

MS | RISK

# Maritime Security Review



Issue No 13

2 April 2018

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## INCIDENTS AT SEA

Reporting Period: 26 March – 1 April 2018

Region	Current Incidents	Late Reported Incidents	Threat Level
<b>MAIN REGIONS</b>			
Gulf of Aden/Arabian Sea	0	0	Low
Gulf of Guinea	2	8	High
Southeast Asia	1	0	Low
<b>WORLDWIDE</b>			
North America	0	2	Medium
Central America/Caribbean/ South America	0	5	High
Atlantic Ocean Area	0	0	Low
Northern Europe/English Channel/Baltic	0	0	Low
Mediterranean/ Black Sea	0	3	Medium
Arabian Gulf	0	0	Low
East Asia/Indian Subcontinent	0	0	Low
Southern Africa	0	0	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](mailto: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

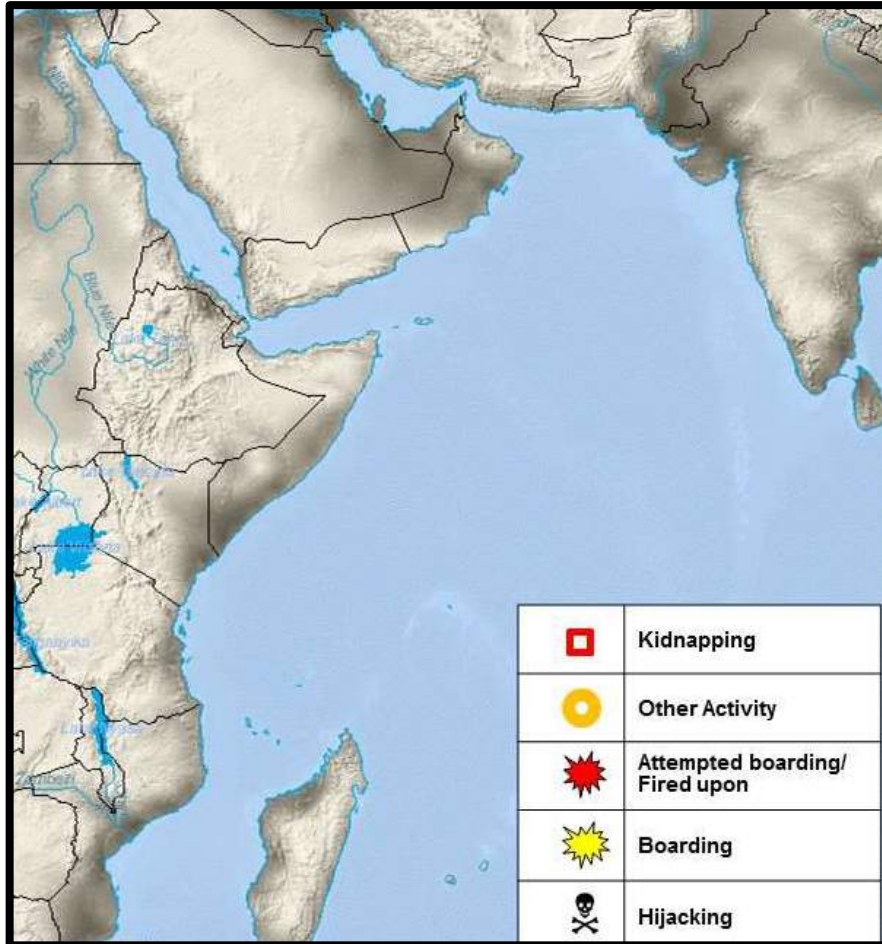
complacency may have set in and this year's successful hijacking is likely to result in potential copycat attacks, as pirate action groups head out in a bid to successfully hijack a commercial vessel.

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:

0

**VESSEL HIJACKED**

- No current incidents to report

**UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES**

- No current incidents to report

**VESSELS FIRED UPON/ATTEMPTED BOARDINGS/ATTACKS**

- No current incidents to report

**VESSELS BOARDED**

- No current incidents to report

**KIDNAPPING**

- No current incidents to report

**SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY**

- No current incidents to report



**OTHER ACTIVITY**

- No current incidents to report

**MARITIME REPORTING**

- No current incidents to report

**WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF ADEN, ARABIAN SEA, RED SEA****WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 29 MARCH – 4 APRIL 2018**

**NORTHERN ARABIAN SEA:** Westerly winds of 10 – 15 knots and 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:** 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 3 – 5 feet in the southern section of the coastline.

**SOMALI COAST:** Northeast winds of 15 - 20 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the northern section of the coastline; with northeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the southern section of the coastline.

- **Extended Forecast:** Northeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the northern section of the coastline; with northeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the southern section of the coastline.

