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(U) WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report 19 December 2019–22 January 2020

24 January 2020



(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

(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:

1. (U) **MARAD ADVISORY 2020-002-Gulf of Guinea-Piracy/Armed Robbery/Kidnapping for Ransom.**
Description: This revised advisory cancels U.S. Maritime Advisory 2019-010. Issue: Piracy/Armed Robbery/Kidnapping for Ransom continues to serve as a significant threat to United States-flagged operators with vessels transiting or operating in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG). According to the Office of Naval Intelligence's "Shipping Threat Reports" website (<https://www.oni.navy.mil/News/Shipping-Threat-Reports/>) 129 incidents of piracy and armed robbery at sea were reported in the GoG region in 2019. This is an 11-percent decrease from 2018, but kidnappings were at the highest level recorded in the last 11 years. Attacks, kidnappings for ransom (KFR), and boardings to steal valuables from ships and crews are the most common types of incidents, with the majority of incidents taking place off Nigeria. There were 33 kidnapping incidents in 2019, two of which involved crew members being taken from hijacked vessels when pirates disembarked. Three out of the six hijacked vessels in 2019 were petroleum tankers, likely being hijacked for cargo theft (refined petroleum products). United States-flagged operators with ships operating in or through the GoG Voluntary Reporting Area designated on Maritime Security Chart Q6114 (<http://www.shipping.nato.int/nsc/media-centre/downloads/maritime-security-charts.aspx>) should transit with

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extreme caution and vigilance. This advisory in its entirety and other U.S. Maritime Alerts and Advisories, including subscription details, can be found at <http://www.marad.dot.gov/MSCI>.

2. **(U) MARAD Advisory 2019-012-Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea, Red Sea - Threats to Commercial Vessels.** Description: This revised advisory cancels U.S. Maritime Advisories 2019-004 and 2019-008. References: U.S. Maritime Alerts 2019-004A, 2019-003A, 2019-002A, and 2019-001A. Issue: Heightened military activity and increased political tensions in this region continue to pose serious threats to commercial vessels. Associated with these threats is a potential for miscalculation or misidentification that could lead to aggressive actions. Vessels operating in the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, and Gulf of Oman may also encounter GPS interference, bridge-to-bridge communications spoofing, and/or other communications jamming with little to no warning. For more information about U.S. Maritime Alerts and Advisories, including subscription details, please visit <http://www.marad.dot.gov/MSCI>.

3. (U) Summary

1. (U) NIGERIA: On 22 January, eight crew members, kidnapped from Greek tanker HAPPY LADY on 30 December, were released.
2. (U) MALAYSIA: On 21 January, armed men kidnapped five crew members from the Malaysia-flagged fishing vessel, SSK 00543/F, 4 NM northwest of Tambisan, Sabah, Malaysia.
3. (U) INDONESIA: On 21 January, four men boarded the Indonesian tanker HORIZON MARU in Kabil waters, eastern Batam Island, Indonesia.
4. (U) NIGERIA: On 21 January, Panama-flagged container ship MSC GRACE reported being attacked 20 NM south of Bonny.
5. (U) NIGERIA: On 20 January, a merchant vessel reported being attacked 57 NM southeast of Lagos.
6. (U) BENIN: On 20 January, Marshall Islands-flagged container ship ATLANTIC DISCOVERER reported being attacked 75 NM south-southwest of Cotonou, Benin.
7. (U) NIGERIA: On 19 January, 19 of the 20 seafarers, kidnapped on 15 December from the tanker DUKE, were released. One able seaman died shortly after capture.
8. (U) NIGERIA: On 16 January, five armed pirates in a small craft approached an underway tanker 52 NM southwest of Bonny.
9. (U) MOZAMBIQUE: On 13 January, robbers boarded a cargo vessel anchored in Nacala Anchorage.
10. (U) INDONESIA: On 13 January, robbers boarded a bulk carrier anchored in Panjang Anchorage.

