Argentine crew at risk. The fishing vessel's pursuit lasted almost eight hours in adverse weather conditions before Argentina's ministry of foreign affairs ordered the coast guard to end the chase. In 2016, a similar discovery of a Chinese boat illegally fishing in Argentina's exclusive economic zone ended with the sinking of the Chinese trawler LU YAN YUAN YU 010, forcing the crew to abandon ship. (www.fis.com; www.newsweek.com)

10. (U) BRAZIL: On 15 February, the duty officer onboard a bulk carrier anchored near position 00:02N - 051:04W, Macapa Anchorage, saw the forecastle door open and unauthorized persons walk out onto the forward deck. Alarm raised and crew mustered. Seeing the alerted crew, the robbers escaped. On searching the vessel, ship's stores were reported stolen.

Port authority notified via local agent. (IMB)

11. (U) VENEZUELA: On 15 February, three robbers armed with knives boarded an anchored tanker near position 10:14N - 064:44W, Puerto La Cruz Anchorage. Duty crewman on routine rounds saw the robbers and notified the duty officer. The duty crewman was threatened by one of the robbers. Alarm raised and crew mustered. Seeing the alerted crew, the robbers escaped with stolen ship's stores. Incident reported to the Puerto La Cruz VTS. A Coast Guard patrol boat was dispatched to investigate. (IMB)

12. (U) BRAZIL: On 14 February, a diver was spotted near the container ship MSC MELINE, docked at Santos, at dawn. The diver fled, leaving behind him a floating waterproof bag with 28 kilograms of cocaine in it. Police surveyed the ship's hull later that day and found two more bags locked in a steel box, containing 57 kilograms of cocaine. (www.fleetmon.com)

C. (U) ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA:

1. (U) ENGLAND: On 17 February, 5.8 million smuggled cigarettes were seized at Dover's Eastern Docks. Border Force officers stopped a Polish-registered truck which had arrived at the Port on a ferry from Calais. Paperwork for the vehicle's load declared it was laden with pallets of insulation and "eco wood". When a search of it was carried out, only 6 pallets were found, along with 24 pallets of cigarettes. (www.itv.com/news)

D. (U) NORTHERN EUROPE - BALTIC:

1. (U) BELGIUM: On 26 February, police arrested six people after the Belgian authorities discovered 4,500 kilograms of cocaine in a container at the port of Antwerp. The cocaine was hidden in a banana shipment that came from Colombia. The Belgian authorities removed the drugs from the container and sent it on to its delivery address. The Dutch police took over when that delivery address turned out to be in Oss. The suspects - four men and two women - were arrested when they came to search the container. (www.nltimes.nl)

E. (U) MEDITERRANEAN - BLACK SEA:

1. (U) GREECE: On 4 March, Greece's Coast Guard seized 1.3 tons of cannabis, hidden aboard a fishing vessel intercepted off the southern island of Crete. The drug bust was the result of a three-day operation. Greek authorities had been informed by French Customs that a suspect ship was sailing to the southeast of the island. The operation involved four coast guard patrol vessels and two planes, one belonging to Frontex, the European border and coast guard agency. The suspect fishing boat, F/V CELINE STAR, was spotted by the Frontex aircraft about 60 nautical miles southeast off Crete. The fishing boat, which had sailed from Syria towards an undisclosed European port, attempted to flee unsuccessfully and was escorted to the port of Ierapetra in Crete. Its captain and four-member crew were arrested, the Greek Coast Guard said. (www.marinelink.com/news)

2. (U) GIBRALTAR: On 27 February, HM Customs Marine Section assisted by Gibraltar Defense police officers seized approximately 150 cartons of smuggled cigarettes and arrested a Spanish national at Western Beach. The individual was arrested when spotted trying to swim across the harbor back to Spain pushing two large bags containing the cigarettes. (www.euroweeklynews.com/news)

3. (U) TUNISIA: On 16 February, authorities detained the RO-RO ship URAL in the port of Sfax for a more thorough search after a consignment of weapons was found on board. (www.fleetmon.com)

4. (U) ITALY: On 16 February, 300 kilograms of cocaine were found on board the container ship DIMITRIS C in Genoa. Plastic bags with cocaine were found by ship's all-Ukrainian crew and reported to Italian authorities. The authorities commended the crew in finding and seizing of the drugs. Prior to Europe, the ship was calling a number of South and Central American ports. (www.fleetmon.com)

