



UNCLASSIFIED

## (U) **WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report, 3 February – 3 March 2021**



3 March 2021

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### 1. (U) **Scope Note**

(U) The Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) message provides information on threats to merchant vessels, the shipping industry, and other maritime stakeholders worldwide in the last 30 days. This report is produced primarily to inform merchant mariners and naval forces.

### 2. (U) **Warnings and Advisories:** MARAD Alert 2021-003A-Gulf of Oman-Threat to Commercial Vessels

Description. Issued 26 Feb 2021 and effective until 5 Mar 2021. A maritime incident has been reported in the Gulf of Oman in the vicinity of 24:23N 058:33E on February 25, 2021 (GMT). The nature of the incident is reported to be an explosion near the waterline of a commercial vessel. Exercise caution when transiting this area. U.S. commercial vessels operating in this area should review U.S. Maritime Advisory 2021-001 (Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea, Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and Indian Ocean - Threats to Commercial Vessels by Iran and its Proxies) for amplifying information and points of contact and report small boat activity in the vicinity of their vessel to the U.S. Fifth Fleet Battle Watch. This Alert will automatically expire on March 5, 2021. Any maritime industry questions regarding this alert should be directed to [GMCC@uscg.mil](mailto:GMCC@uscg.mil).

### 3. (U) **Summary:**

- A. (U) **PHILIPPINES:** On 3 March, a bulk carrier reported a suspicious approach by a speedboat carrying three persons 11nm southeast of Sibutu Island, Tawi-Tawi.
- B. (U) **ANGOLA:** On 26 February, robbers boarded an offshore supply ship anchored in Luanda Anchorage.
- C. (U) **OMAN:** On 25 February, the Bahamas-flagged vehicle carrier HELIOS RAY reported an explosion aboard the vessel approximately 44 NM northwest of Muscat, Oman.
- D. (U) **ENGLAND:** On 16 February, a stowaway from Morocco was discovered onboard a ship in the Port of Hull.

#### 4. (U) Details: Monthly Incidents by Region

(U) This section lists reports of active violence against shipping, credible threats to shipping, or the potential for a situation to develop into a direct threat to shipping over the last 30 days. Every effort is made to ensure that incidents are not double-counted. In the event 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:**

1. (U) COLOMBIA: On 13 February, five robbers boarded a container ship under pilotage in the Magdalena River Passage near position 1101N – 074:4E. The alarm was raised and the crew mustered inside the accommodation area. The pilot notified port authorities. The robbers made their escape with stolen items of ship's property after seeing the alerted crew. The container vessel was requested to anchor in order to allow the coast guard to board and conduct an investigation. (Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) PERU: On 12 February, a robber boarded an anchored tanker at Callao Anchorage, near position 12:00S – 07711W. A duty crewman spotted a robber armed with a knife. The alarm was raised and the crew mustered. Upon hearing the alarm, the robber made his escape in a small wooden boat. One mooring rope was reported stolen. All crew were reported safe. (Clearwater Dynamics)

#### **D. (U) NORTHERN EUROPE – BALTIC:**



Figure 1. Northern Europe – Baltic Sea Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) ENGLAND: On 16 February, a stowaway from Morocco was discovered onboard a ship in the Port of Hull. ([www.hulldailymail.co.uk](http://www.hulldailymail.co.uk))



2. (U) ENGLAND: On 19 February, authorities in Portsmouth International Port announced that they had seized 2.3 tons of cocaine hidden among a shipment of bananas arriving from Colombia. (Reuters)

E. (U) **MEDITERRANEAN – BLACK SEA:** No current incidents to report.

F. (U) **WEST AFRICA:**



Figure 2. West Africa Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) ANGOLA: On 26 February, robbers boarded an offshore supply ship anchored in Luanda Anchorage, near position 08:45S - 013:17E. The robbers were able to board the ship, steal ship's property, and escape unnoticed. The theft was noticed by a duty crewman during routine rounds. The crew conducted a search of the ship and confirmed the robbers had escaped. Incident reported to local port authorities. (IMB, Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) NIGERIA: On 12 February, pirates released 15 crew members from the Liberia-flagged containership MOZART who were kidnapped on 23 January while underway from Lagos to Cape Town, South Africa. (www.gcaptain.com; www.hellenicshippingnews.com)

3. (U) NIGERIA: On 9 February, pirates in speedboats abducted at least six people near the Kpoma/Odioma and Nembe/Brass waterways in Bayelsa State. (www.garda.com)

4. (U) CONGO: On 9 February, robbers boarded a container vessel at Pointe Noire Anchorage Area, near position 04:43S – 011:45E. During routine rounds a duty crewman spotted three robbers, one armed with a knife. The alarm was then raised and the robbers escaped. Upon a search of the vessel, it was found that one blue polypropylene line was missing from a mooring station. (Clearwater Dynamics)