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 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:

1. (U) MEXICO: On 21 November, authorities in the Port of Altamira found 134 packages of cocaine hidden among a cargo of ore onboard the Bahamas-flagged bulk carrier DELPHI RANGER. (www.fleetmon.com)

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

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1. (U) DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: On 29 December, a sailing yacht was boarded after being thoroughly inspected by local customs officers in Luperon Port. During their inspection, they asked for, and were given, a small 'gratuity.' Later that evening, the boarding occurred; a jewelry box was ransacked and most items were stolen. No police report was made. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)
2. (U) ECUADOR: On 7 January, Ecuador Navy personnel boarded and inspected the Liberia-flagged container vessel SEALAND LOS ANGELES in the Port of Puerto Bolivar. During the inspection, authorities found 88 packages of cocaine stashed in a container. (www.fleetmon.com)

C. (U) ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA:

(U) No current incidents to report.

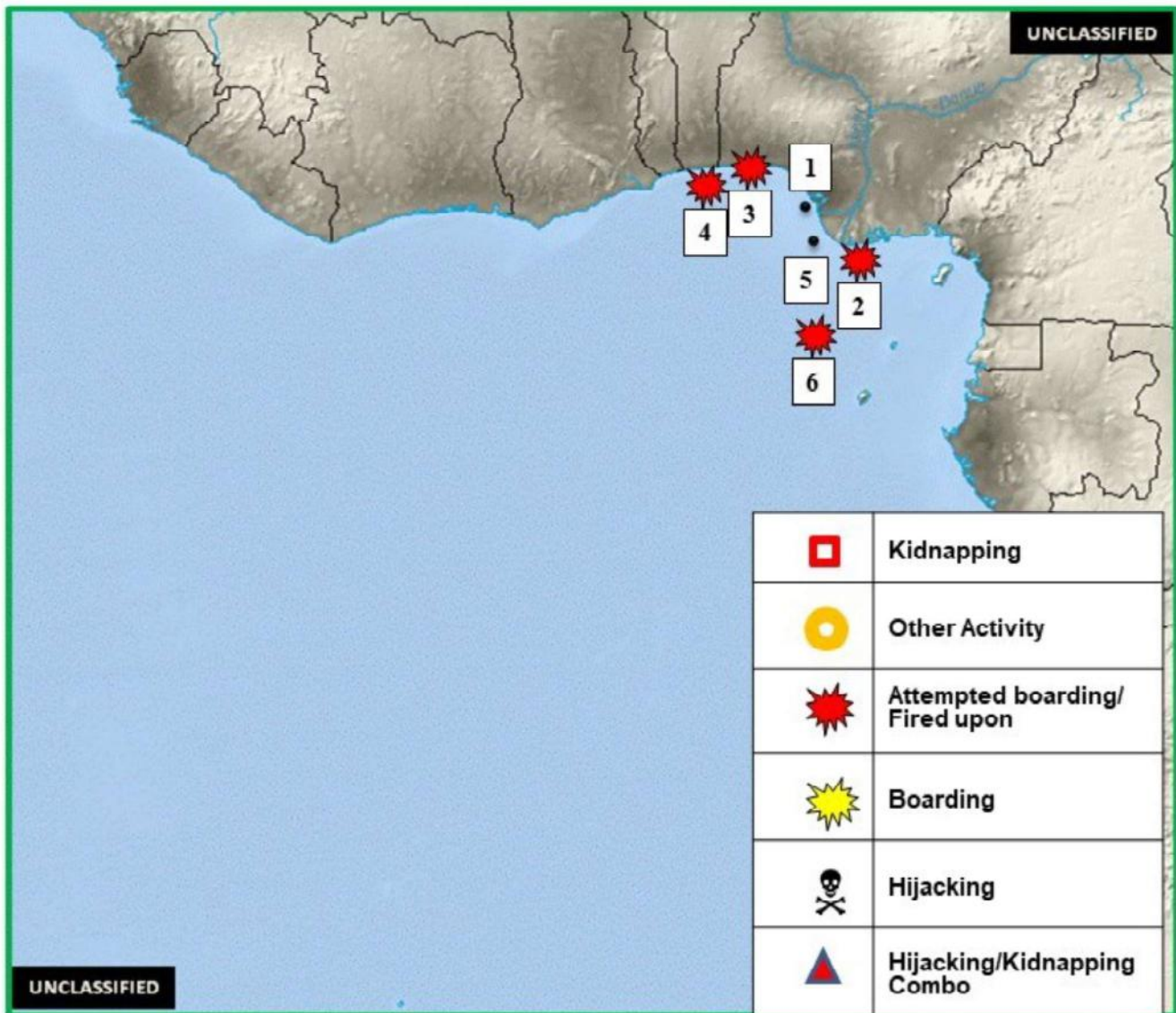
D. (U) NORTHERN EUROPE - BALTIC:

(U) No current incidents to report.

(U) MEDITERRANEAN - BLACK SEA:

(U) No current incidents to report.

F. (U) WEST AFRICA:



(U) Figure 1. West Africa Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) NIGERIA: On 22 January, eight crew members, kidnapped by Nigerian pirates from the Greek tanker HAPPY LADY on 30 December, were released. (www.fleetmon.com)
2. (U) NIGERIA: On 21 January, Panama-flagged container ship MSC GRACE reported being attacked by approximately 15 armed individuals in a skiff near position 04:04N - 005:47E, 20 NM south of Bonny. The vessel increased speed and non-essential crew members took shelter in the citadel. When armed naval guards onboard the MSC GRACE returned fire, the skiff aborted the attack and departed the area. The Nigerian Navy was notified. (IMB; www.sguardian.com; www.fleetmon.com)
3. (U) NIGERIA: On 20 January, a merchant vessel reported being attacked by six individuals in a skiff near position 05:30N - 003:41E, 57 NM southeast of Lagos. (www.sguardian.com)
4. (U) BENIN: On 20 January, Marshall Islands-flagged container ship ATLANTIC DISCOVERER reported being attacked near position 05:08N - 002:17E, 75 NM south-southwest of Cotonou. (www.sguardian.com; www.fleetmon.com)

