

MS | RISK

Maritime Security Review



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Table of Contents

INCIDENTS AT SEA	3
GULF OF ADEN, ARABIAN SEA, RED SEA	4
SPOTLIGHT ON YEMEN	10
ACTIVITY REPORTING.....	11
<i>Yemen officials say UAE barring ships with government cash</i>	11
<i>Two killed in Saudi-led air strikes in Yemen</i>	11
<i>Armed men raid Yemeni media organization in Aden</i>	12
<i>War 'at the gates' of Zabid UNESCO World Heritage</i>	12
<i>Security official shot dead in Aden</i>	12
<i>Protests against Houthi militia continue in Sanaa</i>	12
<i>Rights group: Houthi militia using Yemeni prisoners as human shields</i>	13
<i>IS claims deadly drive-by shooting in Yemen's Aden</i>	13
YEMEN PROCEDURE.....	14
WEST AFRICA, GULF OF GUINEA.....	15
SOUTHEAST ASIA	19
Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Vessels in Asia: Monthly Review (February 2018)	23
WORLDWIDE	27
.....	33
<i>EU Looking at Ways to Prevent Migrants from Reaching its Shores as Spring Arrives</i>	33
<i>Migrants Likely Dead on Trip from Libya to Italy</i>	34
SPOTLIGHT ON LIBYA	35
ACTIVITY REPORTING.....	36
<i>Car bomb explosion kills 3 in Ajdabiya</i>	36
<i>Political solution out of reach in near future</i>	36
<i>El-Feel oilfield to reopen</i>	36
<i>El Sharara oilfield shutdown By pollution protest</i>	36
LIBYA PROCEDURE.....	37
ABOUT MS RISK	38

INCIDENTS AT SEA

Reporting Period: 5 - 11 March 2018

Region	Current Incidents	Late Reported Incidents	Threat Level
MAIN REGIONS			
Gulf of Aden/Arabian Sea	2	0	Medium
Gulf of Guinea	4	1	High
Southeast Asia	0	1	Low
WORLDWIDE			
North America	0	1	Low
Central America/Caribbean/ South America	0	4	Medium
Atlantic Ocean Area	0	0	Low
Northern Europe/English Channel/Baltic	0	1	Low
Mediterranean/ Black Sea	0	1	Low
Arabian Gulf	0	0	Low
East Asia/Indian Subcontinent	0	1	Low
Southern Africa	0	1	Low
Northeast Asia	0	0	Low
Pacific Ocean/Southern Ocean	0	0	Low

Piracy Levels are determined on a weekly basis as follows:

- HIGH** 5 or more incidents in the current reporting period
- MEDIUM** 2 – 4 piracy incidents in the current reporting period
- LOW** 0 – 1 piracy incidents in the current reporting period

PLEASE NOTE:

The information contained in this report is as accurate as possible at the time of publishing. In some cases, however, incidents are updated at a later date as more information becomes available.

We encourage our readers to confidentially report any incidents or suspicious activity to info@msrisk.com.

GULF OF ADEN, ARABIAN SEA, RED SEA



WARNING FOR RED SEA, BAB EL-MANDAB STRAIT, AND GULF OF ADEN: HIGH THREAT OF VESSEL HIJACKING

There remains a high threat of piracy and a risk of vessel damage as the result of maritime conflict in this region. International naval patrols and anti-piracy measures on board commercial vessels have greatly diminished Somali piracy since its peak in early 2011. The international community has significant steps to improve security in the region, including:

- Boosting naval forces in the area
- Requiring ships to take protection measures, such as
 - Reporting in and out of high risk areas
 - Sailing at top speed as far as possible from the Somali coast, and
 - Travelling with armed escorts on board.

Some vessels transiting this region may have increasingly become complacent in the belief that the piracy threat had diminished. However, poverty and other motivating factors for piracy remain. The threat of attack and/or hijacking remains significant as the root causes on the ground in Somalia have not been sufficiently addressed. After five years without a successful attack, analysts say that

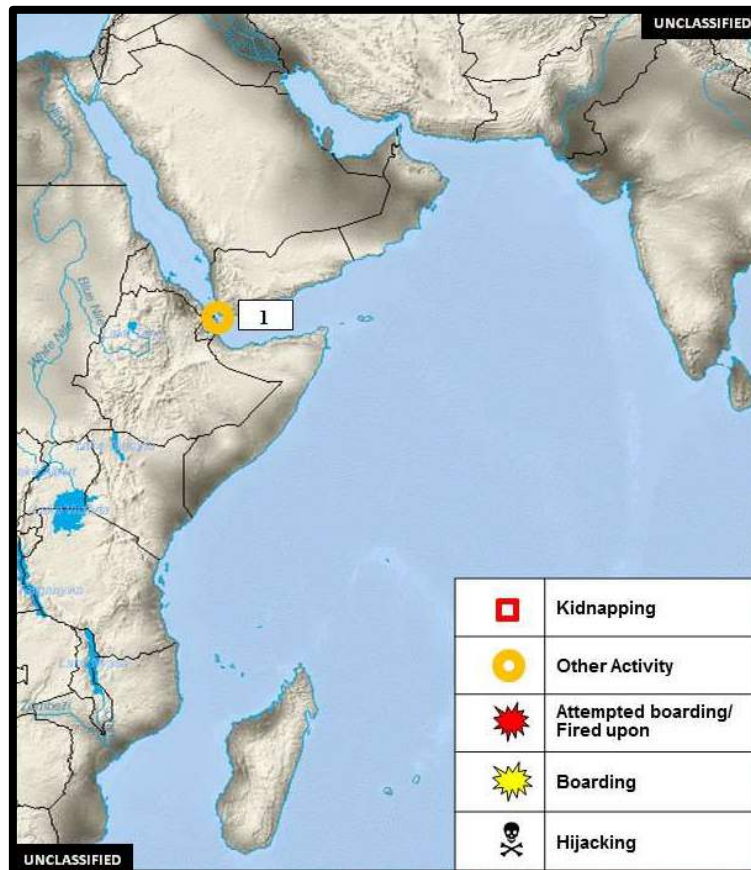
complacency may have set in and this year's successful hijacking is likely to result in potential copycat attacks, as pirate action groups head out in a bid to successfully hijack a commercial vessel.

Masters are advised to remain vigilant at all times inside the HRA and are urged to adhere to guidance and protective measures as set down in BMP4. Sailing yachts should avoid transiting the HRA. Past activity has demonstrated that pirates will attack both large and small yachts transiting this region. While successful attacks and hijackings of merchant vessels have significantly decreased over the past two years, the possibility of attacks and the successful hijacking of sailing vessels continues to remain high. This is due to the reduction of revenue sources from pirated merchant vessels, and the fact that sailing yachts are vulnerable and easier targets. PAG's continue to conduct "soft approaches" on merchant ships transiting the area. Skiffs have approached vessels in order to probe the reaction of the crewmembers and any possible Privately Contracted Armed Security Personnel (PCASP) onboard. If the pirate approach does not elicit a response, the pirates will likely proceed with an attack, in which additional skiffs may participate.

Vessels transiting the greater Gulf of Aden region should operate under a heightened state of alert. This is due to increasing tensions in the region, particularly around Bab al Mandab Strait and near Yemen, where fighting has taken a maritime trajectory. The risk for potential for direct or collateral damage to vessels transiting the region is high. These threats may come from a number of different sources such as missiles, projectiles, or waterborne improvised explosive devices. Houthi rebels have claimed responsibility for the 1 October 2016 attack on a UAE vessel. MS Risk advises all vessels transiting this region to report any hostile activities immediately.

Current
Incidents:

2

**VESSEL HIJACKED**

- No current incidents to report

UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES

- No current incidents to report

VESSELS FIRED UPON/ATTEMPTED BOARDINGS/ATTACKS

1. **8 March (Red Sea)** – A merchant vessel was approached by three skiffs, with 3 – 4 persons in each skiff near position 12:32 N – 0043:27 E, Bab el Mandeb Strait. The vessel and crewmembers on board have been reported safe.

VESSELS BOARDED

- No current incidents to report

KIDNAPPING

- No current incidents to report

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- No current incidents to report

OTHER ACTIVITY

- **5 March (Somalia)** – According to a Somali media outlet, seventy-five Somalis touched down at Mogadishu’s international airport after serving up to seven years in prison for piracy offenses. Seventy-five Somali men received a warm welcome from Mahdi Mohamed Guled Khadar, deputy prime minister, and other government officials. India’s navy captured the men off Somalia’s coast and they were charged with piracy.

MARITIME REPORTING

- No major incidents to report

WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF ADEN, ARABIAN SEA, RED SEA**WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 8 - 14 MARCH 2018**

NORTHERN ARABIAN SEA: Westerly winds of 10 – 15 knots, with seas of 3 – 5 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Westerly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 3 – 5 feet.

GULF OF OMAN: Variable winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 2 - 4 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

- **Extended Forecast:** Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

GULF OF ADEN: East-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with east-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

- **Extended Forecast:** East-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with east-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

SOMALI COAST: Northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots, and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the northern section of the coastline; with northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 5 – 7 feet in the southern section of the coastline.

- **Extended Forecast:** Northeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the northern section of the coastline; with northeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 5 – 7 feet in the southern section of the coastline.

CENTRAL AFRICAN COAST/INDIAN OCEAN: Northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet.