F. (U) WEST AFRICA

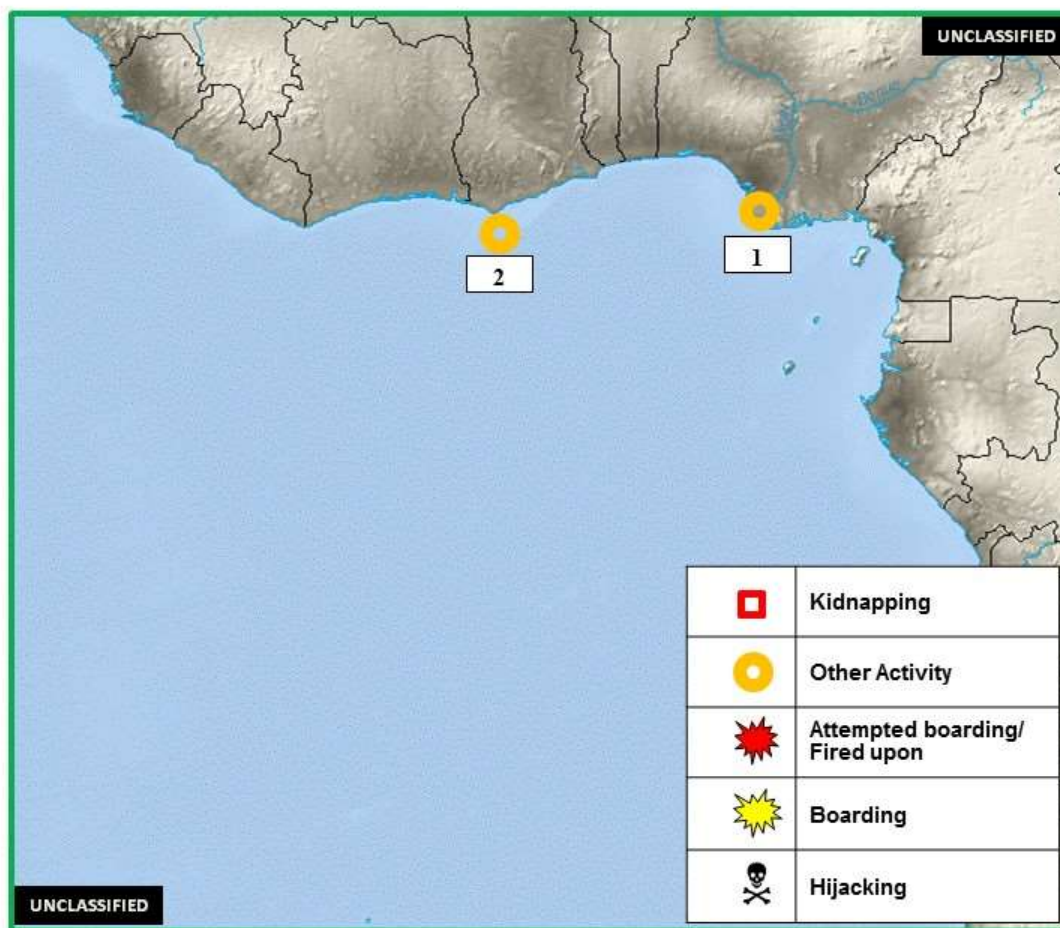


Figure 2. West Africa Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) NIGERIA: On 9 March, a pregnant woman was injured by gunfire from armed robbers that attacked a Yenagoa bound passenger boat in the coastal area of Koluama in Southern Ijaw local government area of Bayelsa State. The passenger boat was travelling from Koluama to Yenagoa when the pirates struck in the early hours of the day. The Chairman of the Bayelsa State chapter of the Nigerian Maritime Workers' Union said the pirates also stole the 200 horsepower engine belonging to the boat owner as well as the belongings of the passengers. (www.vanguardngr.com)

2. (U) GHANA: On 8 March, a merchant vessel was approached by three speedboats near position 03:55N - 001:14E, 65 nm southeast of Takoradi. Occupants were wearing camouflage clothing and carrying weapons. (MDAT-GoG)