**CENTRAL AFRICAN COAST/INDIAN OCEAN:** Southeast winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.

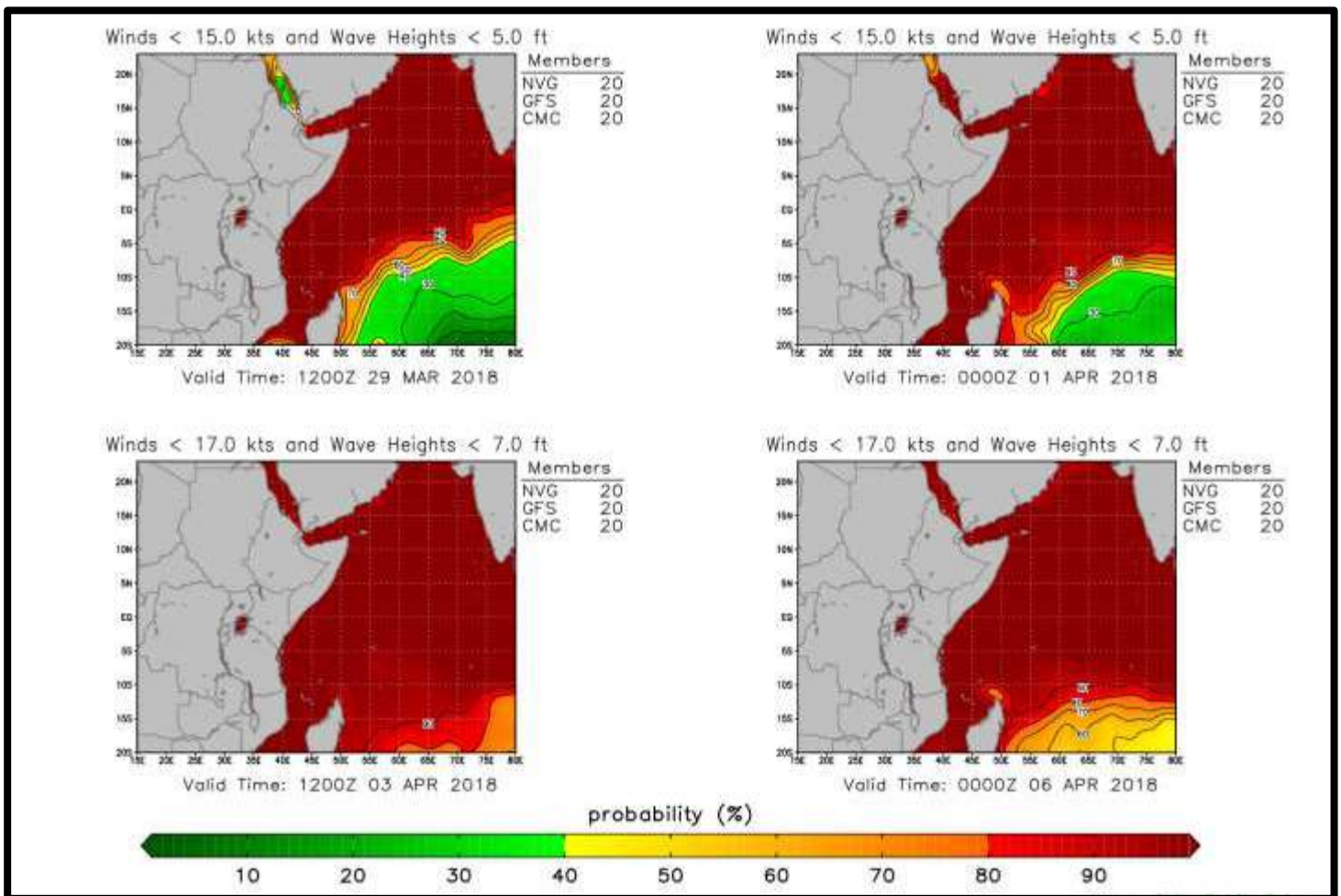
**MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL:** Variable winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 - 4 feet in the northern Channel; with southeast winds of 15 – 20 knots, and seas of 7 – 9 feet in the southern Channel.



- **Extended Forecast:** Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the northern Channel; with southeast winds of 15 – 20 knots, and seas of 5 – 7 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' speed 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 1 APRIL 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

**NINE SOLDIERS, FIVE MILITANTS KILLED IN ATTACK ON ELITE YEMENI FORCE**

**29 March** – Suspected al Qaeda militants attacked a military checkpoint outside Mukallah, killing at least nine soldiers from a local force backed by the Saudi-led coalition. An official said that five suspected militants also died during the gun attack late on Wednesday in the Hadramout provincial capital. The Hadrami Elite Forces were set up and trained by the UAE as part of a strategy to combat al Qaeda. At least four other soldiers from the Hadrami Elite Forces were also wounded in the attack in an area called Wadi Hajar. Local forces, backed by the UAE members of the Saudi-led coalition, AQ them out in a series of military operations over the past two years, but militants still operate in remote areas in southeastern Yemen, including in Abyan, Shabwa and al-Bayda.

**COALITION AIRSTRIKES KILL 8 CIVILIANS IN YEMEN MARKET**

**29 March** – At least eight civilians were killed when the Saudi-led coalition struck a popular market in Yemen's city of Saada on Thursday, witnesses and a local official said. The victims were three shoppers and a family of five including a couple and their three adult daughters. The airstrikes happened at the Jayash fruits market at downtown in the afternoon. Several sellers and shoppers were wounded in the airstrikes and were taken to a nearby hospital. Saada is the main stronghold of dominant Shiite Houthi movement, which seized control over the country's north area, including the capital Sanaa, in late 2014, and forced President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi into exile. The attack was the latest in a series of airstrikes conducted by the U.S.-backed Saudi-led coalition air force since the start of the war in Yemen three years ago.

**UAE STOPS WORK ON BAB AL-MANDAB ISLAND BASE**

**28 March** – The United Arab Emirates appears to have stopped building a runway on Yemen's Mayyun (Perim/Barim) island in the Bab al-Mandab strait, but is pushing forward with a base near Berbera in Somaliland. The UAE's plan to build a military base in Berbera was revealed in February 2017, when it was approved by the parliament of the separatist region of Somaliland, although few details were announced. The UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea reported in November 2017 that the UAE had begun building a naval base west of Berbera and had been granted permission to refurbish and use existing facilities at the city's airport as a military base for 25 years, primarily for anti-piracy maritime patrols and not for carrying out airstrikes.

**YEMEN NEWSPAPER STAFF ABDUCTED BY GUNMEN**

**27 March** – Unidentified armed men stormed the offices of the Al-Shomou Foundation in Aden and kidnapped at least seven staff. The newspaper group hit by an arson attack earlier this month. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) said the Friday kidnappings from the group's headquarters in the southern city, which is the seat of the troubled Saudi-backed government, showed there was nowhere in Yemen where journalists could feel safe. "Journalists in Yemen would appear to be at risk everywhere — on the street, in their homes and their places of work," its deputy executive director, Robert Mahoney, said in a statement on Monday. Sources at the group's daily, Akhbar al-Youm, said they believed the attack was "politically motivated". Masked gunmen already stormed Al-Shomou's offices on March 1, torching its presses in mid print-run after herding staff outside.