5. (U) NIGERIA: On 19 January, 19 of the 20 seafarers, kidnapped on 15 December from the tanker DUKE, were released. One able seaman died shortly after capture. Following release, the crew members had medical checks and are reported to be well, given the circumstances of their ordeal. They will be debriefed by local authorities and then return home to their families. (www.maritime-executive.com)
6. (U) NIGERIA: On 16 January, five armed pirates in a small craft approached a tanker underway near position 03:38N - 006:40E, 52 NM southwest of Bonny. The crew raised the alarm and began evasive maneuvers. When the security team on the tanker fired warning shots, the pirates returned fire and departed the area. (IMB)
7. (U) NIGERIA: On 12 January, four Chinese nationals abducted by pirates during a late December attack in waters off Owendo Port in Libreville, Gabon's capital, were rescued in Nigeria, the Chinese Consulate to Lagos confirmed. Four kidnapped Chinese crew working for fishing company Sigapeche were taken by pirates who attacked two company vessels on 22 December. (Xinhua)
8. (U) NIGERIA: On 2 January, robbers attacked the Nigeria-flagged dredger vessel AMBIKA near position 05:07N - 005:20E, 3 NM from the mouth of the Ramos River. There was a heavy exchange of gunfire between the embarked security personnel on AMBIKA and the pirates, during which four security guards were killed and two injured. After the firefight, the pirates boarded the vessel and kidnapped three crew members, leaving behind five sailors. Two of the abducted men are Russians, and one is Indian. On 7 January, Nigerian military forces rescued the men, killing several of the kidnappers (www.gcaptain.com; www.worldmaritimenews.com; www.oilprice.com)
9. (U) CAMEROON: On 30 December, gunmen boarded and kidnapped eight crew members (five Greeks, two Filipinos, and one Ukrainian) from the Greece-flagged tanker HAPPY LADY while anchored 2 miles off Limboh Terminal, Cameroon. One Greek crew member was injured during the attack when a stray bullet from a gunman struck him. He was later taken to a local hospital. (IMB; www.arxmaritime.com; www.hellenicshippingnews.com)
10. (U) NIGERIA: On 30 December, pirates attacked and boarded the Singapore-flagged bulk carrier DROGBA in the Bight of Bonny, 45 NM south-southwest of Bonny while en route from Lagos to Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The pirates fled after encountering an embarked Nigerian Navy armed security team. The ship reached Port Harcourt later that evening. (www.fleetmon.com)
11. (U) GULF OF GUINEA: On 30 December, three pirates attacked and boarded Vietnam-flagged bulk carrier VINALINES MIGHTY approximately 150 NM northwest of Sao Tome. All crew are safe. (www.fleetmon.com)
12. (U) GULF OF GUINEA: On 28 December, pirates attacked the Bermuda-flagged tanker LNG LUKOJA in Gulf of Guinea 70 NM northwest of Sao Tome, while en route to Bonny, Nigeria. The tanker crew managed to avoid a pirate boarding through evasive maneuvering. The Nigerian naval vessel DEFENDER 6 responded and escorted the tanker to Bonny. (www.fleetmon.com)
13. (U) NIGERIA: On 26 December, authorities from the Indian High Commission in Abuja, Nigeria, stated that the government of India has established contact with pirates who kidnapped 20 Indian crew members from the Marshall Islands-flagged tanker DUKE off Benin on 15 December. All crew members reportedly alive. (www.worldmaritimenews.com)
14. (U) EQUATORIAL GUINEA: On 25 December, offshore vessel operator Swire Pacific Offshore (SPO) announced that pirates released seven of its crew members from the PACIFIC WARDEN, who were abducted off Equatorial Guinea in November. (www.marinelink.com)
15. (U) NIGERIA: On 21 December, two robbers boarded a tanker anchored near position 06:15N - 003:13E, Lagos Secure Anchorage Area. When a duty crew member noticed the robbers, he raised the alarm and the crew mustered. A Nigerian naval patrol boat responded and searched the waters around the tanker, but found nothing. A search was carried out on the vessel, which determined that nothing was stolen. (IMB).
16. (U) GULF OF GUINEA: On 24 December, pirates attacked the Malta-flagged tanker INSTANBUL near position 01:47N - 004:28E, approximately 220 NM southwest of Bonny, Nigeria. The pirates tried to board the tanker twice, but failed due to the crew's evasive actions. Following the unsuccessful boarding attempts, the pirates proceeded toward a possible nearby pirate mothership. (MDAT-GoG; IMB; www.fleetmon.com)