3. (U) NIGERIA: On 6 March, a merchant vessel was attacked by armed men in two speedboats near position 04:04N - 006:56E, 25 nm southwest of Bonny. (MDAT-GoG)

4. (U) NIGERIA: On 6 March, a chemical tanker was boarded by heavily armed pirates near position 04:05N - 006:56E, 21 nm southwest of Bonny Island. All crew went into the citadel and the Nigerian Navy was notified. Pirates damaged communications equipment and fired shots. The pirates escaped before the Nigerian Navy ship arrived. The crew emerged from the citadel and regained control of the vessel. (MDAT-GoG)

5. (U) NIGERIA: On 6 March, gunmen in speedboats invaded Ogbia town in Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa

State during the early afternoon hours, kidnapping one woman and stealing four boats. (www.sguardian.com)

6. (U) NIGERIA: On 5 March, gunmen in speedboats invaded Anyama community in Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, killing two persons, injuring three others and stealing 10 speedboats. Local sources told news reporters that the suspected pirates arrived the community at about 9 pm and shot indiscriminately, causing a huge panic. (www.sguardian.com)

7. (U) NIGERIA: On 1 March, it was reported that the four crew members taken hostage from the refrigerated cargo ship SIERRA LEYER off the coast of Nigeria have been released after 19 days in captivity, according to the ship's owner. M/V SIERRA LEYER, a Bahamas-flagged vessel, was attacked by pirates off Onne, Nigeria, on 9 February on its way to Port Harcourt from Nouadhibou in Mauritania, when it broadcasted a distress signal. Ten assailants attempted to board the vessel, however, only half were successful but managed to kidnap four crewmen. The crew were held in captivity in the Niger Delta. (Lloyd's)

8. (U) BENIN: On 27 February, five armed persons approached the product tanker ST MARSEILLE anchored near position 06:21N - 002:25E, Cotonou Harbor in a speed boat. As they boarded the vessel they commenced firing and injured one of the Benin Navy guards onboard the tanker. All crew except the duty officer on the bridge retreated into the citadel. As the armed persons made their way to the bridge they fired upon and injured another Navy guard. They took hostage the duty officer and demanded the master, chief officer and chief engineer come on the bridge. The armed persons demanded the master heave up anchor but when they were notified that the tanker was in ballast they stole crew properties, kidnapped the master and one engineer and left the vessel in the tanker's lifeboat. The Benin Navy was notified to medivac the injured guards. Once the armed persons were safely ashore, they released the master and engineer who were able to make contact with the local police and later joined the tanker. (MDAT-GoG; www.fleetmon.com; IMB)

9. (U) NIGERIA: On 24 February, two skiffs with 2 - 3 armed pirates in each skiff chased and fired upon a bulk carrier underway near position 03:38N - 006:37E, 45 nm southeast of Brass. Ship increased speed, crew mustered in a safe place and the armed guards were on standby. Due to the hardened measures, the pirates aborted the attempt. (IMB)

10. (U) NIGERIA: On 24 February, 10 pirates in a speed boat, armed with automatic weapons, chased and fired upon a reefer vessel underway near position 03:38N - 006:42E, 40 nm south-southwest off Bonny Fairway buoy. The armed guards onboard the vessel returned fire, resulting in the pirates aborting the attack and moving away. All crew safe. Vessel sustained minor damage due to the gun fire. (IMB)

11. (U) NIGERIA: On 24 February, eight armed pirates in a speed boat chased a container vessel underway near position 03:33N - 007:02E, 50 nm south-southwest of Bonny Island. Alarm was raised, SSAS activated, speed increased and all non-essential crew retreated to the citadel. Nigerian Navy contacted, who informed the master to rendezvous with their naval vessel in the vicinity. As the pirate boat closed the master commenced evasive maneuvers. Due to the hardening, the pirates were unable to hook their ladder onto the vessel and moved away. Nigerian Navy escorted the vessel to the pilot boarding point. (IMB)

12. (U) NIGERIA: On 22 February, a merchant vessel reported being attacked near position 03:30N - 006:31E, 67 nm southwest of Bonny. (MDAT-GoG)