#### BOMBS DISGUISED AS ROCKS IN YEMEN SHOW IRANIAN AID

**26 March** – A report finds that roadside bombs disguised as rocks in Yemen bear similarities to others used by Hezbollah in southern Lebanon and by insurgents in Iraq and Bahrain, suggesting at the least an Iranian influence in their manufacture. Conflict Armament Research, an independent watchdog group that receives funding from the United Arab Emirates, Germany and the European Union to research weaponry recovered in Yemen, said it examined a fake rock bomb in January near Mokha, some 250 kilometers (150 miles) southwest of the capital, Sanaa. The fiberglass-encased bomb, packed with explosives, could be armed by radio and triggered by an infrared beam, the group said. It said there were three varieties, including anti-personnel mines and so-called explosively formed projectiles, which can penetrate armored vehicles and were used with lethal effect against U.S. troops following the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Electrical circuitry in the bombs mirrored those manufactured by militants in Bahrain, while the bombs bore markings suggesting one workshop mass-produced the explosives, the report said. Such bombs, however, have yet to be used in Bahrain. Investigators also found a type of Chinese-manufactured wire covering used in other Iranian materiel, the report said. Independent experts also examined the explosives and found that “construction indicates that the bomb maker had a degree of knowledge in constructing devices that resembled, and possibly functioned in a manner similar to (explosively formed projectile bombs) that have been forensically tied to Iran and Hezbollah,” according to the report. Alireza Miryousefi, a spokesman for Iran’s mission to the United Nations, dismissed the report, saying the Houthis had no need for such weapons as they control stockpiles of arms purchased under former Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The Houthis killed Saleh, their one-time ally, in December.

#### HODEIDAH PORT REMAINS UNDER ‘DE FACTO’ BLOCKADE

**25 March** – The UN Security Council warned earlier this month that conditions in Yemen are deteriorating and having a "devastating" impact on civilians, with 22.2 million - of the country's total population of 27.6 million - now in need of humanitarian assistance. Hodeidah now receives a trickle of deliveries, with some ships entering only to remove empty containers and haul them away. In February, food imports were half of the monthly national requirement, according to the United Nations agency for humanitarian affairs. "Hodeidah should be supporting more than 20 million Yemenis. It should be the source of at least 70 percent of all imports to Yemen," Suze van Meegen, a protection and advocacy adviser with the Norwegian Refugee Council, said. "Instead it's like a wasteland." "The most striking thing at the port is the destruction of the five gantry cranes," van Meegen said, referring to infrastructure bombed by coalition warplanes in the first six months of their intervention. Some 5,000 day labourers have been let go since the bombing of the cranes, according to port authorities. Van Meegen said that four mobile US-purchased cranes delivered in January - while welcomed by humanitarian groups - do not have the same capability as the old ones. "The cranes destroyed in 2015 could transport 30 containers each hour," she said. "The four mobile cranes delivered by the US will help with offloading very small quantities of cargo." The truck-mounted cranes have an offloading capacity of 60 tons but cannot necessarily reach a large container ship, said Robert Foley, a US-licensed chief mate who has sailed on numerous container ships. Fuel deliveries amounted to only 24 percent of Yemen's needs in February, while food met 51 percent, causing sharp price rises of both. "For whatever reason, the amount of food and fuel required to meet needs in Yemen is not coming in through Hodeidah and it is likely there are some deliberate actions being taken to cause it," said van Meegen. The biggest obstacle, according to authorities at Hodeidah port, is out at sea. "There is only one authority which has the power to give permission for the ships or prevent them," port director Dawood Fadel said. "That is the coalition warships." Colonel Turki al-Malki, spokesman for the Saudi-led coalition, said on Saturday that the port was "fully open" and carrying out inspection procedures in cooperation with the UN

Verification and Inspection Mechanism. He accused the Houthis of levying fees on critical goods to fund their war chest and Iran of smuggling in weapons for the rebels.

#### YEMENI TROOPS CAPTURE THREE IS-LINKED MILITANTS IN ADEN

**25 March** – Yemeni troops captured three militants linked to the Islamic State group in Aden on Sunday. UAE-backed troops raided a building after getting intelligence tips about the presence of militants and criminals belonging to the Islamic State in Aden province, the local police source said on condition of anonymity. According to the details, three IS-linked militants were seized along with a large amount of grenades and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) from the targeted building. "High-tech cameras apparently used by IS drive-by shooters, computers, TNT and C-4 explosives were confiscated by the troops," the source said. Other security sources confirmed that "a well-trained team of the Islamic State militants responsible for conducting drive-by shootings and assassinations in Aden was caught this morning." The Yemeni police sources said that the arrested were involved in several incidents of terrorism and assassinations of military commanders in Aden. The captured militants have been shifted to undisclosed locations supervised by the Saudi-led coalition where they are undergoing investigation. Yemeni government forces and intelligence agencies are on high alert and have sped up security raids in Aden to abort any imminent terrorist attacks.

#### SAUDI ARABIA SAYS YEMENI REBELS FIRED BALLISTIC MISSILES, KILLING 1 IN RIYADH

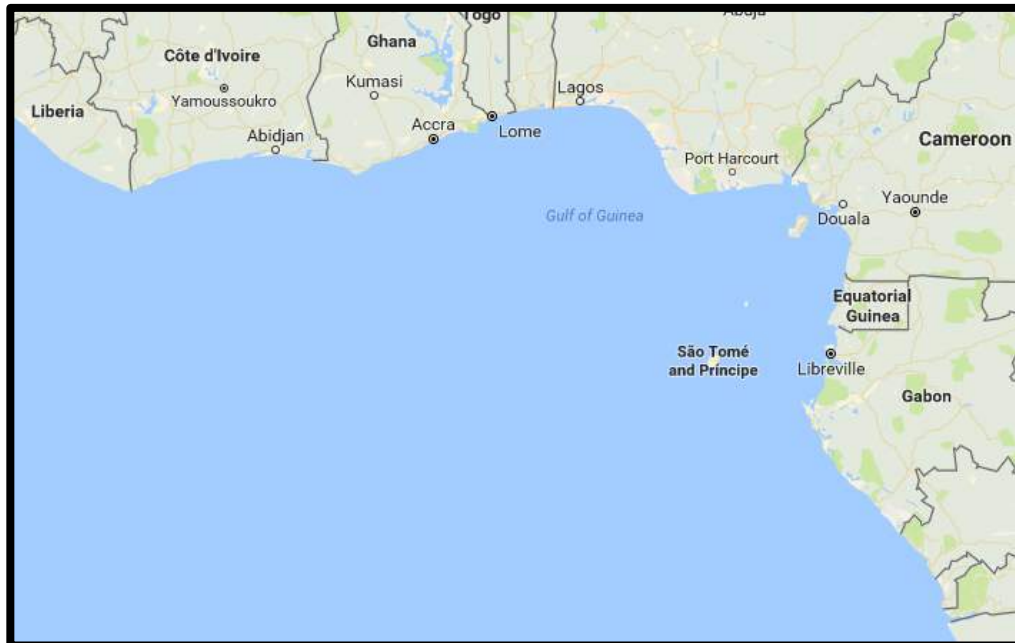
**25 March** – Yemen's Shiite rebels fired seven ballistic missiles targeting Saudi Arabia late Sunday on the third anniversary of a kingdom-led war in Yemen, with fragments of one missile over Riyadh reportedly killing one person and wounding two. The casualties were the first in Saudi Arabia's capital since the Saudi-led war in Yemen began in March 2015, though previous rockets fired by the Yemeni rebels have caused deaths in other parts of the kingdom. The Houthis said they launched a missile attack targeting Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport and other sites, again showing their ability to strike deep into the neighboring kingdom. Saudi officials detailed the targets for each: Three were centrally poised in the direction of Riyadh, one toward the southwest in Khamis Mushait, one along the Southern border targeting Najran, two aiming for the southern city of Jizan and one was randomly launched with the intent of hitting a densely populated civilian area. Coalition spokesman Turki Al Maliki, said that all seven ballistic missiles were intercepted and destroyed, but the interception resulted in debris fragments raining on a few residential neighborhoods. One Egyptian resident was killed, in addition to material damage.