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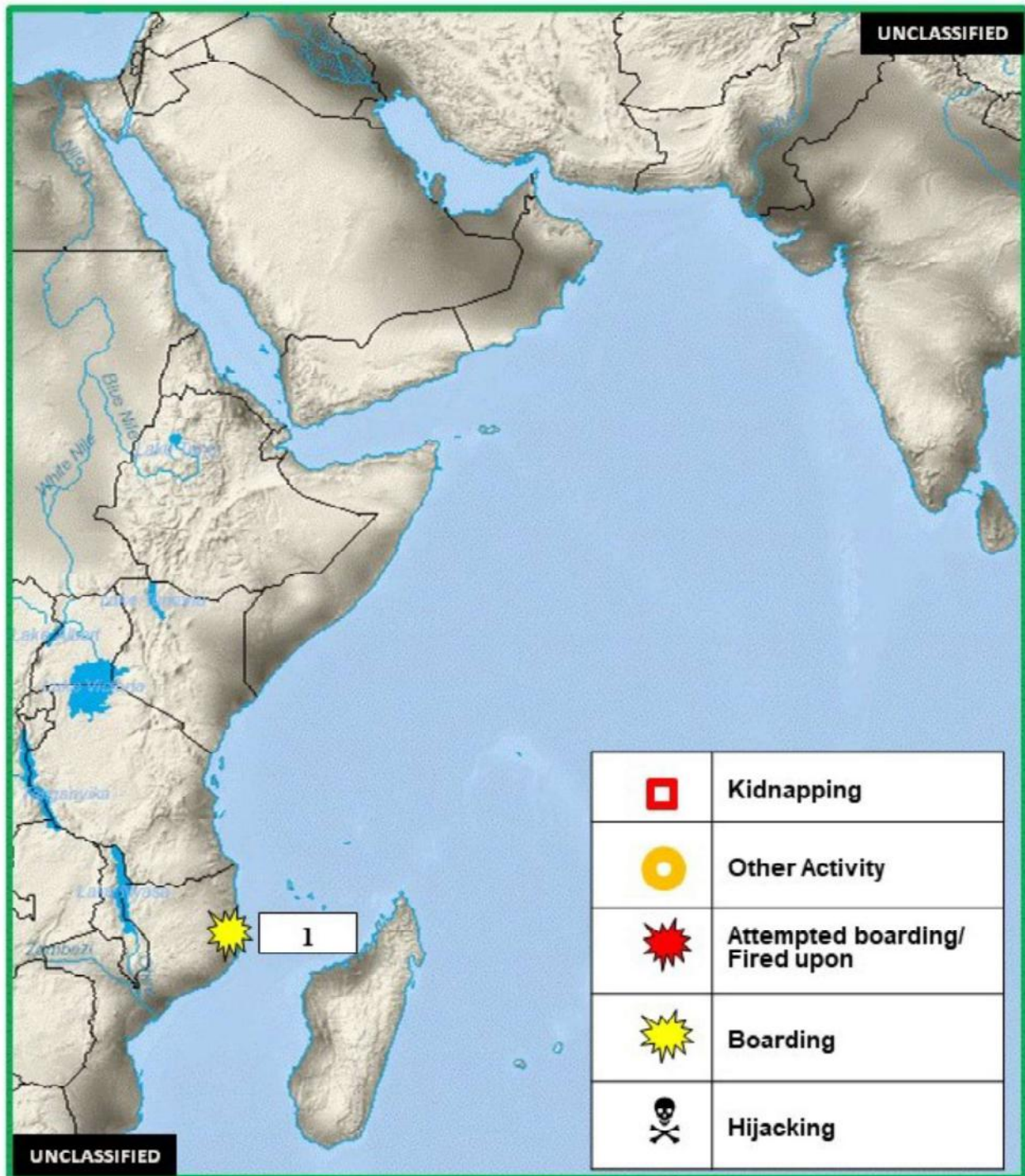
17. (U) GABON: On 21 December, two merchant vessels reported a suspicious approach by a small boat carrying seven persons near position 00:19N - 009:23E, Owendo Anchorage. (MDAT-GoG)
18. (U) NIGERIA: On 21 December, pirates released 19 hostages from the Hong Kong-flagged tanker NAVE CONSTELLATION. The men, 18 Indians and one Turk, were kidnapped on 3 December as the NAVE CONSTELLATION was transiting to India. (www.fleetmon.com)
19. (U) GABON: Late on 21 December, two China-flagged fishing vessels, GUOJI 867 and GUOJI 838, were boarded by seven armed men near position 00:19N - 009:23E, Owendo Anchorage. The captain and chief engineer from both vessels were kidnapped. (MDAT-GoG; www.fleetmon.com)
20. (U) GABON: Late on 21 December, a local landing craft was boarded by seven armed men near position 00:19N - 009:23E, Owendo Anchorage. The captain of the vessel was killed during the boarding. (MDAT-GoG; www.fleetmon.com)
21. (U) GABON: Late on 21 December, the Liberia-flagged bulk carrier AFRICAN KALMIA was attacked near position 00:19N - 009:23E, Owendo Anchorage. (MDAT-GoG; www.fleetmon.com)
22. (U) GULF OF GUINEA: On 19 December, a merchant vessel reported a possible mothership towing a skiff near position 03:00N - 003:53E, 150 NM southwest of Brass Nigeria. (www.arxmaritime.com; www.sguardian.com)

G. (U) ARABIAN GULF:

(U) No current incidents to report.