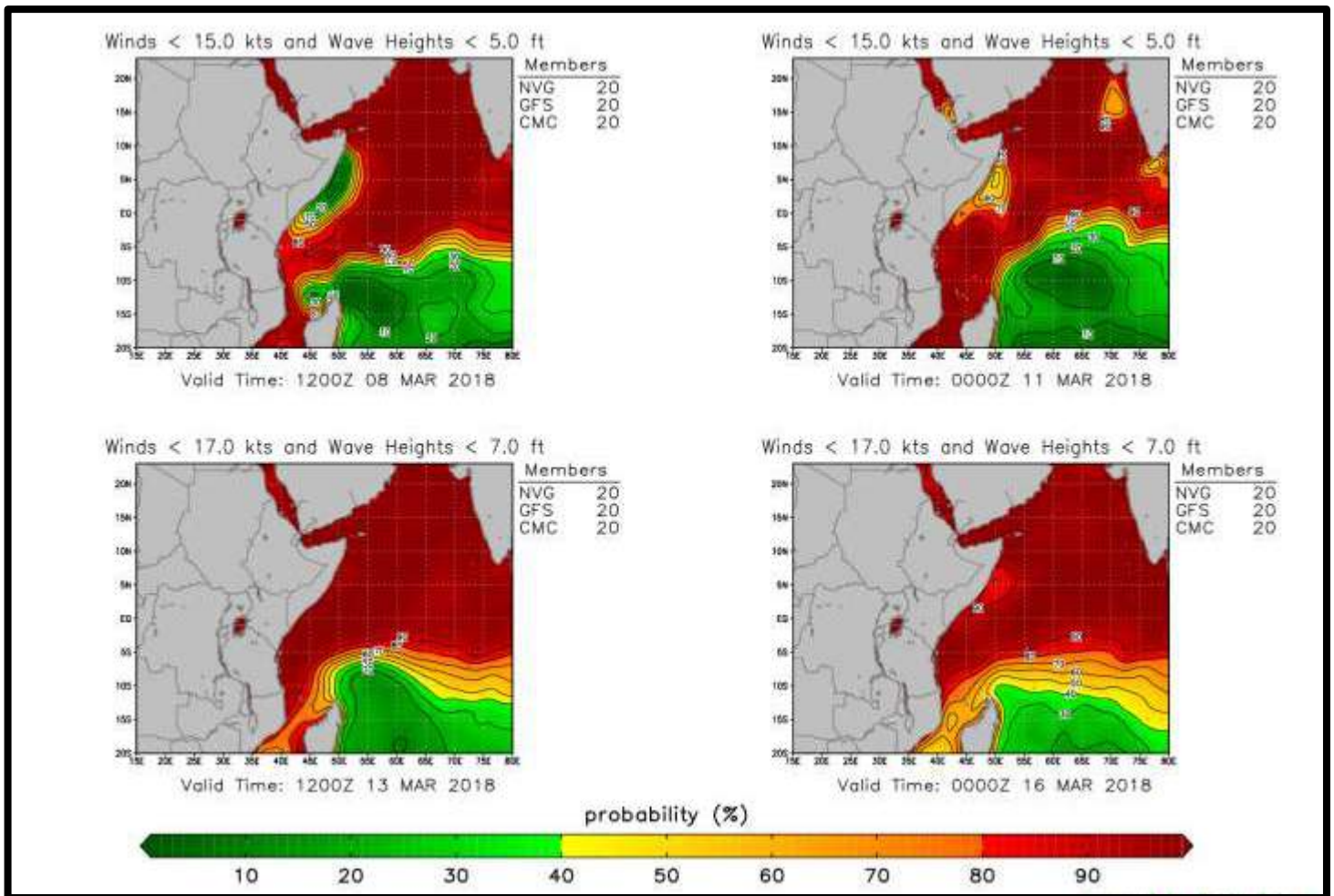
- **Extended Forecast:** Northeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 3 – 5 feet.

MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL: North-northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the northern Channel; with southeast winds of 15 – 20 knots, and seas of 8 – 10 feet in the southern Channel.

- **Extended Forecast:** Northwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 4 – 6 feet in the northern Channel; with southeast winds of 15 – 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots, and seas of 10 – 12 feet in the southern Channel.

SURFACE CURRENTS: The northern Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden currents are variable with most areas having an average speed of 1 knot. The Mozambique Channel currents are variable having an average speed of 2 knots. Currents' speeds along the Somali Basin are north-easterly averaging between 2 – 3 knots.

SYNOPTIC DISCUSSION: High pressure will dominate the weather pattern over much of the region producing mostly clear skies. Isolated rain showers and thunderstorms can be expected during the forecast as an area of low pressure moves through the region. Expect increased localized wind flow through the Strait of Hormuz due to funnelling effects and occasional shamal winds across the Arabian Gulf.



SPOTLIGHT ON YEMEN

PORT STATUS AS OF 11 MARCH 2018			
Port Name	Port Status	Risk Level	Notes
Aden Port	Open	High	Curfew: 2000 - 0600
Ash Shihr Oil Terminal	Closed	High	
Balhaf LNG Terminal	Closed	Closed	
Hodeidah Port	Open	High	The Saudi Royal Navy is using a holding area 60 NM west of Hodeidah port for vessels attempting entry into Salif or Hodeidah. Inbound vessels should plan on holding here prior to receiving clearance.
Mokha Port	Open	High	Considered unsafe; no activity reported since August 2015
Mukalla Port	Open	High	Capacity: 2 berths
Ras Isa Marine Terminal	Closed	Closed	
Saleef Port	Open to humanitarian aid	High	Capacity: 2 berths

Shipmasters and crew are urged to remain abreast of current conditions surrounding all Yemeni ports, and to ensure that security measured aboard vessels are in place.

ACTIVITY REPORTING

US TRADING COMPANY: CONTRACTED LIBERIAN SHIPPING COMPANY TRIED TO SMUGGLE WEAPONS TO YEMEN

- **7 March** – A US trading company filed a federal complaint stating that the Liberian company it contracted to ship hundreds of thousands of barrels of oil also tried to smuggle weapons to Yemen, and let Saudi Arabian forces confiscate the oil when it got caught. Swaidan Trading Co. brought the lawsuit in Portland, Oregon, against four Liberian companies that conduct their business in Greece: Dileton Maritime, Androussa Shipping, Aretoussa Shipping and Erikoussa Maritime. Swaidan claims the companies hid guns and explosives in the ballast of the M/V Donusa and altered the ship's navigation logs to cover up the fact that the companies were working to violate the blockade of Yemen. Swaidan says it bought 309,173 barrels of oil for \$64.73 per barrel, for a total of \$20 million. Defendants loaded the oil onto the Donusa on April 1 in Djibouti. Three days later, Saudi authorities stopped the ship for inspection. They found irregularities that indicated the boat was being used to smuggle military grade weapons and explosives and confiscated the boat, along with everything inside, the lawsuit states. The shipping companies allegedly told Swaidan that the only guns onboard the Donusa were 16 rifles that were locked in a safe. Swaidan demands \$32 million for its lost oil shipment, plus finance costs, insurance, banking charges and attorney fees.

YEMEN OFFICIALS SAY UAE BARRING SHIPS WITH GOVERNMENT CASH

- **7 March** – The United Arab Emirates is barring ships carrying some 170 billion Yemeni rials (\$680 million) from entering the southern port of Aden, Yemeni officials said Wednesday. The money is meant for the salaries of government employees who haven't been paid for over a year. The officials, including one from the Yemeni central bank, spoke on condition of anonymity. There was no immediate comment from the UAE. Like most other southern ports, Aden is under the control of the UAE, a key partner in the Saudi-led coalition fighting the Shiite Houthi rebels, who control most of northern Yemen, including the capital, Sanaa. The coalition is fighting on the side of President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi's government, but the UAE has long been at odds with Hadi, with each side running its own armed groups in a power struggle across southern Yemen. The officials said the UAE had in the past prevented aircraft carrying cash from landing at Aden's airport. The UAE ban came nearly a year after Hadi ordered the relocation of the Central Bank to Aden, the government's temporary seat. Since then, his rivals have accused him of stashing cash in private banks and in the presidential palace, allegations denied by the government. The unpaid salaries have crippled Yemen's public sector amid three years of grinding war. Malnutrition, cholera, and other diseases have killed thousands of civilians, and millions have come to depend on humanitarian assistance for survival.

TWO KILLED IN SAUDI-LED AIR STRIKES IN YEMEN

- **7 March** – Air strikes killed a woman and a young girl in northern Yemen on Wednesday in a series of attacks by an Arab coalition fighting the country's Iran-aligned Houthi movement. The Saudi-led alliance has conducted frequent air strikes and has sometimes hit civilians, although it denies ever doing so intentionally. On Monday, a panel set up by the coalition to investigate civilian casualties, the Joint Incidents Assessment Team, said air strikes carried out in 2017 "were in accordance with

international humanitarian law and many of the alleged strikes were falsely attributed to the Coalition”.

ARMED MEN RAID YEMENI MEDIA ORGANIZATION IN ADEN

- **7 March** – The Committee to Protect Journalists is urging Yemeni authorities to investigate an arson attack on the offices of a media foundation in Aden. The CPJ says armed men raided the offices of al-Shomou Foundation on March 1, setting fire to the printing presses used for the Al-Shomou weekly and the Akhbar al-Youm daily paper. CPJ’s Mideast coordinator Sherif Mansour said “the attack ... shows that journalists are being targeted with impunity across every inch of Yemen.” He urged local authorities in Aden “to ensure the safety of journalists operating in areas they purport to control.” The CPJ says the attack came more than a week after Yemeni forces, trained and funded by the United Arab Emirates, detained a Yemeni journalist in southern Hadramawt province.