#### UAE-BACKED MILITIA DEPORTS YEMENIS FROM SOUTHERN YEMEN

**23 March** – Al Jazeera reports that nearly two dozen Yemenis have said they were beaten, tortured and arbitrarily held by militias affiliated with the United Arab Emirates in southern Yemen, then dumped hundreds of kilometres away in areas rife with violence and warned to never return. In a series of videos and documents sent to Al Jazeera, the civilians said they were rounded up and driven from the port city of Aden by the UAE-created Security Belt - a force set up in 2016 to police southern areas in the war-ravaged country - to active front lines in the provinces of Taiz and Sanaa. One resident who was recently deported said the Security Belt harassed "northern" women and the elderly: "We were attacked in our hotels [by the Security Belt] and they kicked us out. We couldn't find anywhere to stay," he said. "There were a large number of us and we had a lot of money [invested in Aden], but they harassed us, and told us this is not your country. They forced us out and even took our medication." Shops, restaurants and homes were all raided by the Security Belt, others reported, with hundreds of people arrested and their assets seized. "They gave us 24 hours to leave and said if we don't, we'll open fire at you," another man said. "They even killed one person in Al-Mansoura [a district of Aden]." Others said the deportations

were part of a larger campaign by Shalal Shaya, Aden's Security Chief, a staunch advocate for the partition of Yemen. Since its launch in 2016, the Southern Transitional Council (STC) - a political movement demanding secession for southern Yemen - has intensified its demands to secede from the north after receiving considerable patronage and humanitarian assistance from the UAE. Earlier this year, the STC clashed with the Yemeni army and was able to wrest control of several key military bases in Aden. Since then, the STC has been accused of fomenting sectarian division and hatred in Aden, with a spike in attacks against displaced Yemenis, many of whom who fled intense coalition air attacks in the provinces of Taiz, Hudaida and Sanaa. According to a months-long Al Jazeera investigation, the Saudi-led coalition has carried out more than 3,500 air raids on Sanaa province and more than 2,500 on Taiz. Radhya al-Mutawakel, the chairperson and cofounder of Mwatana, an independent Yemeni human rights organisation, said crimes against displaced persons have intensified.



**WEST AFRICA, GULF OF GUINEA**Current  
Incidents:**10****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.

**VESSELS HIJACKED**

- **22 March (Equatorial Guinea – Late Report)** - A merchant vessel was attacked by a speedboat carrying 10 armed persons, 60 nautical miles south of Equatorial Guinea. The armed persons boarded and then hijacked the vessel. It has been reported that the vessel has now been released and the crewmembers are safe.

**UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES**

- No current incidents to report

**VESSELS FIRED UPON/ATTEMPTED BOARDINGS/ATTACK**

1. **16 March (Nigeria – Late Report)** – A merchant vessel was attacked near position 04:09 N – 006:56 E, southwest of Fairway buoy. Security team fired warning shots, vessel carried out evasive manoeuvres, and the pirates aborted their attempt. The vessel has been reported safe.



2. **16 March (Nigeria – Late Report)** – Eight-armed pirates in a small high-speed boat approached and fired upon a tanker underway near position 03:57 N – 006:42 E, 29 nautical miles southwest of Bonny Island. Master notified the onboard naval armed team, commenced evasive manoeuvres and all non-essential crewmembers retreated to the citadel. Upon seeing the vessel hardened against boarding, the pirates aborted and moved away. The Nigerian Navy was informed of the incident.
  3. **14 March (Nigeria – Late Report)** – A merchant tanker was reported being attacked near position 03:51 N – 006:40 E, 29 nautical miles southwest of Bonny. The tanker subsequently carried out evasive manoeuvres, resulting in the pirates being unable to board the vessel. The tanker has been reported safe.
- **27 March (Benin)** – Two fishing vessels reported that they were under attack near position 04:10 N – 002:19 E, 100 nautical miles south of Cotonou.
  - **22 March (Nigeria – Late Report)** – An unidentified group of pirates chased and fired upon a tanker near position 03:35.0 N – 006:44.0 E, 53 nautical miles southwest of Bonny. The vessel's alarm system and emergency procedures were raised, while armed guards on board, using small arms, returned fire, resulting in the pirates moving away from the vessel.

#### VESSELS BOARDED

- **22 March (Benin – Late Report)** – Eight pirates armed with guns and knives in a small boat boarded an anchored vessel near position 06:15 N – 002:30 E, 7.5 nautical miles southeast of Cotonou. The pirates demanded that the crew start the vessel's main engine, however the engine failed to start. After 1 ½ hours, the pirates decided to leave the vessel, stealing the ship's property along with crew's personal belongings.
- **16 March (Nigeria – Late Report)** – Armed guard onboard an anchored product tanker noticed three unauthorized persons onboard the vessel and fired a warning shot. The vessel was anchored near position 06:17 N – 003:25 E, 13.5 nautical miles south-southeast of Lagos. One person managed to escape in a small boat while the remaining two were captured and handed over to the Nigerian Navy.