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

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(U) Figure 2. Indian Ocean - East Africa - Red Sea Piracy and Maritime Crime

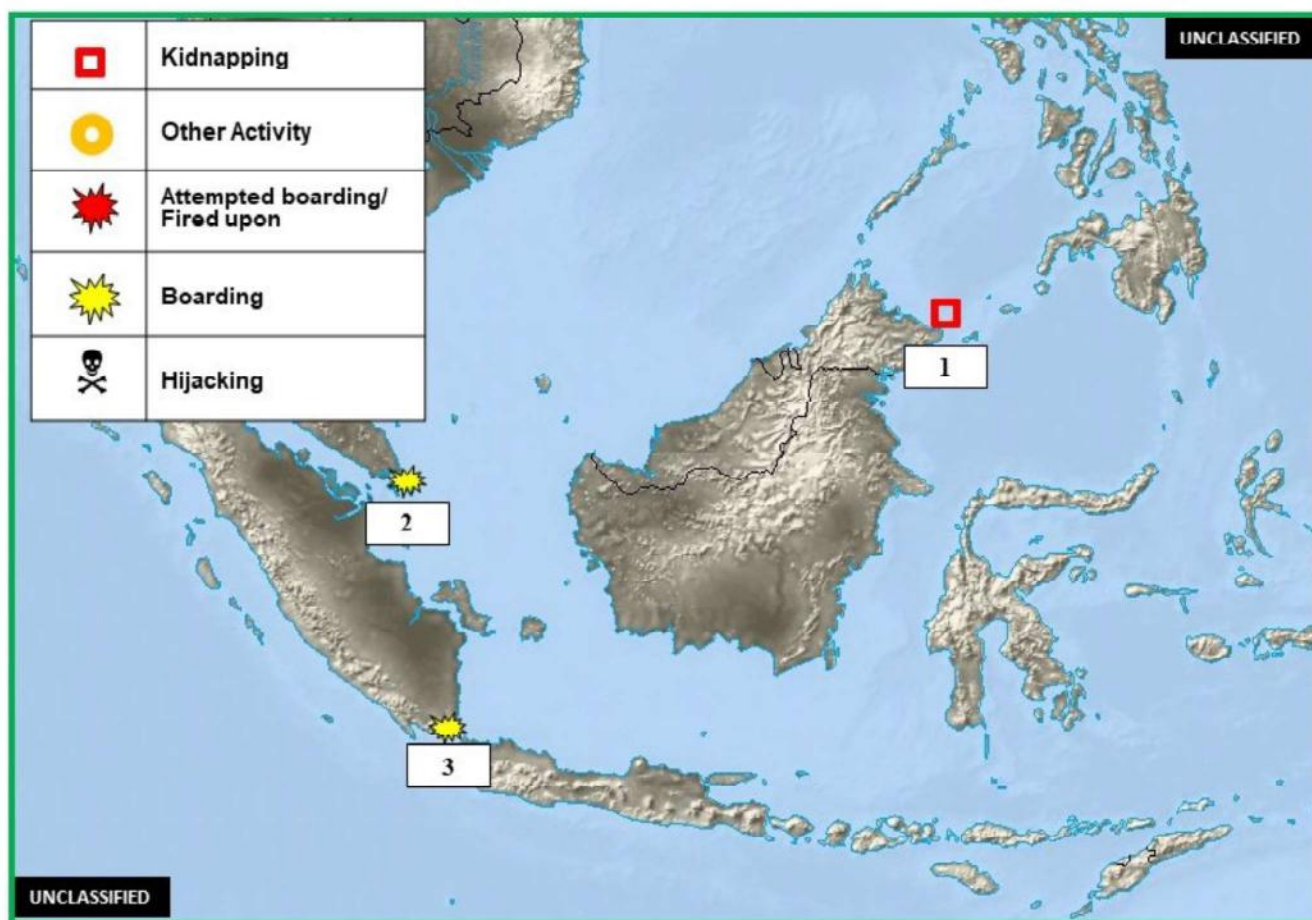
1. (U) MOZAMBIQUE: On 13 January, a duty watchman during rounds onboard a cargo vessel anchored near position 14:22S - 040:42E, Nacala Anchorage, spotted two robbers armed with long knives approaching him. He immediately informed the duty officer, who raised the alarm. During a subsequent check of the vessel, the crew discovered a long rope missing from the forward store room. (IMB)