5. (U) GULF OF GUINEA: On 9 February, pirates boarded the Panama-flagged tanker MARIA E approximately 113 NM northwest of Neves, Sao Tome and Principe, near position 01:35N – 005:07E in the Joint Development Zone along the maritime Nigeria – Sao Tome and Principe border. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics; Dryad Global)

6. (U) GULF OF GUINEA: On 8 February, crew onboard the drifting Bahamas-flagged tanker SEAKING saw a mother vessel launching a skiff with four persons, which approached the tanker at high speed approximately 56 NM southwest of Sao Tome island. Master raised the alarm, increased speed, took evasive maneuvers and non-essential crew mustered in the citadel. The skiff managed to come alongside the vessel but due to the hardening measures taken by the master, the boarding was avoided. Crew and tanker reported safe. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics; Dryad Global; [www.defenceweb.co.za](http://www.defenceweb.co.za))

7. (U) EQUATORIAL GUINEA: On 7 February, pirates hijacked the Gabon-flagged fishing vessel LIAN PENG YU 809 approximately 45 NM northeast of Pagalu Island. The ship was carrying a mixed crew of Chinese, Indonesian, and Gabonese nationals. The pirates kidnapped 10 of the 14 crew onboard when they left the ship. The Maritime Domain Awareness for Trade – Gulf of Guinea (MDAT-GoG) have confirmed that the hijacked fishing vessel is now being used as a mothership in the area of other incidents reported on 8 February and remains a threat to merchant shipping in the area. The vessel is a tuna fishing vessel with a blue hull and white superstructure. ([www.observador.pt](http://www.observador.pt); MDAT-GOG; Clearwater Dynamics; Dryad Global)

8. (U) SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE: On 6 February, pirates boarded the Marshall Islands-flagged tanker SEA PHANTOM about 50 NM north-northeast from Principe Island, near position 02:00N – 008:15E. Alert crew noticed the pirates and retreated into the citadel. The pirates damaged communication and navigation equipment. Upon hearing of the incident the IMB PRC immediately alerted and liaised with regional authorities including a Portuguese Navy warship. Crew attempted to navigate the tanker to rendezvous with dispatched Cameroonian and Equatorial Guinean patrol boats. The ship reached the port of Malabo, in Equatorial Guinea, on the afternoon of 7 February. All crew reported safe. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics; Dryad Global; ThemaNews; [www.maritime-executive.com](http://www.maritime-executive.com); [www.defenceweb.co.za](http://www.defenceweb.co.za))

9. (U) NIGERIA: On 4 February, a container ship was approached while underway approximately 63 NM southwest of Bonny, Nigeria, near position 03:31N – 006:31E. One speedboat with up to seven persons onboard came to within 1 NM of the container ship before aborting the approach. No ladders or weapons were sighted. The vessel and crew are reported as safe. (Clearwater Dynamics)

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

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



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



1. (U) OMAN: On 25 February, the Bahamas-flagged vehicle carrier HELIOS RAY reported an explosion aboard the vessel approximately 44 NM northwest of Muscat, Oman, at position 24:23N – 058:33E. Vessel and crew are safe and the vessel was able to return to a safe port. (Dryad Global, Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) NORTH ARABIAN SEA: On 18 February, Combined Task Force 150 announced that one of its assets had boarded two dhows in a 36-hour period and seized a total of 2,145 kilograms of illegal drugs, including heroin and methamphetamines. The leader of the second boarding team commented, "Everywhere we looked onboard there were suspicious packages." (www.maritime-executive.com)

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



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

1. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 3 March, a bulk carrier reported a suspicious approach by a skiff carrying three persons 11 NM southeast of Sibutu Island, Tawi Tawi. (Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) INDONESIA: On 21 February, robbers boarded the barge LIMAU 133 under tow by Malaysia-flagged tug DANUM 50 in the Singapore Strait eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme, near position 01:09N – 103:49E. Two small crafts were spotted alongside the barge by an Indonesian Navy patrol vessel. Three robbers were onboard the barge, passing stolen items to two further perpetrators in the small crafts. The patrol vessel intervened, which resulted in the five perpetrators being arrested, the two small crafts seized, and 150 kilograms of steel wire recovered. (Clearwater Dynamics; ReCAAP)