13. (U) NIGERIA: On 18 February, a speed boat with six to seven armed pirates chased and fired upon a tanker underway near position 03:41N - 006:37E, 42 nm southeast off Brass. Alarm raised, crew mustered, evasive maneuvers commenced and Nigerian authorities contacted. Due to the vessel hardening, the pirates were unable to board the vessel and moved away. The vessel was escorted to Bonny anchorage by two Navy vessels. All crew are safe. Vessel sustained minor damage due to being fired upon. (IMB)

14. (U) NIGERIA: On 20 February, six robbers boarded an anchored merchant vessel near position 06:17N - 003:14E, southwest of Lagos. They jumped overboard once the vessel sounded alarms. Nothing was stolen. (MDAT-GoG)

15. (U) NIGERIA: On 19 February, six pirates armed with AK-47 rifles in a black hull speed boat approached and attempted to board a crude oil tanker underway near position 04:02N - 006:34E, 25 nm southeast of Brass. Master raised the alarm, activated SSAS, transmitted distress message, increased speed, took evasive maneuvers and crew secured all access doors. The pirates made seven attempts to hook an aluminum ladder on the tanker's railing but were unsuccessful due to the evasive maneuvers taken by the master. They then fired upon at the tanker and moved away. A Nigerian Navy boat was in contact with the tanker and arrived at the location. The tanker and crew are safe. (IMB)

16. (U) BENIN: On 17 February, the duty officer onboard a tanker anchored near position 06:17N - 002:30E, Cotonou Anchorage, noticed three armed persons on deck and immediately raised the alarm. SSAS activated and all crew retreated to the citadel. The IMB Piracy Reporting Centre received the incident information from the CSO and immediately informed the Benin authorities. Three patrol boats were dispatched to the location. They searched the waters around the tanker. A Navy team boarded the tanker. On confirmation from the team that the tanker was clear of pirates, the master and crew emerged from the citadel. On investigating, the ship's office port hole was damaged due to a gunshot and other ship's property found damaged. (IMB)

17. (U) NIGERIA: On 15 February, four pirates in a speed boat chased and fired upon a container ship underway near position 03:42N - 007:05E, 40 nm south-southwest of Bonny. The master increased speed and commenced evasive maneuvers. Due to the presence of a Nigerian naval escort boat the pirates aborted and moved away. Crew and ship reported safe. (IMB)

18. (U) NIGERIA: On 13 February, customs officials said they had seized banned drugs, including the powerful pain killer tramadol, which is popular with jihadists. A Nigeria Customs Service spokesman said four shipping containers of controlled and prohibited pharmaceuticals arrived in Lagos from India. (www.businesslive.co.za)

G. (U) ARABIAN GULF:

1. (U) BAHRAIN: On 19 February, police foiled an attempt to smuggle a large shipment of liquor into the kingdom. A gang of 21 individuals from different Asian countries were arrested during the operation, the Director General of Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science said. The smugglers used a sand carrier vessel to load the bottles from a boat further out to sea, then offloaded them with help from their accomplices in the area reserved for the company at the port. (www.gulfnews.com)

2. (U) DUBAI: On 12 February, police arrested five individuals who attempted to smuggle a large consignment of drugs hidden in a large drilling machine aboard a ship that arrived at Hamriyah Port. On dismantling the machine, police found a huge quantity of pills, 783,800 in number, of three different drugs, concealed inside the cylinder in the front of the machine. In addition to this, 562 plastic bags with a total of 115 kg of captagon pills were found. (www.khaleejtimes.com/news/crime)