WAR 'AT THE GATES' OF ZABID UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE

- **6 March** – Yemen's war is closing in on his historical capital Zabid, famed as an architectural marvel of early Islam. The town of Zabid can only hope to survive the three-year-long war behind its ancient mud and rock walls. The town, overlooking the country's west coast, was named a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1993 for its centuries-old urban planning and architecture, including the world's fifth-oldest mosque. Riven by neglect and poverty, it was placed on the UNESCO list of World Heritage in Danger seven years later. Amid its humanitarian crises, Yemen's culture and historical sites have also been affected by the war, which is now threatening the fate of Zabid. From the 13th to the 15th centuries, Zabid was the capital of Yemen. The town predates the coming of Islam to Yemen, but is an architectural marvel of the faith: Four gates surround the city, where a web of narrow, cobblestone streets links a souk with quieter residential areas. It also features the highest concentration of mosques in Yemen, one of the world's first Islamic universities and canals to supply water to residents. Mukhtar Abdulsamad, head of the general authority for historic preservation in Zabid, fears one of the last pillars of his country's heritage may soon be demolished. "We appeal to international organisations, and UNESCO, to prioritise the protection of Zabid," Abdulsamad said. "This town belongs to the world and not to Yemen alone."

SECURITY OFFICIAL SHOT DEAD IN ADEN

- **5 March** – A senior security official was shot dead in Aden on Monday, according to a local security official. Unidentified gunmen opened fire on Abdul Karim Abdullah, the deputy security chief of the 7th security zone, inside a restaurant, the official said on condition of anonymity. He said the attackers had fled the scene unscathed. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack. Aden has recently seen a spate of assassinations that targeted a number of security officials, preachers and party leaders.

PROTESTS AGAINST HOUTHİ MILITIA CONTINUE IN SANAA

- **4 March** – Protests broke out in Yemen’s capital Sanaa on Sunday against the Houthi militia by tens of civilians after the militia closed down gas filling stations for the sixth day in a row. Yemeni media outlets reported that civilians organized demonstrations and burned car tires in front of the capital’s secretariat building. Protesters closed down the main road in front of the building, meanwhile the militia has increased its presence in the streets, especially in areas prone to civilian demonstrations.

The protests spread into different areas of the capital following an attempt by the militia to suppress other demonstrations in agricultural areas where they arrested a number of protesters amid mounting public discontent. For days, gas filling stations have been closed down with civilians standing in long lines to attempt filling their cylinders. Gas prices have doubled in the black market and at official filling stations, where the price of a 20-liter gas cylinder in areas controlled by the Houthis has reached 7,000 to 9,000 Riyals versus 4,000 Riyals before the price increase. The militia is making large amounts of money off of black market trading of oil derivatives, estimated by a local study to amount to about \$1.5 million a day from gasoline only.

RIGHTS GROUP: HOUTHİ MILİTİA USING YEMENİ PRISONERS AS HUMAN SHIELDS

- **4 March** – Yemeni detainees are being used as human shields at Houthi militia prisons, the according to Geneva-based International Association for Peace and Human Rights (IAPHR). The human rights group outlined two reports on the Houthi coup in Yemen and its humanitarian impact on Yemeni civilians at a seminar at the United Nations in Geneva on March 3. Hamdan Zaid Dammaj, vice president of the IAPHR's Yemeni Organization for Studies and Research, said there were 1,202 documented incidents of Yemeni detainees being used as human shields at 59 detention centers throughout the country. Detention centers included schools, residential facilities and sports clubs that had been turned into military barracks by Houthi militia, he said. Dammaj said the detainees were government supporters, including media activists, politicians from the Reform Party, as well as 130 intellectuals and 181 military personnel. President of the World Federation of Yemeni Communities Abroad, Dr. Hiaf Ali, said the Houthi militia's practices violated all international charters. The IAPHR is working to have militia classified as a terror group.

IS CLAIMS DEADLY DRIVE-BY SHOOTING IN YEMEN'S ADEN

- **4 March** – The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for a drive-by shooting that killed two security personnel in Yemen's southern port city of Aden on Sunday. In a statement by its official news agency Amaq, the IS said its fighters assassinated "two apostate soldiers in Aden's neighborhood of Mansourah." The terror group also posted four pictures showing two of its fighters launching the attack in Aden. A local security source also confirmed the assassination. "Two security guards at Aden's port were killed by terrorists while they were heading to the workplace," he told Xinhua on condition of anonymity. Last month, the IS claimed responsibility for twin suicide bombings that struck the headquarters of the counter-terrorism forces backed by the United Arab Emirates in Aden. Medical sources said the bombings killed 6 soldiers and injured 53 others, mostly civilians. Aden is considered Yemen's temporary capital, as the Saudi-backed Yemeni government has based itself there since 2015.

YEMEN PROCEDURE

MS RISK CONTINUES TO ADVISE EXTREME CAUTION FOR VESSELS TRAVELING THROUGH BAB AL MANDAB, THE GULF OF ADEN, AND THE INDIAN OCEAN.

In the past year, the battle between the Yemeni government and Saudi led coalition against the Houthi rebels has taken a maritime trajectory. In 2016, Houthi rebels deployed sea mines and unmanned armed vessels in the waters around Yemen. While unmanned drone boats may likely target coalition warships, aquatic mines do not distinguish, and can cause harm to any vessel in the vicinity. Therefore, risk of passage through the region has increased and is likely to rise. There remains a high level of violence and criminal activity ashore. Shipping vessels should remain constantly aware of the situation, including changes to protocol when entering Yemeni maritime waters.

United Nations Inspections

The UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) is operational for commercial imports to Yemen.

Shipping companies or owners delivering to ports not under the control of the Government of Yemen must apply for permits upon departing from the port of origin of their cargo. Yemen-based importers/traders are required to submit this notification form. More information about the UNVIM program is available here: <https://www.vimye.org/home>.

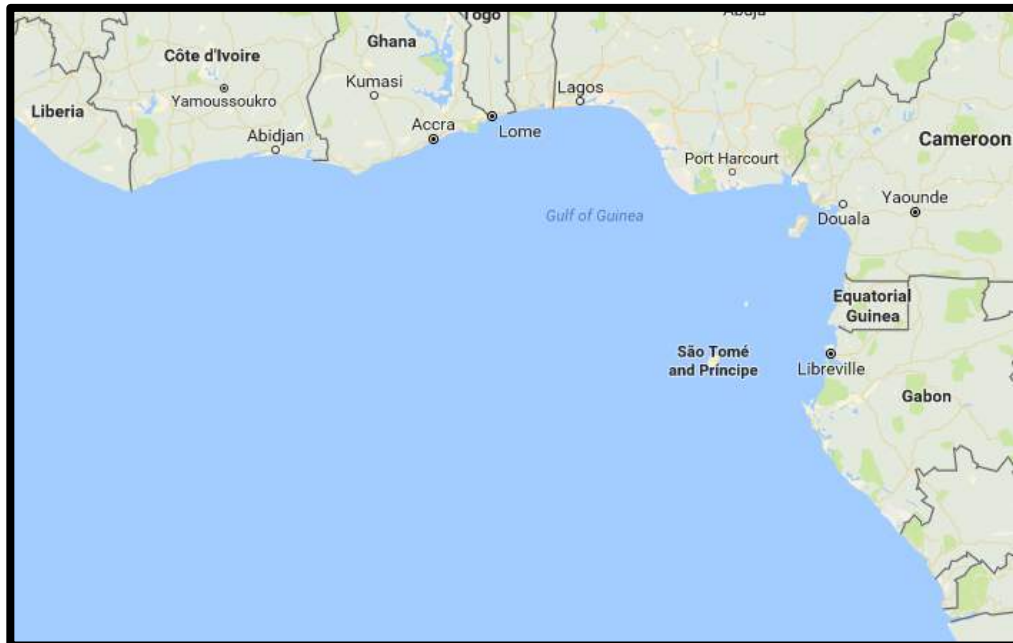
Vessels applying to go to ports under the control of the Government of Yemen need obtain permission for entry from the Yemeni Ministry of Transport. This should be done through the ship's agent and/or receivers prior to the vessel's arrival. The form should be completed by the ship's master and sent directly to the Ministry of Transport.

Saudi Coalition Inspections

All vessels calling at Yemeni ports will only be allowed to enter Yemeni territorial waters following an inspection by the Saudi Arabian coalition forces. Upon arrival outside Bab Al-Mandab, the shipmaster should call the naval forces of the Saudi Arabian coalition by VHF on channel 16 for the arrival registration, and indicate his location (ideally three miles from Bab Al Mandab). Coalition authorities will advise on the anchor position until they provide final approval to enter the port. This procedure will not take more than 48 hours.

Coalition inspectors do not conduct investigation with the crew; contact will be with the ship's master or Chief Officer about the cargo and documents. Once the vessel is permitted into Yemeni ports, the Master will be required to call port control by VHF on channel 14 or 16 for the arrival registration. The shipmaster will be advised the anchor position until the Harbour master confirms berthing prospects.

Coalition forces require AIS to be kept on at all times. The situation is subject to change and vessels should check frequently with local sources for any changes.

