



UNCLASSIFIED

(U) **WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report** **6 March - 10 April 2019**



11 April 2019

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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 001/APR/2019:** Category: Suspicious approach. Description: On Monday/8 April at 0851 UTC, a merchant vessel reported a suspicious approach in position 04:15N - 008:19E, 17 nm south of Calabar. Mariners are advised to exercise extreme caution in this area. Source: Via VHF. 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.

3. (U) **Summary:**

A. (U) NIGERIA: On 8 April, a merchant vessel reported a suspicious approach south of Calabar.

B. (U) UNITED STATES: On 6 April, authorities in the Port of Savannah, Georgia, announced that they had taken a stowaway into custody.

C. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 5 April, three fishermen kidnapped by Abu Sayyaf militants last December were rescued by Philippine military units.

- D. (U) BRAZIL: On 4 April, authorities seized 1 ton of cocaine hidden inside a plywood cargo container at Paranagua Port.
- E. (U) SINGAPORE: On 3 April, customs authorities seized a shipment of 12.9 tons of smuggled pangolin scales and 177 kilograms of elephant ivory.
- F. (U) CANADA: On 2 April, authorities seized 100 kg of cocaine hidden inside a furniture container at Montreal Port.
- G. (U) ECUADOR: On 1 April, a containership underway 3.6 nm west-northwest of Isla Escalante Island was attacked.
- H. (U) GUADELOUPE: On 31 March, a motor yacht anchored in St Francois, was boarded by one robber.

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

A. (U) GULF OF ADEN: Government of Japan convoy schedule for April 2019. 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: hqt-info-piracy@mlit.go.jp (MSCHOA)

B. (U) GULF OF ADEN: China Navy convoy schedule for April 2019. For further information, please email: planavy@navy.mil.cn, or call Tel: 441 221 061 or 00870 773120140. (MSCHOA)

C. (U) GULF OF ADEN: South Korea Navy convoy schedule for April 2019. 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)-870-776-444-280 or (001)-870-773-110-438. Email: choiyounge981@navy.mil.kr or kes0539@hanmail.net (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:

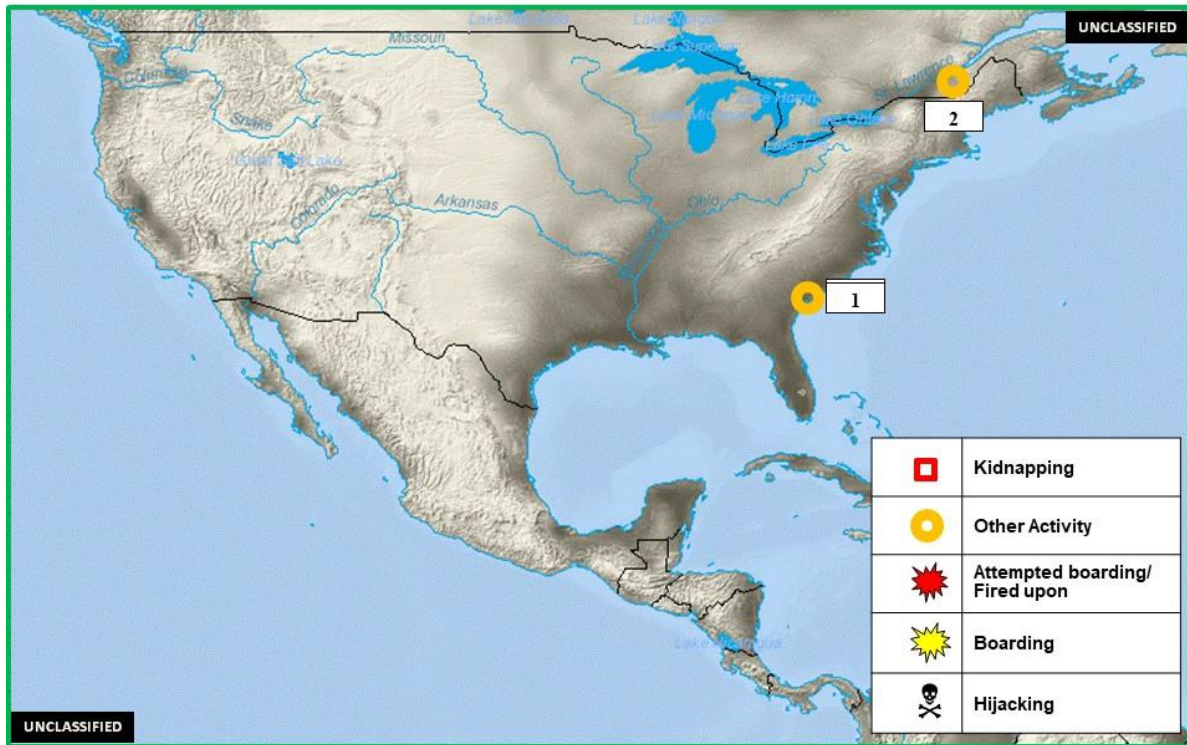


Figure 1. North America Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) UNITED STATES: On 6 April, authorities in the Port of Savannah, Georgia, announced that they had taken a stowaway into custody. The man, from El Salvador, reportedly stowed away in a cargo ship in Panama. He was discovered by the crew and detained aboard until their arrival. (www.11alive.com)

2. (U) CANADA: On 2 April, authorities seized 100 kg of cocaine hidden inside a furniture container at Montreal Port. Authorities found the narcotics as a result of an ongoing investigation into drug gangs, officials said. The cocaine reportedly originated from Mexico. Two people were arrested in connection with the case. (www.pviltd.com)

3. (U) MEXICO: On 28 March, at least one fisherman and as many as three were injured by gunfire during a 26 March law enforcement operation to protect the vaquita, a small porpoise which is nearing extinction. Mexican authorities, operating in cooperation with an environmental NGO, were removing illegal gillnets intended for catching totoaba in the Gulf of California. According to the Mexican Navy, one fisherman was injured when a small boat attempted to get its nets back by attacking the NGO vessel. A Mexican marine's gun reportedly discharged by accident during the altercation, injuring the fisherman. (www.maritime-executive.com)