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

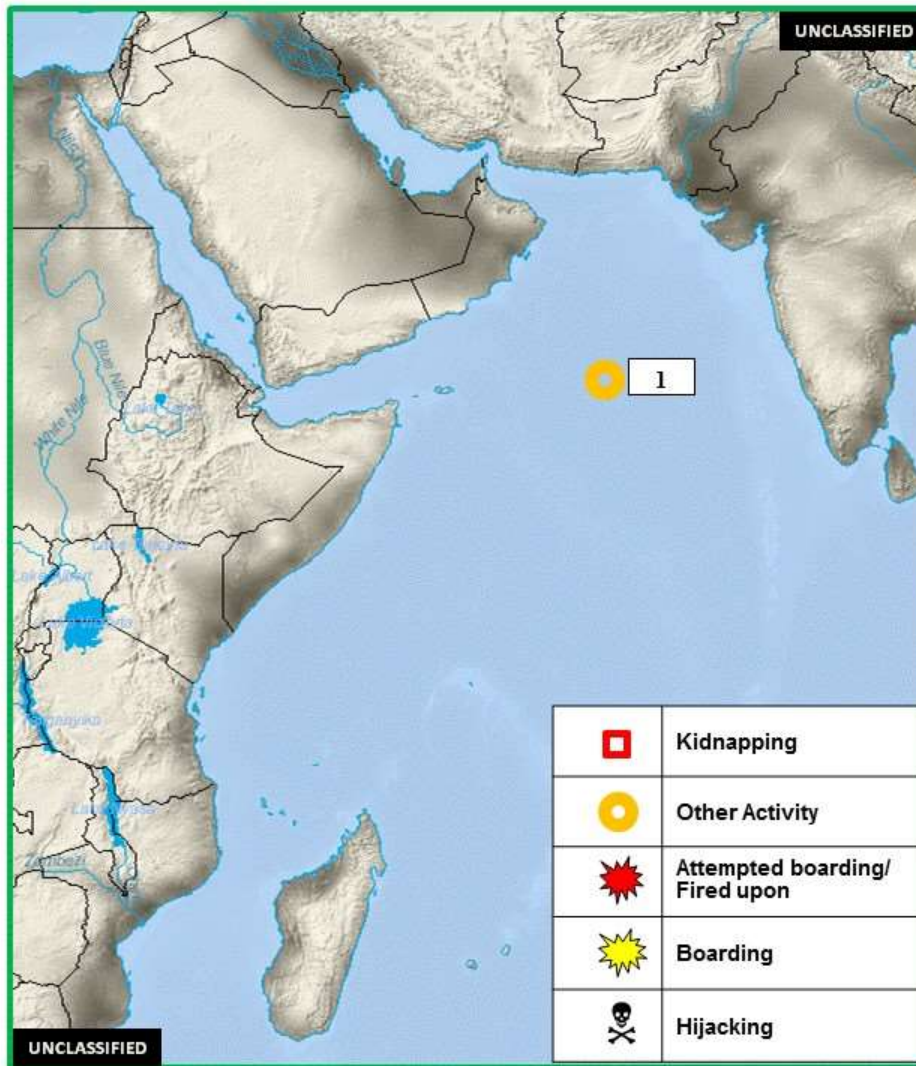


Figure 3. Indian Ocean - East Africa - Red Sea
Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 10 March, it was announced that Her Majesty's Australian Ship (HMAS) WARRAMUNGA boarded her third vessel in just four days, interdicting millions of dollars' worth of heroin. Combined Task Force (CTF) 150, CMF's counter-terrorism and maritime security task force, seized 12,216kg of hashish and 132kg of heroin from 3 to 6 March in the Arabian Sea. "Removing heroin from circulation reduces the funding resources available for terrorists, which then reduces their ability to inflict suffering on the communities in East Africa," said CTF 150 commander Commodore Mal Wise. CTF 150, as part of CMF, supported by international agencies such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, seeks to disrupt smuggling networks transferring illicit narcotics from Central Asia through to East Africa. (www.gdnonline.com)

2. (U) RED SEA: On 8 March, a merchant vessel was approached by 3 skiffs, with 3-4 persons in each skiff near position 12:32N - 043:27E, Bab el Mandeb Strait. Vessel and crew are safe. (UKMTO)

3. (U) SOUTH AFRICA: On 21 February, the Hawks Eastern Cape Serious Organized Crime unit seized 1.6 tons of smuggled abalone in Durban harbor. (www.timeslive.co.za/news)

4. (U) SOMALIA: On 5 March, seventy-five Somalis touched down at Mogadishu's international airport after serving up to seven years in jail for piracy offenses, according to a Somali media outlet. Seventy-five Somali men received a warm welcome from Mahdi Mohamed Guled Khadar, deputy prime minister, and other government officials. All the men

kneeled to kiss Somali soil as they got off the plane, the site reported. India's navy captured the men off Somalia's coast and they were charged with piracy. (www.hellenicshippingnews.com)