WEST AFRICA, GULF OF GUINEACurrent
Incidents:**5****WARNING:**

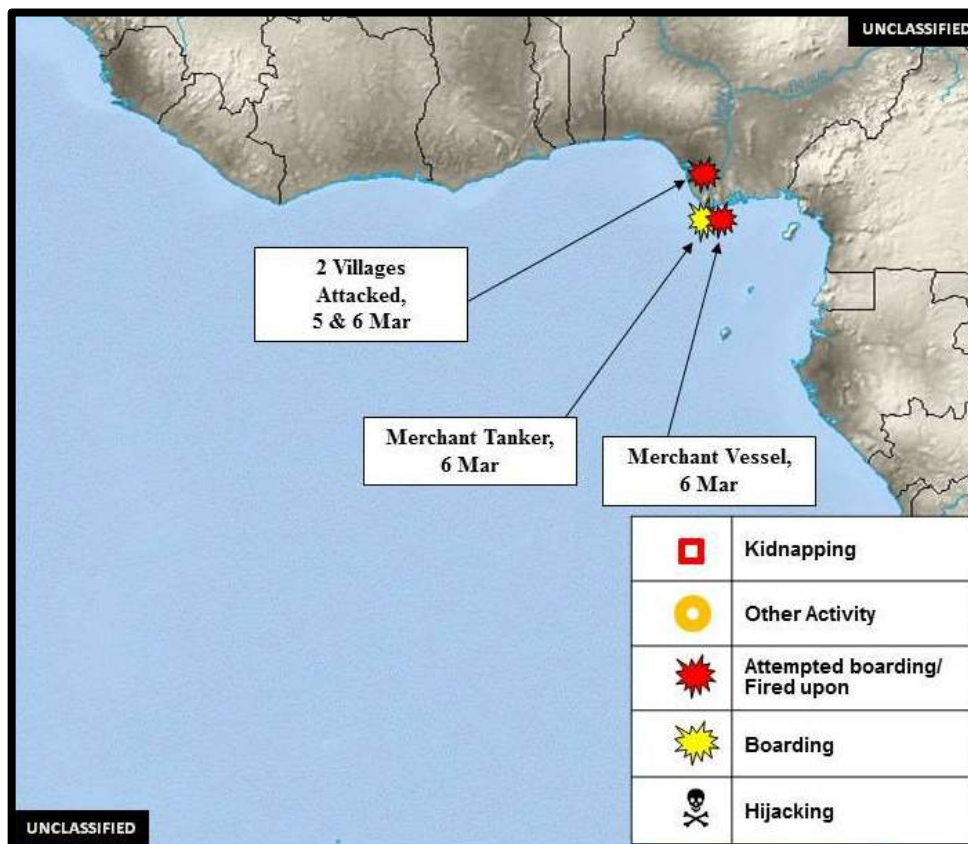
In recent weeks, the Gulf of Guinea region has seen a significant rise in incidents. The entire Gulf of Guinea region remains at a high risk to piracy; MS Risk advises all vessels transiting within 100 nautical miles of Tema, Ghana; Lome, Togo; and Cotonou, Benin to remain particularly vigilant.

On 23 February, Intercargo, the International Association of Dry Cargo Ship-owners, issued an alert in regards to the increasing threat of hijack and kidnap in and around Nigerian waters. Intercargo urged vessels operating in the area to report to the FR/UK operated Maritime Domain Awareness for Trade – Gulf of Guinea (MDAT – GoG), which is a secure and trusted agency. Additionally, it recommends that Masters of vessels operating in the area plan according to the following:

- “Arrive at the Pilot Station, Anchorage or STS Area just in time. Tim transit with consideration to safe speed and maintaining distance offshore or use an offshore waiting area. Consider higher transit speeds where risk/threat assessment is high.”
- “Rendezvous, where possible, avoid waiting and slow steaming. Consider offering several alternative rendezvous points and advise rendezvous points at the last minute. If waiting, keep well off the coast (up to 200 nautical miles). Do not give away waiting positions. Do not drift and keep engines ready for immediate manoeuvres.”
- “Vessels should proceed within the 200 nautical mile range at Full Speed. Anchoring, where practicable, a prolonged stay at anchorage is to be avoided. Minimise use of VHF and use e-mail

or secure satellite telephone instead. Where possible only answer known or legitimate callers on the VHF, bearing in mind that imposters are likely and may even appear in uniform.”

- “The greatest risks of piracy are at night and these need to be factored into all planning. Where possible, operations should start and end during daylight hours. The use of Privately Contracted Armed Guards on board is banned in Nigerian waters. If using an armed escort, due diligence on the company providing this service must be conducted to ensure strict adherence to the MOU issued by the Nigerian Navy and NIMASA.”
- “Ship owners and managers must have a means of verification that hardening measures are available and in place on vessels prior to entering the Gulf of Guinea area. Spot check for verification at ports within the Gulf of Guinea area is an additional option to consider. Nigerian Naval armed guards can protect merchant ships utilising patrol boats to escort ships in the region. Maintain all-round visual lookouts and good radar watch.”
- “Members and clients with vessels operating in the Gulf of Guinea are also advised to closely monitor the situation via the IMB website and by staying in close contact with regional authorities and their local agents. A risk assessment should be conducted and the relevant preventive measures adopted, following the Interim Guidelines for Owners, Operators and Masters for protection against piracy in the Gulf of Guinea region and the BMP4.”



VESSELS HIJACKED

- No incidents to report

UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES

- No incidents to report

VESSELS FIRED UPON/ATTEMPTED BOARDINGS/ATTACK

- **6 March (Nigeria)** - A merchant vessel was attacked by armed men in two speedboats near position 04:04 N – 006:56 E, 25 nautical miles southwest of Bonny.

VESSELS BOARDED

- **6 March (Nigeria)** – A chemical tanker was boarded by heavily armed pirates near position 04:05 N – 006:56 E, 21 nautical miles southwest of Bonny Island. All crewmembers went into the citadel and the Nigerian Navy was notified. The pirates damaged the communications equipment and fired shots. They escaped before the Nigerian navy vessel arrived. The crew emerged from the citadel and regained control of the vessel.

KIDNAPPING

- **1 March (Nigeria – Late Report)** – According to the vessel's owner, four crewmembers taken hostage from the refrigerated cargo ship *SIERRA LEYER* off the coast of Nigeria were released after 19 days in captivity. On 9 February, Bahamas-flagged vessel *SIERRA LEYER* was attacked by pirates off Onne, Nigeria, while on its way to Port Harcourt from Nouadhibou, Mauritania when it broadcast a distress signal. Ten assailants attempted to board the vessel, however, only half were successful but they managed to kidnap four crewmembers. The crew were held in captivity in the Niger Delta region.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- No incidents to report

OTHER ACTIVITY

- **6 March (Nigeria)** – 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.
- **5 March (Nigeria)** – Gunmen in speedboats invaded Anyama community in Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, killing two persons, injuring three others, and stealing ten speedboats. Local sources told news reporters that the suspected pirates arrived in the community at about 9 PM local time, shooting indiscriminately and causing a huge panic.

MARITIME REPORTING

- No incidents to report

WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF GUINEA**WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 8 - 14 MARCH 2018**

GULF OF GUINEA: South-southwest winds of 15 – 20 knot and seas of 3 – 5 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** South-southwest winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 3 – 5 feet.

SYNOPTIC DISCUSSION: High pressure continues to dominate the weather in the region producing relatively light winds across the Somali Basin. Isolated thunderstorms and rain showers can be routinely expected along the Somali and West Africa coasts with increased southerly wind flow through the Bab el Mandeb Strait due to funnelling effects.

SOUTHEAST ASIA



Current
Incidents:

1

WARNING:

While in recent months, there have been no reports of kidnapping of crewmembers from vessels while underway in the Sulu-Celebs Sea region, the threat of further such incidents remains high. MS Risk advises all vessels, particularly slow-moving vessels, to re-route where possible. If unable to re-route, we strongly advise vessel Masters and crewmembers to adopt the following measures:

- Maintain a heightened level of vigilance and increase security watch rotations
- Sound the alarm when unknown people are sighted on board the vessel or when suspicious boats are in the vicinity
- Report all incidents and suspicious activity
- Maintain continuous communication with shipping company and with local enforcement agencies
- Avoid confrontation with the perpetrators

Pirate Action Groups (PAG's) operating in this region are likely to target vessels to siphon fuel or oil onto another ship. Masters are therefore reminded to remain vigilant at all times in all regions, including at ports and anchorages. Attacks and robberies can occur at any time. Incidents involving the siphoning of oil/fuel have been on the rise in recent months. Masters are reminded to remain vigilant at all times and to report any incidents, suspicious activity, attacks or hijackings to the local authorities.

VESSELS HIJACKED

- No current incidents to report

KIDNAPPING

- No current incidents to report

UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES

- No current incidents to report

VESSELS FIRED UPON/ATTEMPTED BOARDINGS/ATTACK

- No current incidents to report

VESSELS BOARDED

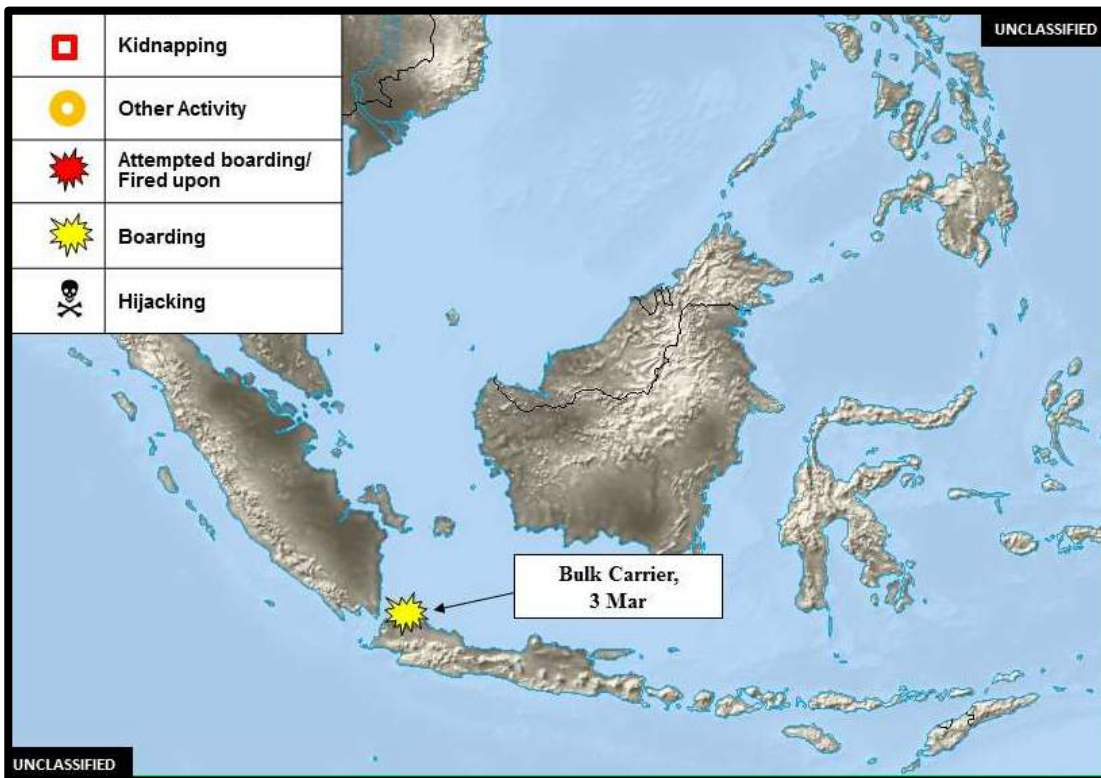
- **3 March (Indonesia – Late Report)** – Two robbers boarded a bulk carrier anchored near position 06:02 S – 106:53 E, Tanjung Priok Anchorage. Duty motorman saw the robbers on the deck and raised the alarm. Upon seeing the alerted crewmembers, the robbers escaped in a waiting boat. On searching the vessel, nothing was reported stolen.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- No current incidents to report

OTHER ACTIVITY REPORT

- No current incidents to report



MARITIME REPORTING

- No incidents to report

WEATHER FORECAST: SOUTHEAST ASIA

WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 8 - 14 MARCH 2018

SOUTHERN SOUTH CHINA SEA: Northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet.