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



Figure 2. Central America - Caribbean - South America Piracy and Maritime Crime

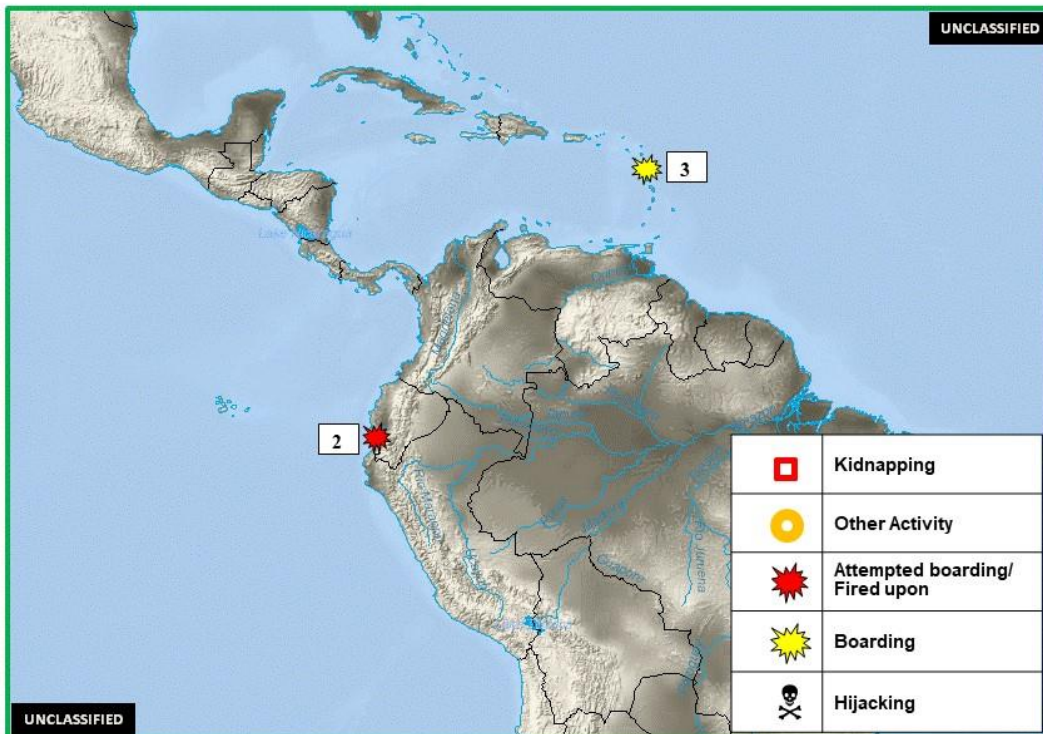


Figure 3. Central America - Caribbean - South America Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) BRAZIL: On 4 April, authorities seized 1 ton of cocaine hidden inside a plywood cargo container at Paranagua Port. Authorities confiscated the narcotics after port workers identified the drugs while handling the container. Authorities have seized more than 5 tons of cocaine at Paranagua Port in 2019, exceeding the total volume of narcotics seized at the port in 2018. The narcotics were bound for Antwerp Port in Belgium. (www.pvilt.com)

2. (U) ECUADOR: On 1 April, bridge crew aboard a containership underway near position 02:31S - 080:05W, 3.6 nm west-northwest of Isla Escalante Island, saw 2 fast boats approaching from the stern. One boat, with 10 persons and a grappling hook followed the ship, the other, approached the ship from the starboard side and attempted to hook on a telescopic ladder to the ship's rails. The pilot notified port control and the coast guard. The persons fired a few shots towards the search lights resulting in all crew retreating into the bridge and accommodation. Later, the boats aborted their approach and moved away. All crew are safe.

3. (U) GUADELOUPE: On 31 March, a motor yacht anchored in St Francois, was boarded by one robber when the owners were snorkeling nearby. The owners saw a local open motor boat with one man aboard idling slowly around the anchorage, and saw him tie up to a nearby mooring, jump in, swim to their boat, climb the ladder and enter their salon. Owners returned to their yacht and used their dinghy to pursue the individual, who had moored off the beach. Vessels in the anchorage were notified by VHF, and the marina dock master was provided a picture of the intruder's boat. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

4. (U) VENEZUELA: On 28 March, five robbers armed with knives and a pipe wrench boarded a tanker anchored near position 10:11N - 064:52W, Jose Terminal Anchorage. They tied up the aft watchkeeper and broke into the paint store room. Alarm raised and crew mustered. Hearing the alerted crew, the robbers escaped with stolen ship's stores. (IMB; www.pvilt.com)

5. (U) MARTINIQUE: Between 16 and 22 March, robbers stole an outboard motor from a sailing yacht anchored in Anse a l' Ane. A police report was made. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)
6. (U) ST LUCIA: On 19 March, robbers stole a dinghy and outboard from a sailing yacht anchored in Rodney Bay. Reports were made to the police and Rodney Bay marina. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)
7. (U) PANAMA: On 16 March, robbers stole a panga and outboard from a sailing yacht anchored in Bocas del Toro. The panga was found the next day, minus the engine. A police report was made. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)
8. (U) DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: On 21 March, robbers boarded a tanker anchored near position 18:24N - 069:19W, San Pedro de Macoris Anchorage, stole ship's properties and escaped unseen. Incident was noticed during routine rounds. (IMB)
9. (U) VENEZUELA: On 21 March, three robbers armed with knives boarded an anchored crude oil tanker near position 10:11N - 064:47W, Jose Terminal Anchorage. Deck watch on routine rounds spotted the robbers and notified the duty officer just before the robbers threatened him with a knife and stole his radio. Alarm raised, and crew mustered resulting in the robbers escaping with their accomplices in a waiting boat. Incident reported to port authorities. (IMB)
10. (U) PERU: On 19 March, four robbers wearing jackets and caps in a small boat approached an anchored vehicle carrier near position 12:01S - 077:12W, Callao Anchorage. Duty crewman on routine rounds noticed the robbers attempting to board the ship via the anchor cable. Alarm raised, ship's horn sounded and crew directed flash lights towards the robbers. Seeing the alerted crew, the robbers aborted the attempted boarding and escaped. Local agents informed. A patrol boat was dispatched to search the anchorage area. (IMB)
11. (U) BRAZIL: On 10 March, two robbers armed with knives boarded an anchored bulk carrier by using a rope with a hook near position 00:03N - 050:57W, Macapa Anchorage. Duty crewman on routine rounds spotted the robbers and immediately informed the duty officer, who raised the alarm. PA announcement made and all crew was mustered. Seeing the alerted crew, the robbers escaped without stealing anything. Incident was reported to port authorities. (IMB)
12. (U) GRENADA: On 6 March, two sailing yachts anchored in Halifax Bay had their dinghy and outboards stolen. Both dinghies were found the next day, minus their outboards. Police reports for both incidents were made. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