3. (U) INDONESIA: On 13 February, robbers boarded the Singapore-flagged container ship ALS JUVENTUS while the ship was berthed at the Port of Jakarta, near position 06:05S – 105:53E. The Third Officer reported that the padlock hinge for the passageway door leading to the engine room was broken. There was no sign of any perpetrators on board or nearby. Spare parts for auxiliary engine were reported missing. The incident was reported to the ship's Company Security Officer. (ReCAAP)

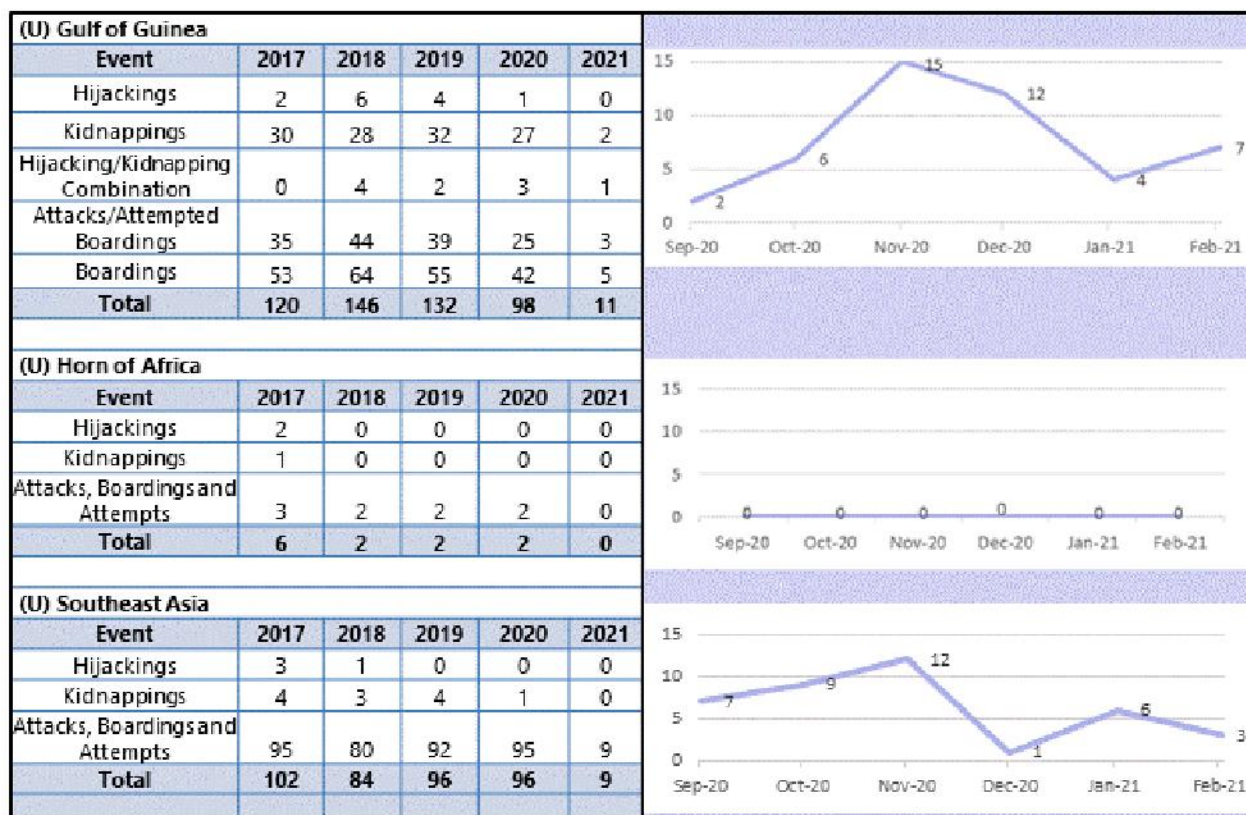
4. (U) SINGAPORE: On 9 February, two robbers boarded a barge being towed by China-flagged tug boat NING HAI TUO in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme, near position 01:05N – 103:34E. When the robbers realized they had been spotted by the crew of the tug, they made their escape with some shackles stolen from the barge. The incident was reported to both the Singapore Coast Guard and the Republic of Singapore Navy's Maritime Security Force as well as the Indonesian authorities. (ReCAAP; Clearwater Dynamics)

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

1. (U) BANGLADESH: On 18 February, criminals kidnapped two fishermen. Two days later, seven criminals were arrested by local coast guard forces in Hatia Upazila in Noakhali district. These criminals reportedly received a ransom payment for the fishermen. (www.observerbd.com)

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



#### 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.

(U) **ICOD:** 3 March 2021

(U) The Weekly Piracy Update (WPU) and Worldwide Threat to Shipping reports are posted weekly on the ONI Intelligence Portal: <https://www.oni.navy.mil/News/Shipping-Threat-Reports/>