5. (U) INDIAN OCEAN: On 23 February, Singapore-flagged product tanker LEOPARD SUN was attacked by pirates, near position 03:26N - 050:27E, 159 nm off the central coast of Somalia. The tanker was approached by three skiffs and was fired upon by armed pirates. The armed security team onboard the vessel returned fire, preventing the pirates from boarding the ship, United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) said. According to EUNAVFOR, the vessel and the crew are reported to be safe. (UKMTO; www.worldmaritimeneews.com)

6. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 18 February, a merchant vessel near position 13:59N - 051:14E, near Point B in the IRTC, reported a suspicious approach by a skiff. (UKMTO)

I. (U) EAST ASIA - SOUTHEAST ASIA - INDIAN SUBCONTINENT:

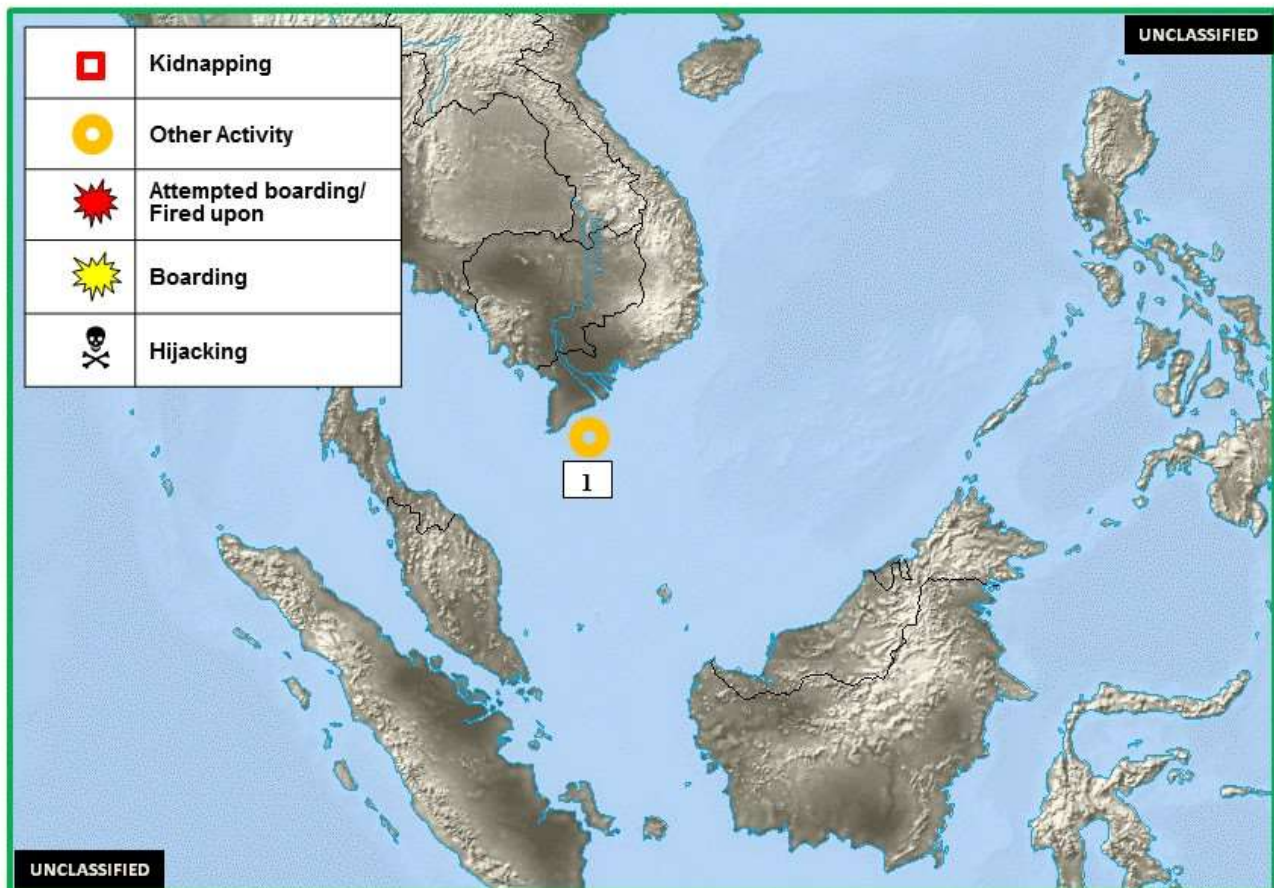


Figure 4. East Asia – Southeast Asia – Indian Subcontinent Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) VIETNAM: On 11 March, Vietnamese fishermen spotted a drifting, unmanned, fishing vessel in waters off Bac Lieu, south of Ho Chi Minh City. It was a Chinese fishing vessel with nobody on board, and no traces as to the crew's fate. Fishermen towed the ghost ship to Vietnamese waters. The ship is 30 meters long, 6 meters wide, with the hull in poor condition. (www.dtinews.vn/en/news)

2. (U) BANGLADESH: On 3 March, members of Forest Guard rescued 14 abducted fishermen and seven fishing boats

following a gunfight with forest robbers in Gatar Khal area of Katka sanctuary in the Sundarbans. In a follow-on operation, members of Bangladesh Coast Guard and Forest Guard jointly conducted several operations in different places in the forest and rescued eight more fishermen and three boats, said a spokesman. (www.theindependentbd.com)

3. (U) INDONESIA: On 3 March, two robbers boarded a bulk carrier anchored near position 06:02S - 106:53E, Tanjung Priok Anchorage. Duty motorman saw the robbers on the aft deck and raised the alarm. Seeing the alerted crew, the robbers escaped in a waiting boat. On searching the vessel nothing reported stolen. (IMB)

4. (U) INDONESIA: On 28 February, an Indonesian Navy patrol boat found the abandoned tanker PISCES anchored in waters off Batam Island, very close to an underwater gas pipeline. There were no people on board and no signs of distress. According to an Indonesian spokesman, the tanker was abandoned recently, for no apparent reason. The tanker was towed to Tanjung Uban port, Bintan island, and berthed. Indonesian authorities are searching for any information on tanker's owner, manager or agent, and fate of the crew. (www.fleetmon.com)