MALACCA STRAIT: Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the northern Strait; with variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the southern Strait.

- **Extended Forecast:** Northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the northern Strait; with northwest winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the southern Strait.

ANDAMAN SEA: Northerly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the northern section; with northerly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the northern section; with easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the southern section.

SOUTHERN SULU SEA – NORTHERN CELEBES SEA: Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet.

SURFACE CURRENTS: Currents in the southern South China Sea, Malacca Strait, and Andaman Sea are generally less than 1 knot with a few areas in the southern South China Sea averaging 1 knot.

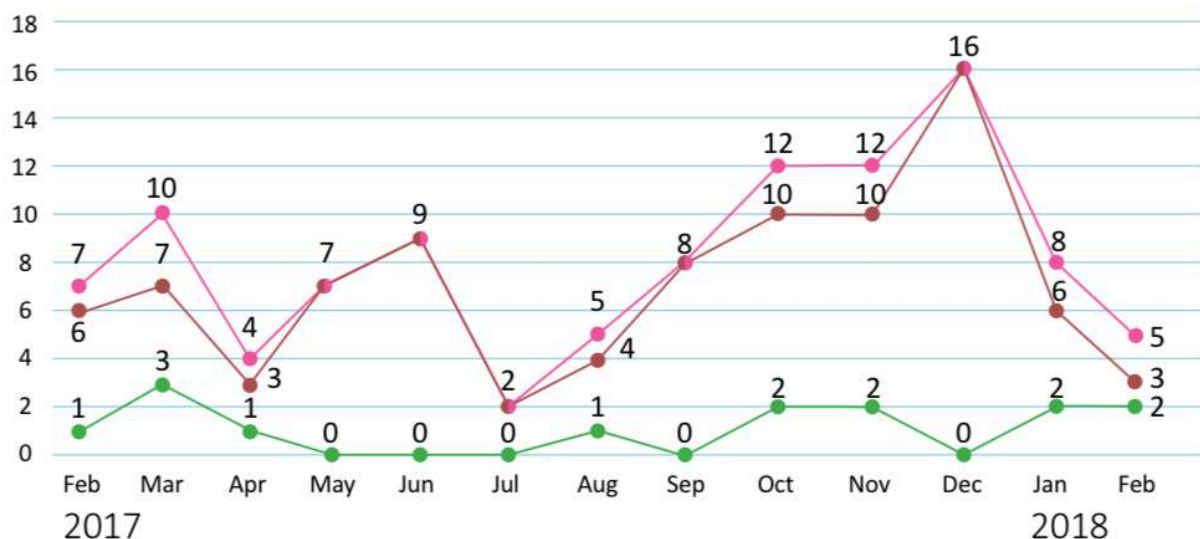
SYNOPTIC DISCUSSION: An area of low pressure moving off of China will produce slightly increased wind flow in the South China Sea. Expect strong gusts in and around scattered thunderstorms, throughout the Malacca Strait and the Andaman Sea due to funnelling effects and daytime heating.

Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Vessels in Asia: Monthly Review (February 2018)

A total of five incidents of armed robbery against vessels were reported in Asia in February 2018, with no incidents of piracy reported. Of the five incidents that occurred, three were actual incidents and two were attempted incidents, with one of the attempted incidents involving the abduction of crewmembers from a container ship approximately 4.4 nautical miles southwest of Sibago Island, province of Basilan, Philippines. During this reporting period, there were not actual incidents of abduction of crew and no incidents of hijacking of vessels for theft of oil cargo.

NUMBER OF INCIDENTS (FEBRUARY 2018)

In February 2018, a total of five incidents of armed robbery against vessels, comprising of three actual incidents and two attempted incidents, were reported. Compared to January 2018, when a total of eight incidents were reported, the situation in February has improved.



Graph 1 - Number of incidents (February 2017 to February 2018)

● Total ● Actual ● Attempted

STATUS OF VESSELS

Of the five incidents reported in February, four incidents occurred on board vessels while at anchor/berth (Bangladesh, India and Vietnam), and one incident occurred on board a vessel while underway (off Basilan, Philippines).

NUMBER OF INCIDENTS (JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2018)

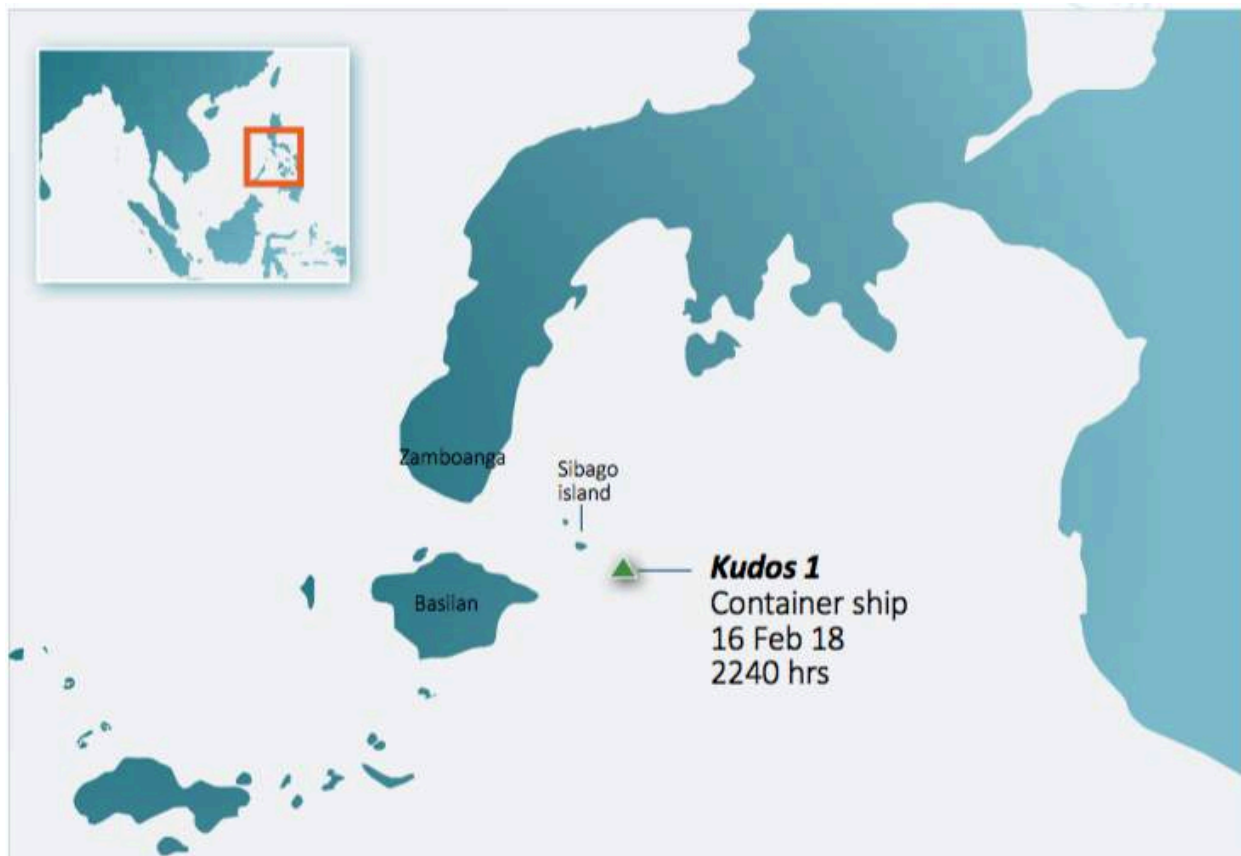
Between January – February 2018, a total of 13 incidents were reported, consisting of nine actual incidents and four attempted incidents. Except for the January – February 2009 period, the number of incidents reported during the January – February period was the lowest among the 10-year reporting

period. Furthermore, compared to the January – February 2017 period, when there were a total of 17 incidents reported consisting of 14 actual incidents and three attempted incidents, there was a 24% decrease in the total number of incidents reported during the January – February 2018 period.

SITUATION ON ABDUCTION OF CREW FROM SHIPS WHILE UNDERWAY IN THE SULU-CELEBES SEA AND WATERS OFF EASTERN SABAH

While during the February reporting period, there was **no report of actual incident** involving the abduction of crew from vessels while underway in the Sulu-Celebs Sea, of concern is **an attempted incident** of abduction of crew that was reported on 16 February involving container ship *KUDOS 1*. The last actual incident occurred on 23 March 2017 on board *SUPER SHUTTLE TUG 1*, with the last attempted incident occurring on 18 April 2017 on board *DONA ANNABEL*.