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2. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 11 January, a merchant vessel near position 12:05N - 045:24E, 44 NM southeast of Aden, Yemen, reported a suspicious approach by seven high-speed crafts with four persons onboard each craft. (UKMTO; www.sguardian.com)
3. (U) ARABIAN SEA: On 25 November, a U.S. Navy warship intercepted a small ship that, after a search, was found to be carrying "advanced missile components" on a stateless vessel and an initial investigation indicated the parts were of Iranian origin. The crew on the small boat have been transferred to the Yemeni Coast Guard and the missile parts are in the possession of the United States. (www.reuters.com)
4. (U) STRAIT OF HORMUZ: On 30 December, Iran detained a ship purportedly carrying smuggled fuel near the entrance to the Strait of Hormuz according to state-run Islamic Republic News Agency. Sixteen Malaysian crew members were detained. According to the Iranian state media, the tanker was intercepted near Abu Musa island transporting 1.3 million liters of smuggled fuel or the equivalent of 8,000 barrels. (www.gcaptain.com)
5. (U) GULF OF OMAN: On 23 December, Britain's Royal Navy reported the seizure of 131 kilograms of methamphetamines from a dhow in the northern Arabian Sea. The drugs were found during a routine search. (www.marinelink.com)
6. (U) SRI LANKA: On 20 December, a crew member aboard the Turkey-flagged bulk carrier INCE KARADENIZ attacked the ship's master with a knife, cutting his throat. The man later died. Two other crewmen who tried to intervene were wounded. The ship contacted Sri Lanka authorities and changed course, heading for Colombo. The Turkish Consulate was also informed. (www.fleetmon.com)

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

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(U) Figure 3. East Africa - Southeast Asia - Indian Subcontinent Red Sea Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) MALAYSIA: On 21 January, Malaysia-flagged fishing vessel, SSK 00543/F, was attacked by six armed persons wearing dark clothing and masks in a grey-colored speed boat near position 05:29N - 119:03E, approximately 4 NM northwest of Tambisan, Lahad Datu, Sabah, Malaysia. Malaysian authorities responded and found three crew members on the fishing vessel, but five other crew members had been kidnapped. (www.pna.gov.ph; www.pvilt.com)
2. (U) INDONESIA: On 21 January, four robbers boarded the Indonesian tanker HORIZON MARU in Kabil waters, eastern Batam Island, Indonesia. The crew managed to fight the robbers off and capture one of them in the process. One crewman suffered an injury to his face during the skirmish. The captured robber was handed over to police. (www.fleetmon.com)
3. (U) INDONESIA: On 13 January, a duty watchman on routine rounds onboard a bulk carrier anchored near position 05:30S - 105:17E, Panjang Anchorage, noticed the steering room lock was open and engine spares were missing. Incident was reported to local agent. (IMB)
4. (U) SINGAPORE STRAIT: On 28 December, the chief engineer onboard a bulk carrier underway near position 01:16.2N - 104:13.4E spotted four robbers armed with knives in the engine room. The alarm was raised, deck lights switched on, and crew mustered. Upon seeing the crew response, the robbers fled. A search was carried out and footprints were noticed on the quarter deck, but nothing was stolen. (IMB).
5. (U) INDONESIA: On 23 December, Panama-flagged tanker BAMZI was underway in the Singapore Strait and en route from Nipa anchorage, Indonesia, to Qing Dao, China, when the chief engineer and duty engineer spotted three robbers in the engine room. One of the robbers was armed with a knife. When the alarm was raised, the robbers fled. Two

motormen were later found who had been tied up by the robbers. A subsequent search found nothing was stolen and the ship resumed her voyage. (ReCAAP; www.fleetmon.com)