5. (U) SINGAPORE: On 24 February, tug MITRA SAMUDERA 28 with 11 crew, towing an empty barge, was boarded by four armed pirates in Karimun Regency waters, south of Singapore, while en route from Malaysia to south Sumatra after offloading cargo of coal. Crew were robbed, one of the crew was seriously wounded during the assault. (www.fleetmon.vom)

6. (U) MALAYSIA: On 22 February, a band of armed men attacked a fishing boat in Segama, Kinabatangan. The State Deputy Police Commissioner said the armed men were believed to have attempted to kidnap or rob the five fishermen in the boat but failed when they managed to escape. He said "Investigations revealed the armed men were from the Philippines based on the location of the incident near the national border with the Philippines," he told a news conference. The spokesman said police were in the process of identifying the group. (www.themalaymailonline.com)

7. (U) INDONESIA: On 20 February, authorities seized 1.6 tons of crystal methamphetamine hidden aboard a Singapore-flagged ship in their second major drug bust this month, officials said. Customs inspectors said they spotted the vessel between Indonesia's Sumatra island and Singapore and reported it to police. A subsequent search of the ship turned up the huge haul of narcotics stuffed into 81 rice sacks. Four Taiwanese crew were arrested. Earlier this month the Indonesian Navy seized 1.3 tons of crystal methamphetamine and arrested four Taiwanese crew on a ship spotted in the strait between Singapore and Indonesia. Indonesia has some of the world's toughest anti-drugs laws, including capital punishment for some trafficking cases. (www.rappler.com/world)

8. (U) INDONESIA: On 18 February, robbers boarded a tug anchored near position 01:09N - 103:56E, 3 nm west of Batu Ampar Port. During routine rounds, the bosun reported the lock to the engine room hatch was broken. Investigations revealed several foot prints on the aft deck and a large number of spare parts missing. (IMB)

9. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 16 February, an attack by suspected Abu Sayyaf militants was thwarted after boiling water mixed with oil was poured on the men as they tried to board the vessel. The M/V KUDOS 1 was sailing off the waters of Basilan in the Philippines when it was attacked by men in three motorboats. After their boarding attempt failed, the pirates fired shots at the vessel and caused some damage and minor injuries as a result. The Western Mindanao Command Commander, praised the actions of the crew who foiled the attempt before naval and coast guard forces arrived on the scene. On arrival, Coast Guard personnel treated the injured crewmen and naval ships escorted the vessel to anchorage. (www.gcaptain.com; www.maritime-executive.com)