Attempted Boarding of KUDOS 1 on 16 February 2018



On 16 February, container ship *KUDOS 1* was underway at approximately 4.4 nautical miles southeast of Sibago Island, province of Basilan, Philippines, when three motorized bancas with three perpetrators on board each banc manoeuvred to the portside amidship of *KUDOS 1*. Armed with firearms, the perpetrators attempted to board the vessel using ropes and hooks. The Master and crewmembers splashed hot water onto the perpetrators who opened fire at the vessel for about two minutes and re-positioned themselves at about 400 to 500 metres away from the vessel. The Master also activated two flares. The perpetrators escaped quickly in the motorized bancas and sped heading towards Basilan. Three crewmembers suffered minor injuries on their hands due to the glass debris from the vessel's porthole mirror, which was broken because of the gunshot. The authorities were alerted to the distress

signal and immediately responded by deploying assets to the location of the incident. The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) boarded the vessel and provided medical treatment to the injured crew. The PCG and Philippine Navy escorted the vessel safely towards the port of Zamboanga City. It should be highlighted that the vigilance of the crewmembers coupled with quick responses in retaliation towards the perpetrators and timely sending out of distress signals to the authorities resulted in an immediate response by the authorities, which in turn successfully forced the perpetrators to abort boarding and resulted in them escaping.

Rescue of Abducted Crewmembers

On 9 February, officials confirmed that two Indonesian fishermen, who were held in captivity by the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) for more than a year, were released. The two fishermen, Masters of fishing vessels *SSK 00520* and *SN 1154*, were abducted in the waters between Pegasus Reef and Kual Kinatabangan near Taganak Island in Tawi-Tawi on 5 November 2016. They were released and handed over to the Indonesian authorities on 20 January 2018.

Current Status

As of 28 February 2018, nine abducted crewmembers are still being held in captivity. The Philippine authorities continue to conduct pursuit operations and intensify its military operations to rescue the abducted crewmembers and neutralise the militant group.

MS Risk continues to advise all vessels to re-route from the area, where possible. Otherwise, ship Masters and crewmembers are strongly advised to exercise extra vigilance while transiting the Sulu-Celebes Sea and eastern Sabah region, and report immediately to the following Centres:

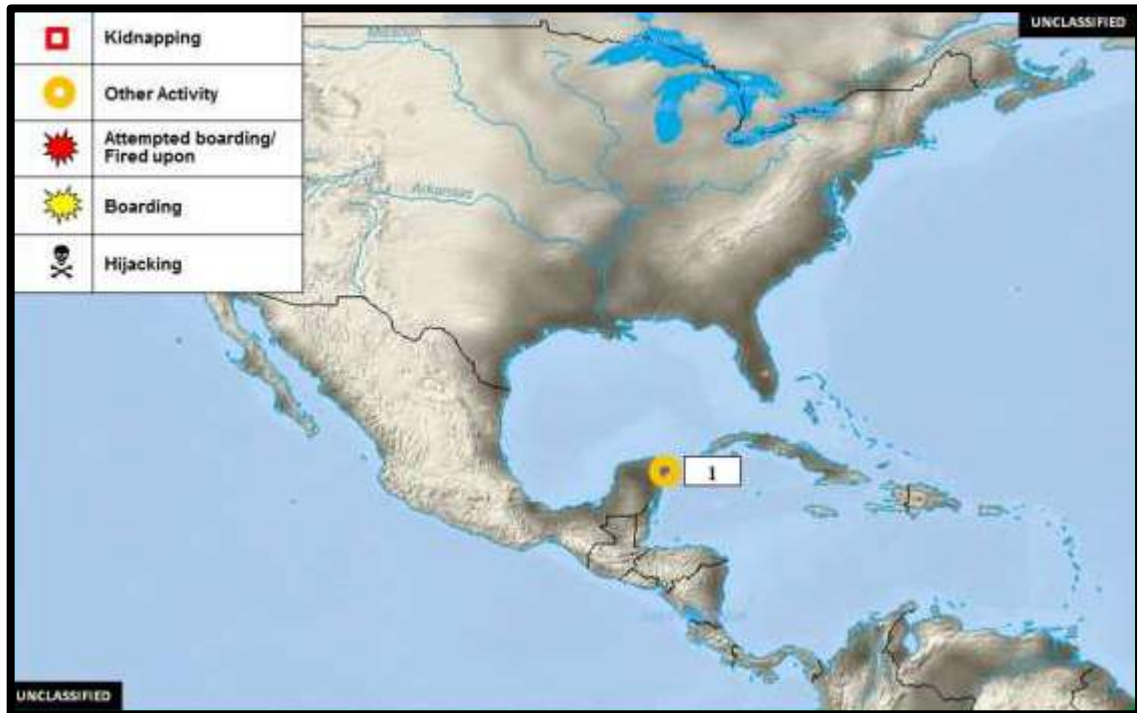
- **Philippine Coast Guard District**
Southwestern Mindanao
Operation Centre
Tel: +63 929686 4129
Tel: +63 929686 0689
VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign "ENVY"
Email: hcgdswm@yahoo.com
- **Navy – Littoral Monitoring Station (LMS)**
Bongao, Tawi-Tawi
Tel: +63 917774 2293
VHF: Channel 16
Email: jointtaskgrouptt@gmail.com
- **Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM)**
Tel: +60 89863181/016
Fax: +60 898631812
VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign "ESSCOM"
Email: bilikgerakanesscom@jpm.gov.my

CONCLUSION

The situation of piracy and armed robbery against vessels in Asia improved in February 2018 compared to the previous month. During this reporting period, a total of five incidents were reported, compared to eight incidents recorded in January 2018. However of concern is the occurrence of an attempted incident of abduction of crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebs Sea that occurred on 16 February.

WORLDWIDE

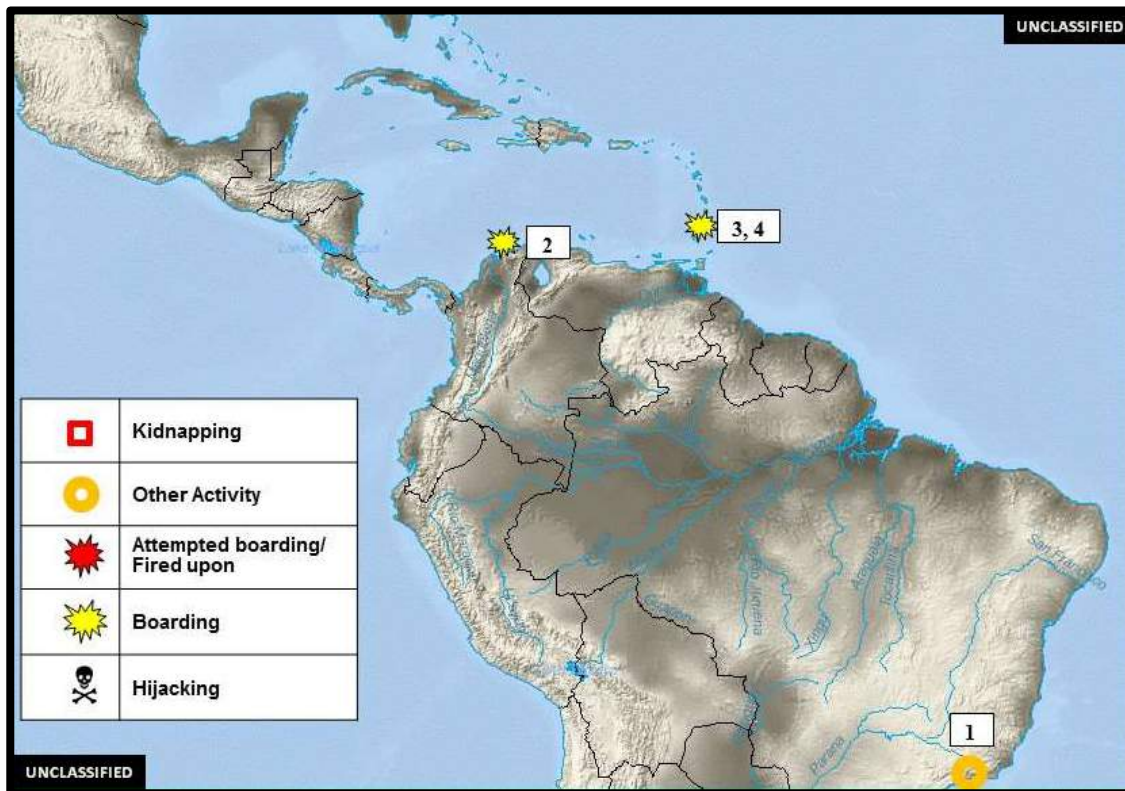
NORTH AMERICA

Current
Incidents:

9

- 1. 1 March (Mexico – Late Report)** – The US 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 twenty people, some of them US 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 US travellers to exercise caution, purchase travel and medical-evacuation insurance, and contact the nearest embassy or consulate for assistance.