#### KIDNAPPING

- **26 March (Ghana)** – Pirates boarded the Ghana-flagged fishing vessel *MARINE 711* near position 05:20 N – 000:51 E, 27 nautical miles southwest of Angola. The pirates left the vessel on 28 March, taking with them at least five hostages, including the vessel's Captain, chief officer and chief engineer of Korean nationality. The other two hostages are Ghanaian and Greek.
- **22 March (Nigeria – Late Report)** – Pirates in a speedboat attacked and seized two fishing boats near position 06:10 N – 003:12 E, 13 nautical miles south of the Nigerian coast. They forced them to sail to Benin waters, releasing the fishing boats but kidnapping 2 crewmembers.

#### SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

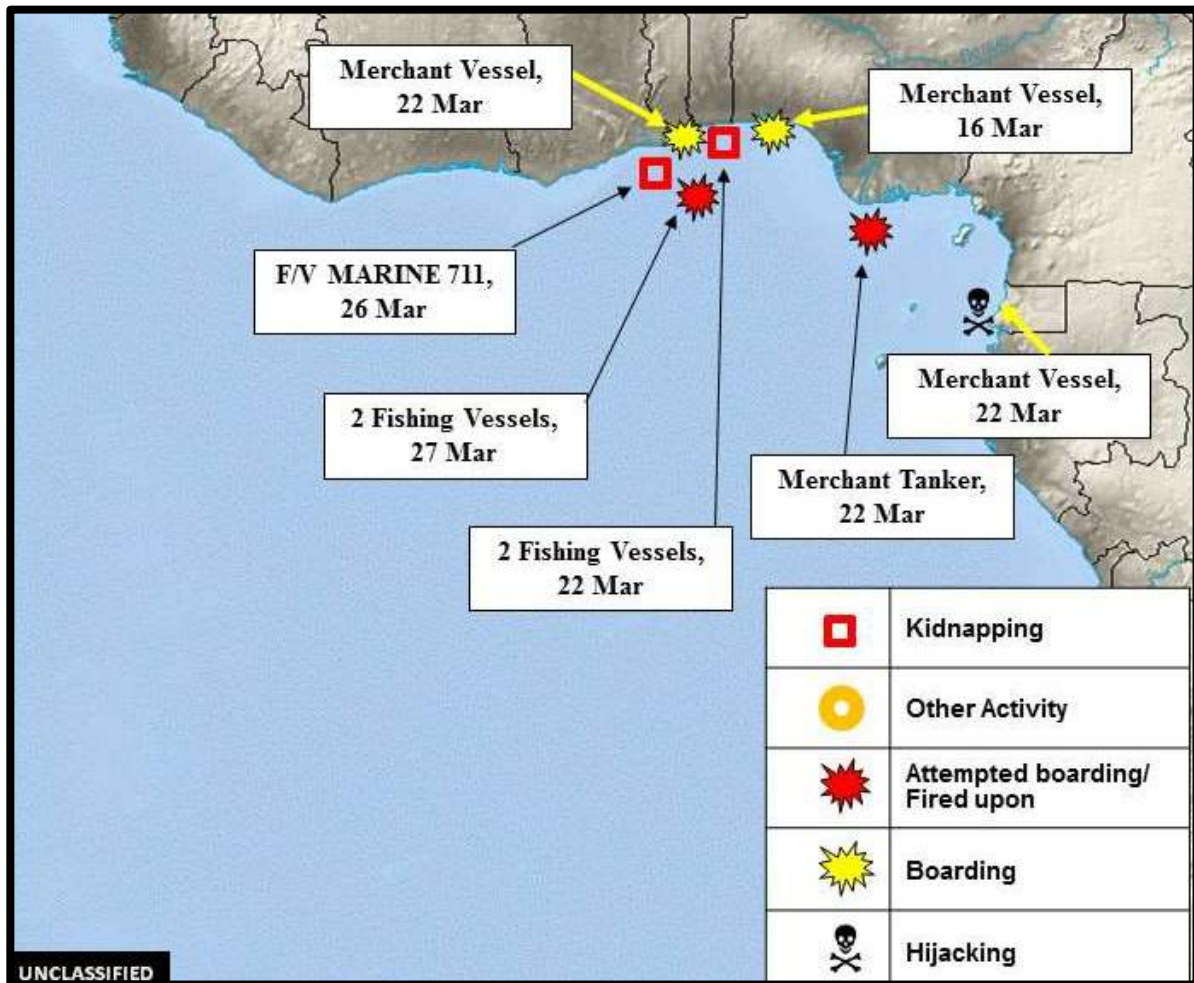
- No current incidents to report

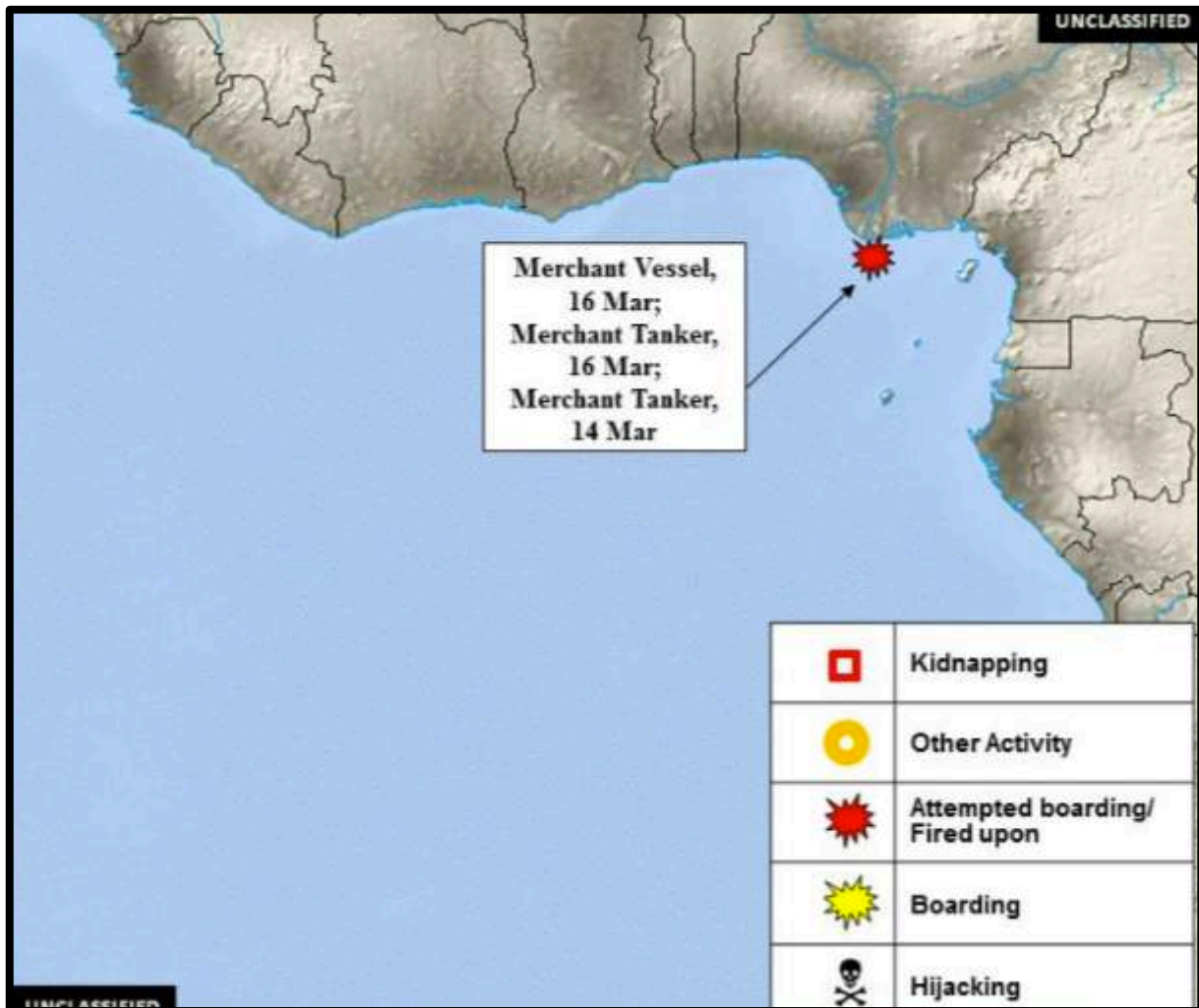
**OTHER ACTIVITY**

- No current incidents to report

**MARITIME REPORTING**

- No current incidents to report





## WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF GUINEA

WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 29 MARCH – 4 APRIL 2018

**GULF OF GUINEA:** South-southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, and seas of 3 – 5 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southwest winds of 10 – 15 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 coasts of Somalia and the West Africa region, with increased southerly wind flow through the Bab el Mandeb Strait due to funnelling effects.

## SOUTHEAST ASIA



Current Incidents:

1

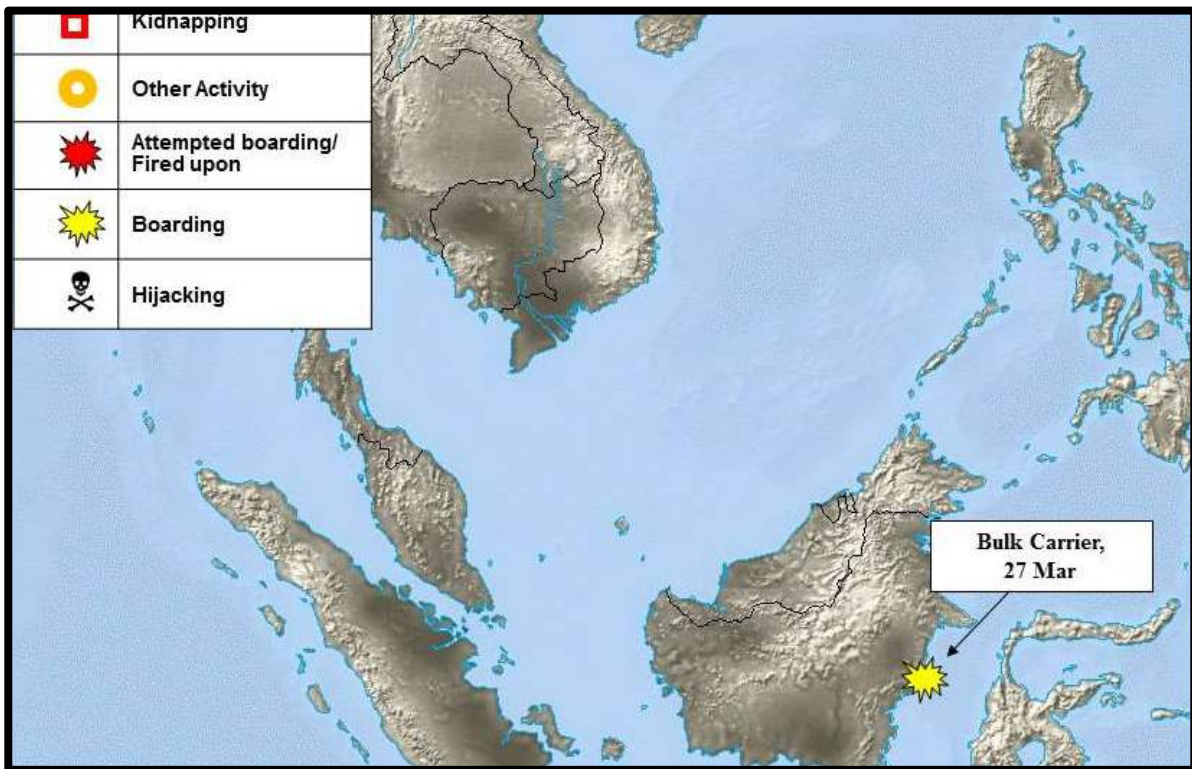
### WARNING:

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

- **27 March (Indonesia)** – Four robbers using a small boat approached an anchored bulk carrier in the proximity of Muara Berau anchorage, Samarinda. While two of the robbers boarded the vessel, the other two waited inside their boat. As the vessel's duty crewman raised the alarm, the robbers escaped the vessel empty-handed.

#### 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 29 MARCH – 4 APRIL 2018**

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

- **Extended Forecast:** Northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 2 – 4 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 – 3 feet in the northern Strait; with variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the southern Strait.

**ANDAMAN SEA:** Northerly winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the northern section; with northerly winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the southern section.

- **Extended Forecast:** Northerly winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the northern section; with northerly winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the southern section.