6. (U) INDONESIA: On 23 December, Panama-flagged bulk carrier TRUST STAR was underway in the Singapore Strait when the crew spotted six robbers onboard. When the crew raised the alarm, the six robbers fled. The robbers had tied up two crew members in the engine room, who later managed to untie themselves. The master subsequently altered course for the port of Singapore in case there were more robbers onboard. Singapore Police Coast Guard boarded the ship, conducted a search, and found no robbers. Nothing was stolen during the boarding. (ReCAAP; www.fleetmon.com)
7. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 22 December, Philippine armed forces rescued two Indonesian fishermen abducted from a Malaysian fishing boat in the waters off Lahad Datu in September. Authorities are attempting to rescue the third fisherman being held hostage. (www.dailyexpress.com.my)
8. (U) INDONESIA: On 20 December, an unknown number of robbers boarded the Panama-flagged bulk carrier JIAN FA while underway in the Singapore Strait bound for China. A subsequent search revealed nothing was stolen during the boarding. The vessel informed Singapore VTIS of the incident and continued her voyage. (www.fleetmon.com)
9. (U) INDONESIA: On 20 December, six robbers armed with knives boarded the India-flagged tanker JAG LALIT while underway in the Singapore Strait bound for Kaoshiung, Taiwan. During the boarding, the 4th engineer was punched in the face and the chief engineer sustained bruises on the neck. Upon the ship's arrival in Singapore, the Singapore Police Coast Guard boarded the ships for investigation and verified that the crew was safe. (www.fleetmon.com)
10. (U) INDONESIA: On 20 December, the crew of the Bangladesh-flagged bulk carrier AKIJ GLOBE spotted five robbers in the engine room while underway in the Singapore Strait. When the crew raised the alarm, the robbers fled in a boat with stolen engine and generator spares in a boat. The Singapore Police Coast Guard boarded the ship upon arrival at Singapore anchorage. (www.fleetmon.com)

J. (U) NORTHEAST ASIA:

1. (U) EAST CHINA SEA: On 27 December, the government of Japan provided the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee with evidence that the North Korean regime is engaging in illegal ship-to-ship transfers of goods in violation of UN sanctions. Tokyo's foreign ministry said that one of Japan's maritime patrol planes spotted a North Korea-flagged crude oil tanker and another vessel on 16 and 17 December in the East China Sea off the coast of Shanghai. The ministry said the two vessels were linked together with a hose. (www.arirang.co.kr)

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

(U) No current incidents to report.

5. (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 (WTS) 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 Weekly Piracy Update and WTS reports are posted weekly on the ONI Intel Portal: http://www.oni.navy.mil/Intelligence_Community/piracy.htm.

6. (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) The following terms have been adopted to describe the 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 by an unknown vessel.

(U) Sourcing

- Agence France Presse (AFP)
- Associated Press (AP)
- BBC News
- DNK Intelligence & Operations Centre (DNK IOC)
- EU Naval Forces (EU)
- FLEETMON
- International Maritime Bureau (IMB), London and Kuala Lumpur
- International Maritime Organization (IMO), London
- Lloyd's
- Maritime Administration (MARAD), U.S.

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- 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
- Norwegian Shipowners' Mutual War Risks Insurance Association
- 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) The Weekly Piracy Update (WPU) and WTS reports are posted each week on the ONI Intel Portal and can be found at: <http://www.oni.navy.mil/News/Weekly-Piracy-Reports/>

(U) ICOD: 22 January 2020