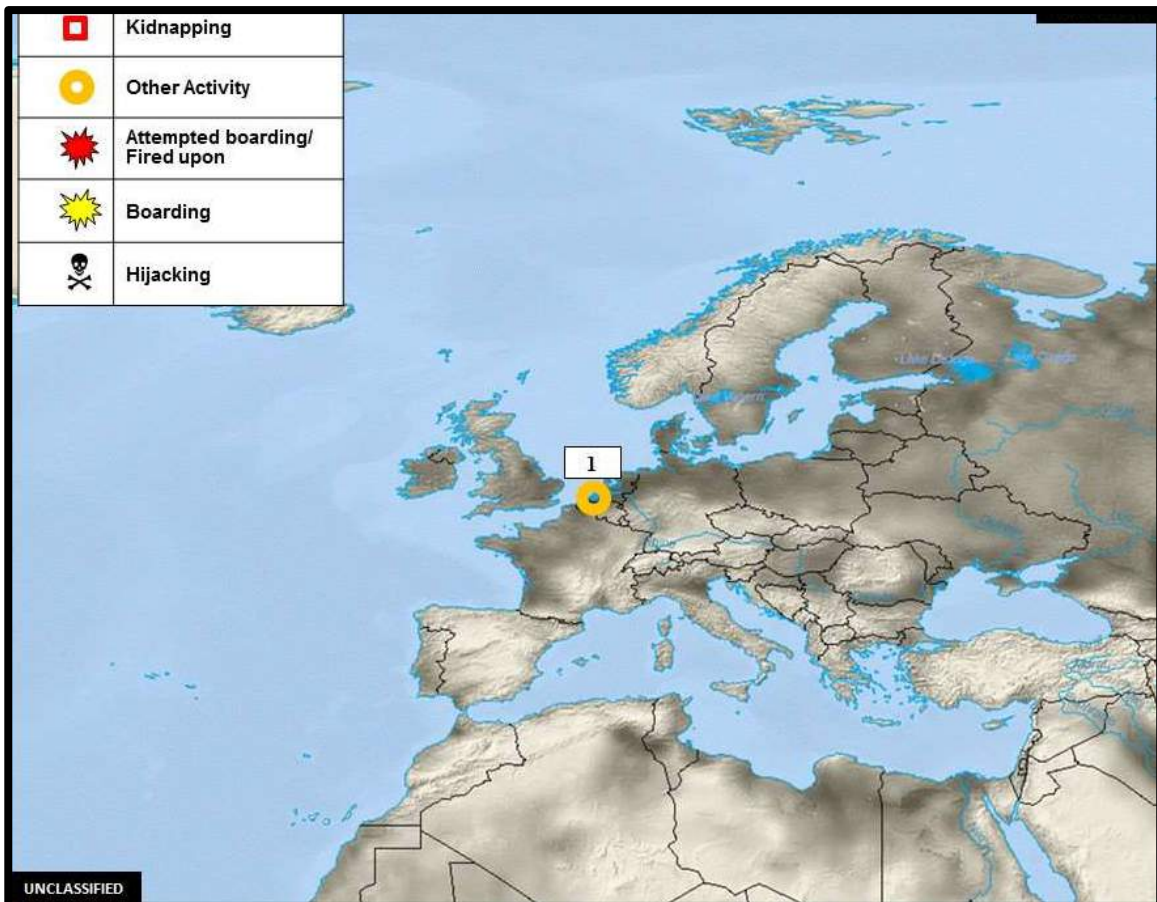
CENTRAL AMERICA/CARIBBEAN/SOUTH AMERICA



1. **3 March (Brazil – Late Report)** – 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.
2. **27 February (Colombia – Late Report)** – A dinghy outboard engine and fuel tank were stolen from a sailing yacht anchored in Cartagena.
3. **26 February (St Lucia – Late Report)** – 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 detach the engine lock and left behind an extra oar.
4. **26 February (St Lucia – Late Report)** – A cable locked dinghy was stolen from a sailing yacht anchored at Rodney Gros Islet. At the same time, they saw the police motor past with the dinghy in tow. They signalled the police, who came over, and after establishing ownership, the police took a report. The police indicated that the dinghy had been found on the beach with some inflatable devices that had apparently been used to get to the yacht.

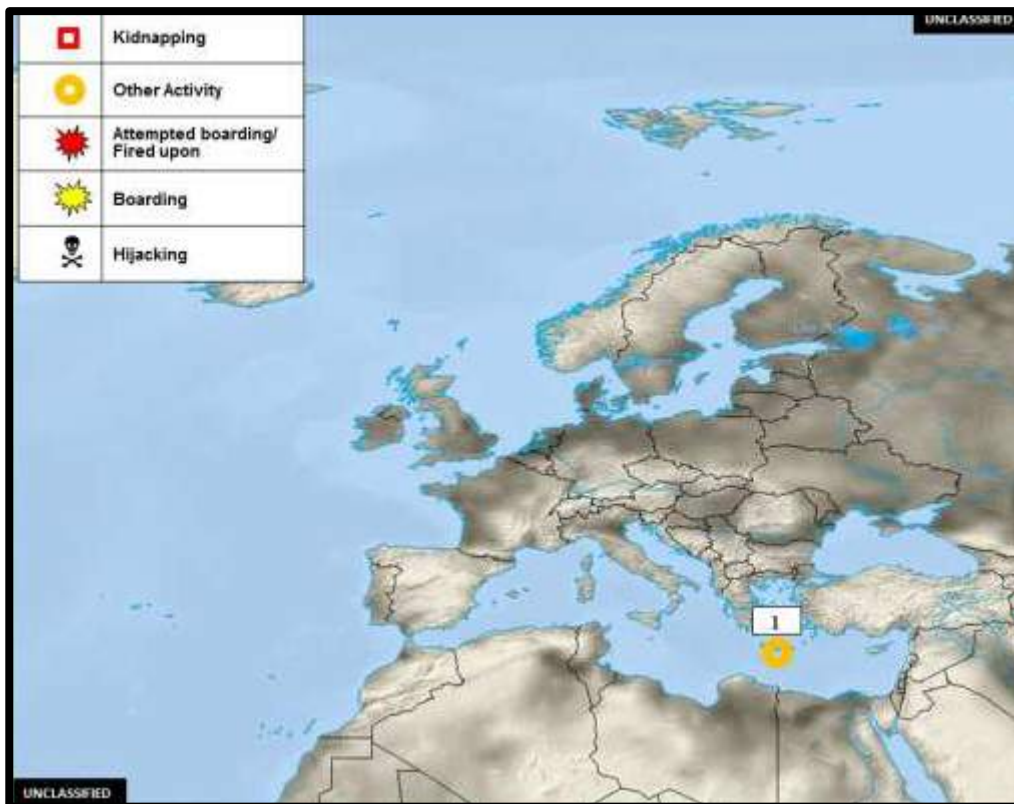
ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA

- No current incidents to report

NORTHERN EUROPE/ENGLISH CHANNEL/BALTIC

1. **26 February (Belgium – Late Report)** – Police arrested six people after 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.

MEDITERRANEAN/BLACK SEA

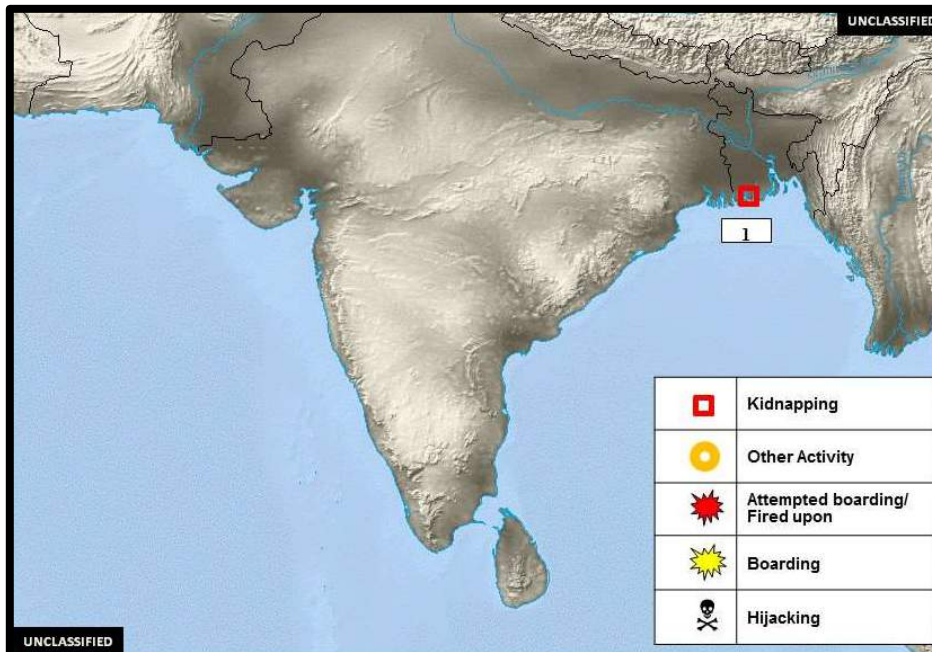


1. **4 March (Greece – Late Report)** – Greece’s Coast Guard seized 1.3 tonnes of cannabis, hidden aboard a fishing vessel intercepted off the southern island of Crete. The drug bust was the result of a three-day operation. Greek authorities had been informed by French Customs that a suspect ship was sailing to the southeast of the island. The operation involved four coast guard patrol vessels and two planes, one belonging to Frontex, the European Union 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 Leraepetra in Crete. According to the Greek Coast Guard, the vessel’s captain and four-member crew were arrested.

ARABIAN GULF

- No current incidents to report

EAST ASIA/INDIAN SUBCONTINENT



- **3 March (Bangladesh – Late Report)** – Members of Forest Guard rescued fourteen abducted fishermen and seven fishing boats following a gunfight with forest robbers in Gatar Khal area of Katka sanctuary in the Sundarbans. According to a spokesman, in a follow-on operation, members of a Bangladesh Coast Guard and Forest Guard jointly conducted several operations in different places in the forest and rescued eight more fishermen and three boats.

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA



- **21 February (South Africa – Late Report)** – The Hawks Eastern Cape Serious Organized crime unit seized 1.6 tonnes of smuggled abalone in Durban harbour.

NORTHEAST ASIA

- No current incidents to report

PACIFIC OCEAN/SOUTHERN OCEAN

- No current incidents to report

MIGRATION



Despite the cold winter weather, migrant crossings in the Mediterranean have continued throughout the winter period, with the Western Mediterranean corridor continuing to see migrants trying to reach Spain. The EU's border agency has warned that migrant numbers arriving in Spain are likely to rise this year.