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

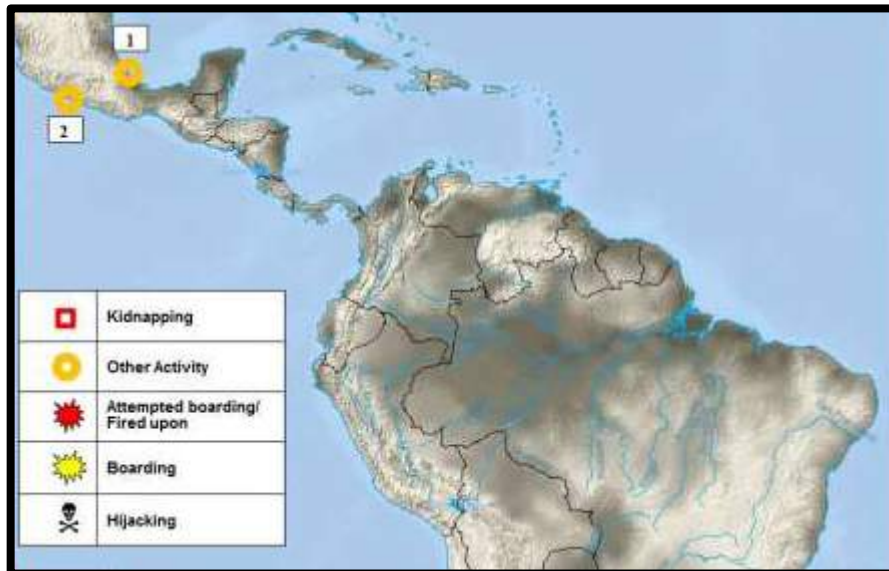
- **Extended Forecast:** Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet.

**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.

## WORLDWIDE

## NORTH AMERICA

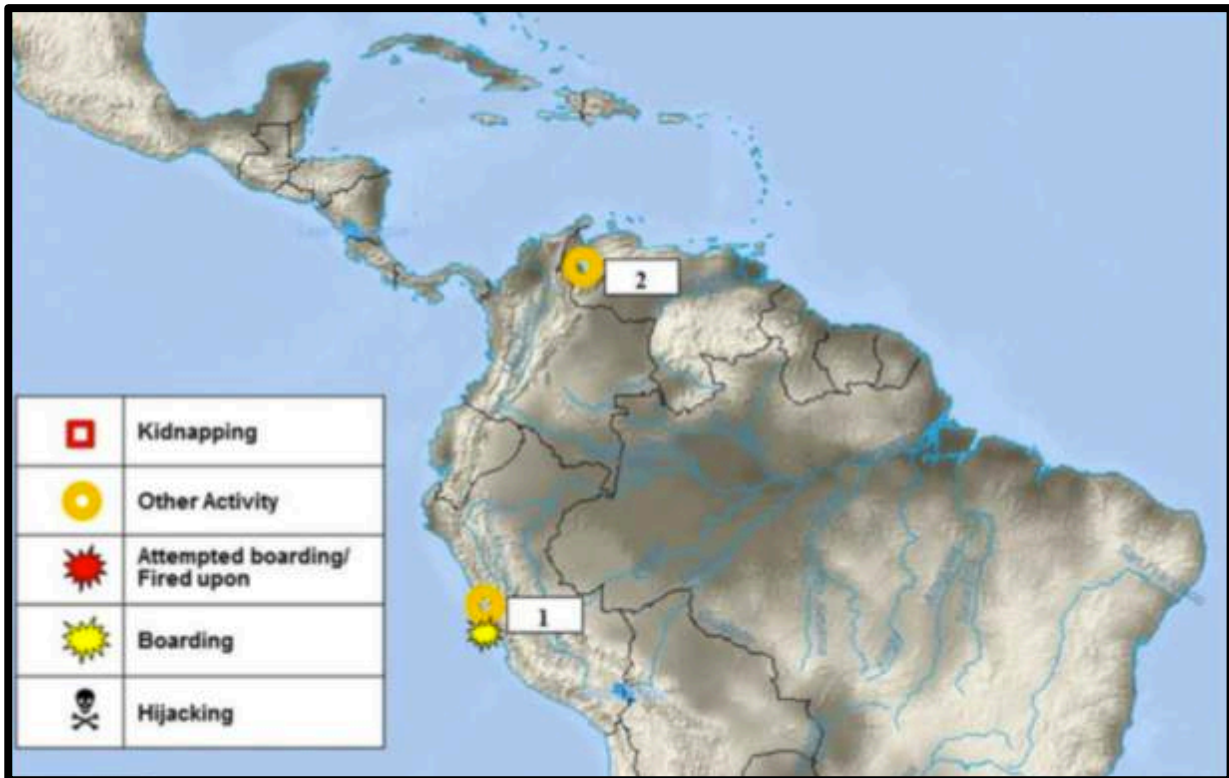
Current  
Incidents:

10

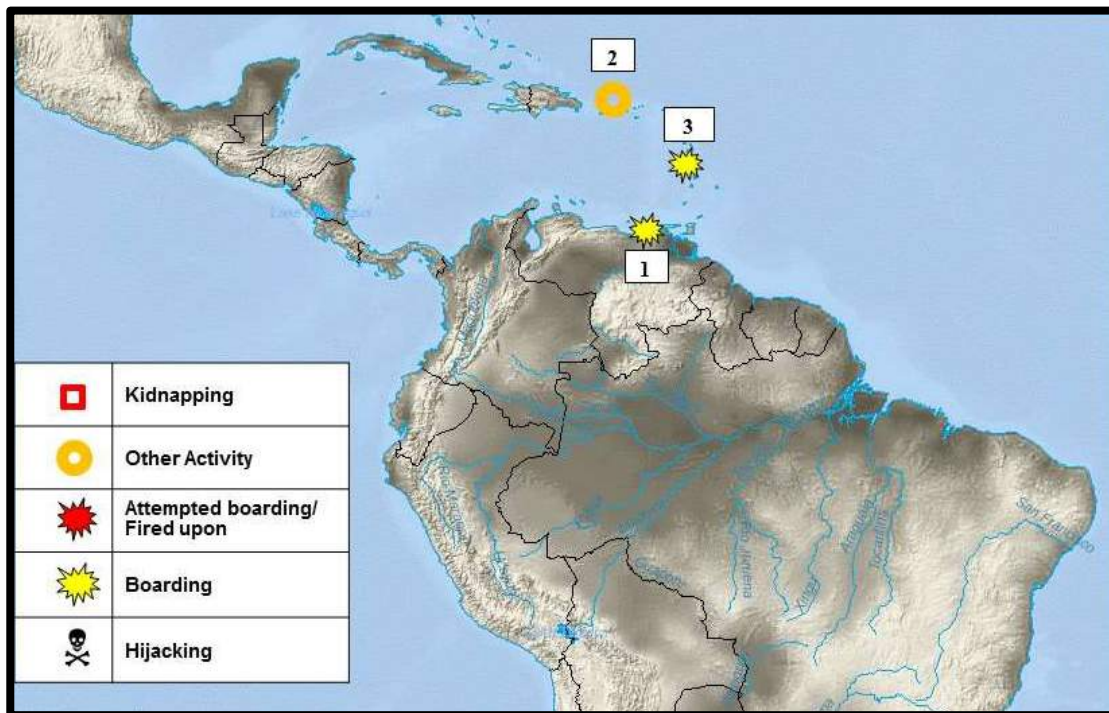
1. **24 March (Mexico – Late Report)** – The Navy reported the seizure of six suitcases containing more than 400 kg of cocaine at Veracruz port. No further details were providing, including whether any arrests were made.
2. **21 March (Mexico – Late Report)** – The Navy released a statement indicating that an operation involving two boats led to the seizure of almost one ton of cocaine off the coast of Acapulco. Fourteen people, including six Ecuadoreans and one Colombian, were arrested in the operation.