C. (U) ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA:

1. (U) MOROCCO: On 1 April, a duty officer onboard a bulk carrier berthed near position 33:36N - 007:37W, Berth T36, Casablanca Port, heard noises from the boat deck. As he approached the area, he noticed the life raft cover was opened and two robbers stealing the equipment. Seeing the duty officer, the robbers jumped overboard and escaped. Incident reported to the port authority. Subsequently, the harbor master and port police and PSC inspector boarded the vessel to investigate. (IMB)
2. (U) PORTUGAL: On 28 March, authorities on the Island of Madeira arrested 12 people and seized 18 kilograms of cocaine from a cruise ship that had docked in the city of Funchal after arriving from the Caribbean. (www.foxnews.com)
3. (U) IRELAND: On 26 March, authorities in the port of Waterford seized 58,000 cigarettes and 1.45 kilograms of pipe tobacco that had been smuggled in on a Panama-flagged cargo ship arriving from Cueta, Spain. (www.irishtimes.com)

D. (U) NORTHERN EUROPE - BALTIC: No current incidents to report.

E. (U) MEDITERRANEAN - BLACK SEA:

1. (U) LIBYA: On 26 March, a group of 108 migrants hijacked the Palau-flagged tanker ELHIBLU 1 near Tripoli. The ship arrived in Malta's territorial waters on 28 March, where it was boarded by Malta armed forces personnel who took control of the ship. (www.timesofmalta.com; www.fleetmon.com)

2. (U) UKRAINE: On 21 March, Ukrainian authorities seized 257 kilograms of cocaine from a vessel at Yuzhny seaport in Odessa. Officials stated that the shipment was bound for Europe, and was packed within a container of bananas. (www.pvilt.com)

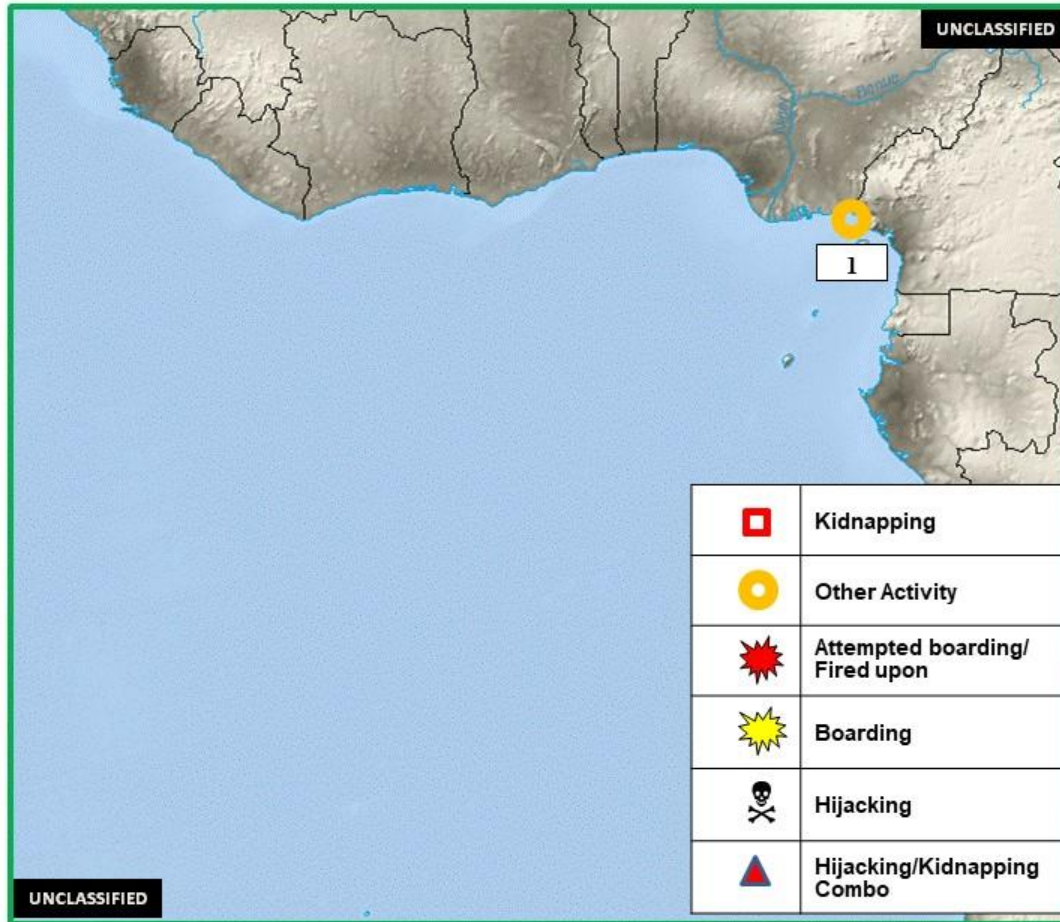
F. (U) WEST AFRICA:

Figure 4. West Africa Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) NIGERIA: On 8 April, a merchant vessel reported a suspicious approach in position 04:15N - 008:19E, 17 nm south of Calabar. (MDAT-GoG)

2. (U) CAMEROON: On 30 March, pirates boarded the Liberia-flagged container ship CONTSHIP OAK anchored near position 03:53N - 009:30E, 15 nm southwest of Douala. The armed men kidnapped 4 crewmen and escaped. (IMB; www.fleetmon.com)

3. (U) NIGERIA: On 30 March, a duty watch stander onboard a product tanker anchored near position 06:18N - 003:17E, Lagos STS Anchorage, noticed robbers near a cargo tank and others near the ship's rails. Alarm was raised. Seeing the

alerted crew, the robbers escaped without stealing anything. Nigerian Navy patrol boat notified and did a search of the waters around the tanker. (IMB)

4. (U) GHANA: On 29 March, the duty officer onboard a product tanker anchored near position 04:52N - 001:41W, Takoradi Anchorage, noticed the paint room door was open and spotted robbers on the forecastle. He directed the search light towards the robbers and sounded the ship's horn. Seeing the alerted crew, the robbers escaped with stolen ship's stores. Takoradi port control informed and the Takoradi Marine Police boarded the ship for investigation. (IMB)

5. (U) NIGERIA: On 24 March, two robbers boarded a product tanker anchored near position 06:15N - 003:12E, Lagos Secure Anchorage Area, and started stealing the oil cargo using a hose. Duty watch stander noticed the hose and immediately informed the master. Incident reported to a Navy patrol boat in the vicinity. Seeing the alerted crew, the robbers escaped. All crew and vessel are safe. It was reported that the Navy patrol boat managed to intercept the boat and apprehend the robbers. (IMB)

6. (U) GHANA: On 11 March, authorities in Tema Port announced they had taken a young man from Morocco into custody after the crew from M/V LANIDIE found the man hiding in the ship. He was hoping to stowaway to Europe. (www.ghanaweb.com)

7. (U) NIGERIA: On 9 March, pirates armed with machine guns in two speed boats approached an offshore support vessel underway near position 03:57N - 006:39E, 32 nm southeast of Brass. The Captain immediately notified the naval escort security boat which maneuvered to engage the attackers. One speed boat closed in from port side of the vessel and crossed the bow, while the other speed boat exchanged fire with the security boat. Alarm raised, crew proceeded to the engine room, and all power was shut down. The pirates boarded the vessel with the aid of an elongated ladder. They broke into the accommodation, vandalized the cabins and took crew belongings and vessel's properties. The pirates then proceeded to the engine room, kidnapped five men and escaped. The remaining crew sailed the vessel under escort to a safe anchorage. One Nigerian Navy armed guard was reported killed in the exchange of fire between the naval security boat and the pirates. Investigations ongoing. (IMB)

8. (U) NIGERIA: On 8 March, two skiffs with 4 persons on each skiff approached a merchant tanker near position 03:14N - 006:27E, approximately 80 nm southwest of Bonny Island. The skiffs closed to within 2 cables. Tanker commenced evasive maneuvering and the skiffs withdrew. (MDAT-GoG)