EU LOOKING AT WAYS TO PREVENT MIGRANTS FROM REACHING ITS SHORES AS SPRING ARRIVES

8 March – With warm weather arriving soon, the European Union (EU) is weighing more ways to prevent migrants from reaching its shores, though the bloc remains deeply divided over how to share responsibility for those entitled to stay. On Thursday, EU interior ministers discussed steps to strengthen the bloc's external borders, while Germany and Austria pushed to prolong ID checks and better control the migrant movement inside Europe's passport-free travel zone. While arrivals have dropped significantly since more than one million unauthorized migrants entered Europe in 2015, the spring period is expected to see more arrivals, and EU ministers are keenly aware of the impact that migration played in Italy during general elections earlier this month, which while no party garnered a majority of seats in parliament, two Eurosceptic parties did manage to attain a large portion of the votes. Despite this, the issue of whether Europe needs a quota system to distribute refugees in countries hit hardest by the migrants flows, primarily Italy and Greece, continues to be a sensitive topic so much so that it is not even on the table. Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic vehemently oppose refugee quotas, rejecting it as a system imposed on them against third will by EU bureaucrats. They insist that migration is best handled by addressing its root causes. EU leaders have demanded that the issue of burden sharing be resolved by early summer. However with quotas stalled, the idea of migrant holding camps around the EU's outside borders is now gaining traction, with the idea particularly being popular in France and Austria, which has an anti-migrant party in its governing coalition. Meanwhile the European Commission is also looking at ways to ensure that migrants who do not qualify are quickly sent home. Currently only around half of those refused entry are returned. The EU's executive body is

believed to be open to allowing member states to restrict the number of visas allocated to some African countries that refuse to take back their nationals.

MIGRANTS LIKELY DEAD ON TRIP FROM LIBYA TO ITALY

6 March – The International Organization for Migration reported on Tuesday that twenty-one migrants were missing and probably drowned after a rubber dinghy and a wooden boat set off from Libya for Italy and had to be rescued. The IOM has reported that the 21 people missing were all among the 51 on the wooden boat, adding that two dead infants had reportedly been discovered on board, bringing the likely death toll to 23. According to IOM spokesman Joel Millman, all 132 people on the rubber dinghy were rescued, adding that both incidents occurred on Saturday, but that survivors had only just reached the port of Pozzallo, Italy. Other survivors were shipped back to Libya. The probable deaths mark the largest incident to occur on the central Mediterranean migrant route between Libya and Italy in over a month, with only one body washing ashore in Libya since 2 February. While fatalities so far this year are down by at least 100 since the same period in 2017, Millman has noted that another route, further west, has become much more hazardous, stating “we continue almost every day to learn of deaths in Moroccan, Algerian and Spanish waters,” adding “we understand the total for the first 63 days of the year is 105 deaths on that route, which is well ahead of what things were like a year ago, when we had 44.”

SPOTLIGHT ON LIBYA



PORT STATUS AS OF 11 MARCH 2018		
Port Name	Port Status	Risk Level
Port of Abu Kammash	Open	Low
Port of al-Khums (Homs)	Open	Low
Port of As-Sidra (Sirte, Es Sider)	Open	Moderate-High
Port of Benghazi	Open	High
Port of Bouri (offshore port)	Open	Low
Port of Derna	CLOSED	High
Port of El Brega (Marsa El Brega)	Open	Moderate
Port of Hariga	Open	Moderate
Port of Mellitah	Open	Low
Port of Misrata (Qasr Ahmed)	Open	High
Port of Ras Lanuf	Open	Moderate-High
Port of Tobruk	Open	Moderate
Port of Tripoli	Open	High
Port of Zawiya (Zawia)	Open	Moderate
Port of Zueitina	Open	Low

ACTIVITY REPORTING

CAR BOMB EXPLOSION KILLS 3 IN AJDABIYA

- **9 March** – A military spokesman says a car bomb explosion has killed at least three security personnel at a checkpoint south of the northeastern Libyan town of Ajdabiya. Faisal Ahbale said Friday's attack took place at the town's southern entrance. No group immediately claimed responsibility but Ahbale said he believes it was carried out by the extremist Islamic State group. Ajdabiya, west of Benghazi, has been under the control of the Libyan National Army since 2016 after forcing out Islamic militants.

POLITICAL SOLUTION OUT OF REACH IN NEAR FUTURE

- **8 March** – The summary to the UN Libya Experts Panel covering the period up to 15 December, states that a political solution remains out of reach in the near future, despite UNSMIL's efforts to overcome the current stalemate. The report states that Libya's stability is increasingly linked to regional stability, noting the growing involvement of foreign armed groups from Sudan and Chad. The report further notes that Daesh cells continue to operate in central and southern Libya. Other concerns include diversion of public funds, the lack of governance and inability to address Libya's economy; deteriorating human rights conditions, including the rise of human trafficking; and the failure to track and control the proliferation of illicit arms.

EL-FEEL OILFIELD TO REOPEN

- **8 March** – An agreement has been reached with the Petroleum Facilities Guard (PFG) to reopen El-Feel oilfield, which was shut by a dispute on February 23. PFG will return and production will be resumed. The oilfield was shut and evacuated after PFG withdrew from El Feel to push demands over pay and other benefits. State-owned National Oil Corp (NOC) said PFG members had threatened staff, tampered with papers and shot in the air. NOC declared force majeure on loadings of Mellitah crude on Feb. 24. The NOC operates El Feel in a joint venture with Italy's Eni. There was no immediate comment from the NOC. The announcement of the planned restart followed the arrest on Tuesday of a senior PFG commander from El Feel, who was held in Tripoli for questioning, according to several sources familiar with the case.

EL SHARARA OILFIELD SHUTDOWN BY POLLUTION PROTEST

- **4 March** – El Sharara oilfield was shut down after a local landowner closed a valve in protest against pollution near a pipeline crossing his land. The closure is a major blow to the North African country a little more than a week after a guards' protest closed the nearby El Feel oilfield. "I closed the pipeline that crosses my land. The land is six hectares and it has become wasteland," said Hassan Mohamed al-Hadi, the landowner in the western Zintan area. "We closed the pipeline last year for the same reason. A number of mediators had intervened to persuade me to reopen it within 20 days for cleaning the land, but unfortunately the same thing has returned." Flows from Sharara in the southwest of the country were not getting through to the Mediterranean port of Zawiya, an oilfield engineer said, confirming the closure. Sharara reopened after a long blockade in late 2016 but has suffered a number of stoppages since then because of localized protests by guards and other groups. Repeated and long shutdowns cause pressure in the oilfield's wells to drop, reducing production capacity. As conflict and falling oil revenues caused living standards to slide in Libya in

recent years, local groups have tried to press demands by blockading oil facilities. week ago NOC declared force majeure on the 70,000 bpd El Feel after a protest by guards closed the field, which is operated by a joint venture between state-owned NOC and Italy's Eni. Crude from El Feel is blended with condensate from the Wafa field to form the Mellitah blend, which is exported from the Mellitah terminal.

LIBYA PROCEDURE

The security situation throughout Libya remains fluid. In the absence of a diplomatic solution, MS Risk continues to advise extreme caution to all vessels entering Libyan waters. The ports are an extremely valuable target, and control of these key facilities in Libya have, and could again, change hands with little or no notice. As a result, ports, infrastructure, and other valuable assets remain at a high risk for violent attack by various armed militia groups.

While all working ports are believed to be currently safe for ships and crew, the security situation remains volatile and subject to rapid change. Shipmasters and crews are urged to exercise extreme caution when entering Libyan ports and waters. Vessels are urged to:

- Observe international laws of trading
- Follow official sea navigation routes to any of the working Libyan ports and avoid navigating in the coastal waters of the closed ports.
- In advance of arrival, declare the intended voyage and type of cargo to be discharged/loaded to the local agent, to allow sufficient time to notify the appropriate authorities.
- Stay in contact with local port authorities to receive the most up to date information.
- Vessels should report their schedules to local port agents prior to arrival at any Libyan port, including:
 - A declaration of the vessel's sailing route
 - Whether they are loading or discharging cargo
 - The type of cargo on board

Vessels are urged to apply extreme caution while navigating coastal waters near Benghazi, Derna and Sirte, the last two ports still being closed. MS Risk advises that shipmasters and owners stay up-to-date on the volatile situation in this region.

ABOUT MS RISK

MS Risk is a privately-owned company domiciled in the Isle of Man. It is underwritten by a syndicate of Lloyd's of London for special risks case management in all jurisdictions. It also acts as retained advisors to syndicates in the Lloyd's of London specialty risk insurance markets: kidnap for ransom, extortion, hijack, illegal detention, illegal war tax, malicious product tamper, terrorism, political and war risk.

MS Risk is always mindful and compliant to legislation and guidelines on the use of private security services including, but not limited to the US FCPA (1977), UK Bribery Act (2010), Canadian Bill C-48 (2007), ASX 8 Corporate Governance Principles, and the World Bank/IFC Voluntary Principles on the Use of Government and Private Security Forces. MS Risk is a signatory of the Swiss government's International Code of Conduct. It is transparent and compliant to market expectations on legal and ethical conduct in the performance of services.

MS Risk has a dedicated team of researchers, a 24/7 hotline service and a pool of trained and experienced consultants to support client needs.

MS Risk supports clients in a variety of business sectors with the following services:

SECURITY CONSULTING

- Risk assessments and intelligence reporting
- Planning and management
- Due diligence and investigations

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Interim security
- Training
- Special assignments

CRISIS RESPONSE

- Crisis management
- Business continuity management
- Hostile operations support to commercial interests

VIRTUAL SECURITY DIRECTOR SERVICE

- For clients lacking a full-time security executive

References are always available.

More information is found at www.msrisk.com

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