10. (U) INDONESIA: On 13 February, customs officials arrested the vessel M/V JAYA INDAH 08 and 4 crewmen when the vessel was found to be carrying a large consignment of smuggled ammonium nitrate in the Riau Islands area. When the search was completed, 1,377 sacks, each weighing 25 kilograms, was impounded. (www.batamtoday.com)

J. (U) NORTHEAST ASIA: No current incidents to report.

K. (U) AUSTRALIA- NEW ZEALAND:

1. (U) AUSTRALIA: On 17 February, an Indonesian fishing vessel was apprehended approximately 390 nautical miles off the Western Australian coast by Maritime Border Command (MBC), together with the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA). The vessel was approximately five nautical miles inside the Australian fishing zone. MBC, a multi-agency task force within the Australian Border Force (ABF), was alerted to the presence of the vessel after it was detected by HMAS MAITLAND northwest of Broome on 16 February. HMAS MAITLAND was tasked to respond and subsequently intercepted the vessel in the early hours of 17 February. Royal Australian Navy and AFMA personnel boarded the vessel and located 15 crew, 1,110 kilograms of yellowfin tuna and 200 live baitfish. (www.seafoodsource.com/news)

6. (U) Appendix A: Further Contact Information and Resources

(U) This appendix provides contact information for the author of the WTS as well as other entities that can be contacted with maritime crime reports. It also lists other resources where the WTS is posted and where piracy and maritime crime incident information can be found.

(U) Contact

(U) Originator of this WTS report requests consumer feedback. Originator will incorporate all anti-shipping events and violence against the maritime industry into this weekly message where appropriate. To aid in our reporting, please add the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) to your normal corporate and organizational reporting requirements. The 24-hour watch can be reached at +1 (301) 669-4053.

(U) Other Resources

(U) This Worldwide Threat to Shipping Report is posted at the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency's Maritime Safety site: <http://msi.nga.mil/NGAPortal/MSI.portal>. The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) also publishes a live piracy report based on reporting from the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, listing all piracy and armed robbery incidents in the last ten days: <http://www.icc-ccs.org/>. The PAWW and WTS Reports are posted weekly on the ONI Intel Portal: http://www.oni.navy.mil/Intelligence_Community/piracy.htm.

7. (U) Appendix B: Terminology and References

(U) This appendix is provided to promote consistent use of accurate terms of reference in reporting and also identifies those references that were used to gather the information contained in this report. ONI welcomes comment and suggestions for addition or amendment.

(U) Terminology

(U) In order to promote consistent use of accurate terms of reference, the following have been adopted to describe the range of criminal anti-shipping activity and impediments to safe navigation in our worldwide reporting and analysis. Please note that these terms relate to observable activity and are independent of target vessel status and exclude actions by governmental powers in lawful pursuit of their authorities:

(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 boarding 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.

(U) Sourcing

(U) ONI derives information in this report from direct reporting and analysis of reports from the following agencies and commercial sources.

- Agence France Presse (AFP)
- Associated Press (AP)
- BBC News
- EU Naval Forces (EU)
- International Maritime Bureau (IMB), London and Kuala Lumpur
- International Maritime Organization (IMO), London
- LSS-SAPU.com (LSS)
- Lloyd's
- Maritime Administration (MARAD), U.S.
- Maritime Security Centre - Horn of Africa (MSCHOA)
- Marine Domain Awareness for Trade - Gulf of Guinea (MDAT-GoG)
- National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), Navigation Safety System
- Noonsite.com (Noonsite), website
- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC)
- Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia, Information Sharing Center (ReCAAP ISC)
- Reuters
- Royal Australian Navy (RAN)
- Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN)
- The Maritime Executive (website)
- United Kingdom Maritime Trade Organization (UKMTO)
- United Press International (UPI)
- U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)

(U) ICOD: 14 March 2018

(U) The PAWW and WTS reports are posted each week on the ONI Intel Portal and can be found at: <http://www.oni.navy.mil/Intelligence-Community/Piracy>