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

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

1. (U) SRI LANKA: On 25 March, authorities detained nine Iranians after they were caught with 107 kilograms of heroin onboard a trawler bound for the country. The vessel was tracked by a joint operations team comprised of a police special task force and the Sri Lankan Navy ship SURANIMALA off the southern coast of Galle. (www.arabnews.com)

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

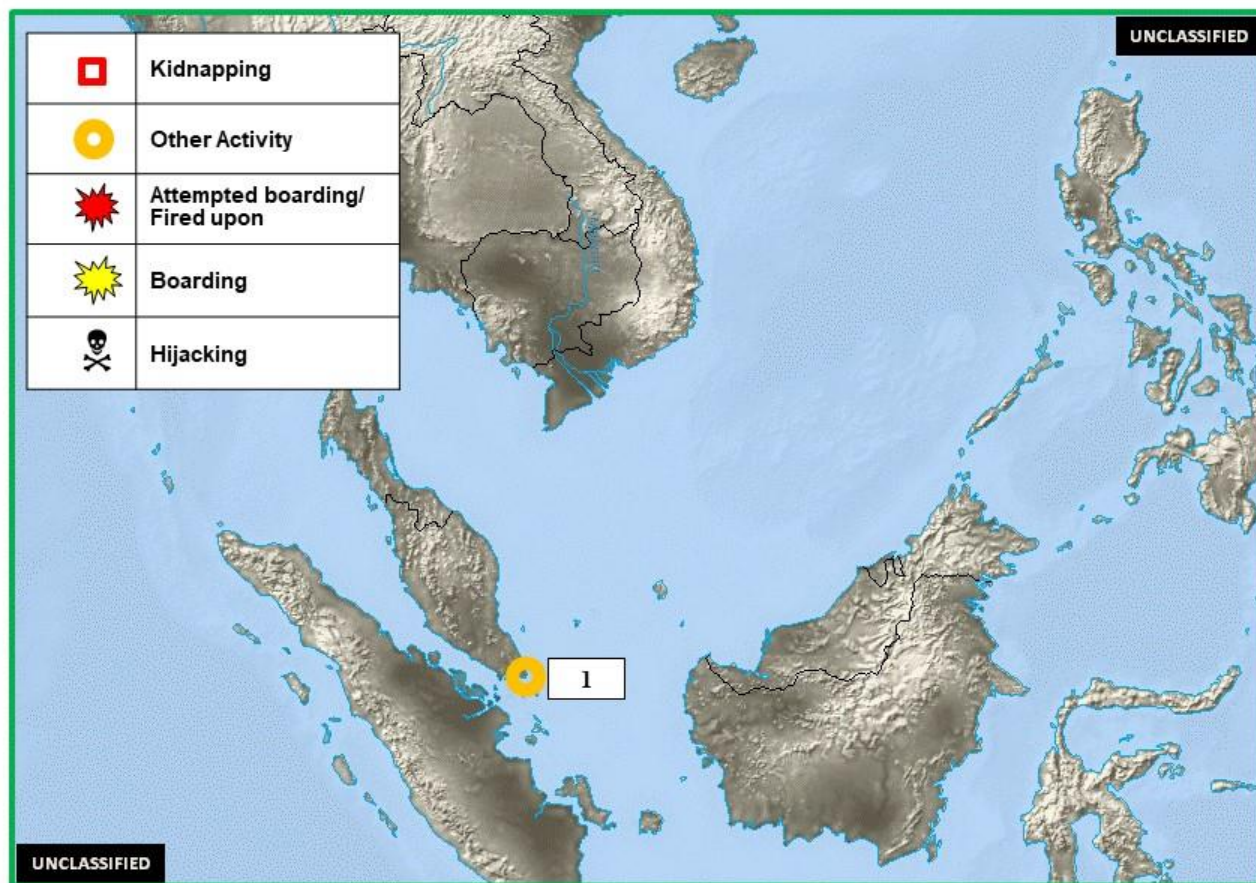


Figure 5. East Asia - Southeast Asia - Indian Subcontinent Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) SINGAPORE: On 3 April, Customs authorities seized a shipment of 12.9 tons of smuggled pangolin scales and 177 kilograms of elephant ivory from a container packed with frozen beef at the Pasir Panjang Export Inspection Station. Officials said that the shipment was en route Vietnam from Nigeria. (www.pvilttd.com)

2. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 5 April, three fishermen kidnapped by Abu Sayyaf militants last December were rescued by Philippine military units after a brief gun fight on Simisa Island in Sulu Province. Unfortunately, one of the men drowned during the rescue and another died a short time later from gunshot wounds. The three were kidnapped on 5 December 2018 from their fishing trawler in Sabah waters close to Tawi-Tawi Island in the Philippines. (www.manilatimes.net)

3. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 26 March, robbers boarded a Liberia-flagged container ship anchored near position 14:33N - 120:54E, Quarantine Anchorage area, South Harbour Manila, and escaped with ship's property. The theft was noticed by the duty watchman during routine rounds. The razor wire installed at the hawse pipe was reportedly removed, footprints were found on the deck and the bosun store room was broken into. The incident was reported to local authorities. The Philippines Coast Guard boarded the ship for investigation. (www.pvilttd.com)

4. (U) VIETNAM: On 26 March, authorities in the Tien Sa Port in Da Nang seized 9.1 tons of elephant tusks concealed in timber containers. (www.asiatimes.com)

5. (U) BANGLADESH: On 27 March, two people, believed to be local pirates, were killed in a gunfight with Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) in Pekua Upazila. RAB-7 said its team raided the area after being tipped off that a pirate gang was preparing for operations. "The pirates opened fire as soon as the RAB team reached the spot, triggering a gunfight," said a spokesman. Bodies of two pirates were recovered after the skirmish. RAB also seized eight firearms and 26 bullets from the spot. (www.unb.com.bd)

6. (U) MYANMAR: On 16 March, Arakan Army insurgents are believed to have attacked a cargo ship in the Kalardan River near Paletwa Township with gun shots and ensuing fire onboard caused the ship to capsize. The cargo ship YADANARWIN 7 was carrying 286 tons of steel trusses for the remaining section of the Paletwa River-crossing bridge. The ship's crew was briefly held by the insurgents and then released. (www.elevenmyanmar.com)

7. (U) BANGLADESH: On 15 March, pirates kidnapped 16 fishermen and four fishing boats from the Bay of Bengal near Barguna. The robbers also looted the fish, fuel, and fishing nets from the trawlers. (Dhaka Tribune Online)

8. (U) MYANMAR: On 10 March, members of the Arakan Army, an insurgent group, attacked a Myanmar police force boat in Kardi Creek near Yathedaung township in Rakhine state. The police boat capsized, spilling the 14 police officers. (www.menafm.com)

9. (U) VIETNAM: On 10 March, authorities detained the product tanker ARISTA LEO on suspicion of fuel smuggling in the Con Dao Island area. The ship was caught transferring 300 tons of gasoline to another ship. (www.fleetmon.com)

10. (U) VIETNAM: On 6 March, a Vietnamese fishing boat reported that they were rammed and sunk while operating near Discovery Reef in the Paracel Islands chain. The five Vietnamese men onboard the fishing boat clung on to the floating wreckage of their ship until they were rescued. (www.news.com.au)

J. (U) NORTHEAST ASIA:

1. (U) TAIWAN: On 13 March, a coast guard ship seized a Chinese fishing boat that had crossed into Taiwanese waters 23.7 nm northwest of Huayu Island, state-run media reported. The coast guard fired a warning shot towards the boat before taking it to Magong Harbour in Penghu. The Chinese vessel had 15 crew members onboard. (www.pvilttd.com)

K. (U) AUSTRALIA - NEW ZEALAND - PACIFIC OCEAN AREA:

1. (U) PAPUA NEW GUINEA: On 10 March, pirates attacked a passenger boat in Astrolabe Bay. The robbers looted the boat, stole supplies, cash, and personal effects from the 13 passengers. The pirates also forced the male passengers to jump into the sea. (www.thenational.com.pg)

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-shiping 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 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.

(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
- DNK Intelligence & Operations Centre (DNK IOC)
- EU Naval Forces (EU)
- International Maritime Bureau (IMB), London and Kuala Lumpur

- International Maritime Organization (IMO), London
- Lloyd's
- Maritime Administration (MARAD), U.S.
- Maritime Security Centre - Horn of Africa (MSCHOA)
- Marine Domain Awareness for Trade - Gulf of Guinea (MDAT-GoG)
- Maritime Asset Security and Training (MAST) Ltd
- 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: 10 April 2019

(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>