## CENTRAL AMERICA/CARIBBEAN/SOUTH AMERICA



- 20 March (Peru – Late Report)** – According to a police chief, Peruvian police seized 1,500 kilograms of cocaine that were to be placed in a container in the port of Callao to be sent to Europe. A senior police spokesman told reporters that “we have seized more than a ton and a half of cocaine that was destined for Europe.” Police have reported that the cocaine was discovered in a truck before being placed in a container that was to be loaded onto a ship bound for Europe. The spokesman disclosed that seven members of the band “Los Ninjas” were captured in the operation, adding “we thought it was a myth, but this band existed, they are very agile young people dressed in black moved from container to container” to introduce the drug.
- 6 March (Colombia – Late Report)** – Authorities seized 5.2 metric tons of cocaine in a shipment of bananas in the Uraba region after receiving a tip from police. The bananas were meant to be shipped to Europe.



1. **24 March (Venezuela – Late Report)** – Robbers armed with guns boarded a tanker anchored near position 10:17 N – 064:42 W, Puerto La Cruz Anchorage. Duty crewman on routine rounds noticed the robbers on the forecastle deck and raised the alarm. Upon seeing the alerted crew, two robbers were seen escaping. Upon carrying out a search of the vessel, it was reported that the forecastle store padlock was broken and the vessel's properties were stolen. Port control was notified via VHF. The Coast Guard later dispatched a vessel to search the anchorage waters around the vessel.
2. **19 March (Puerto Rico – Late Report)** – Customs officials detained a citizen of the Dominican Republic on board a boat transporting 1,441 kilograms of cocaine along the northern coast of Puerto Rico, coming from the Dominican Republic. The vessel was going to the municipality of Vega Alta in Puerto Rico.
3. **11 – 13 March (St. Lucia – Late Report)** – Three dinghies and outboard motors were stolen from separate sailing yachts anchored in Rodney Bay. The dinghies were recovered however the motors were not found.

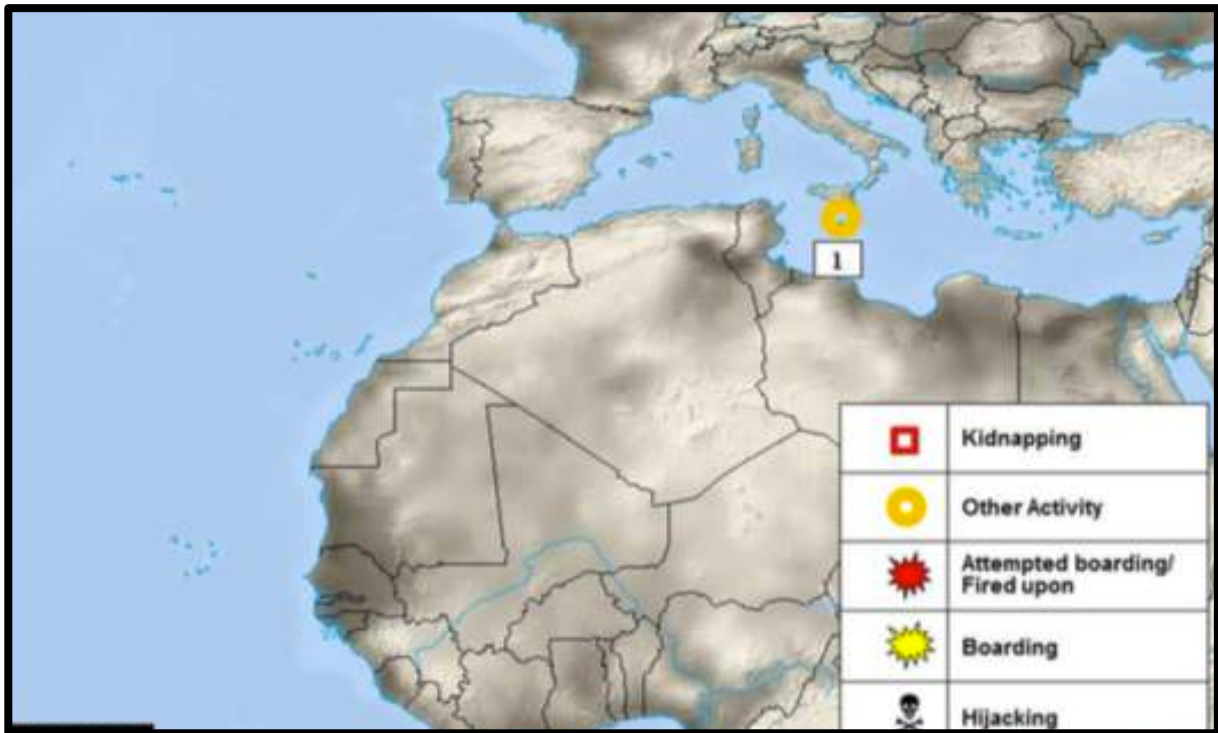
#### ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA

- No current incidents to report

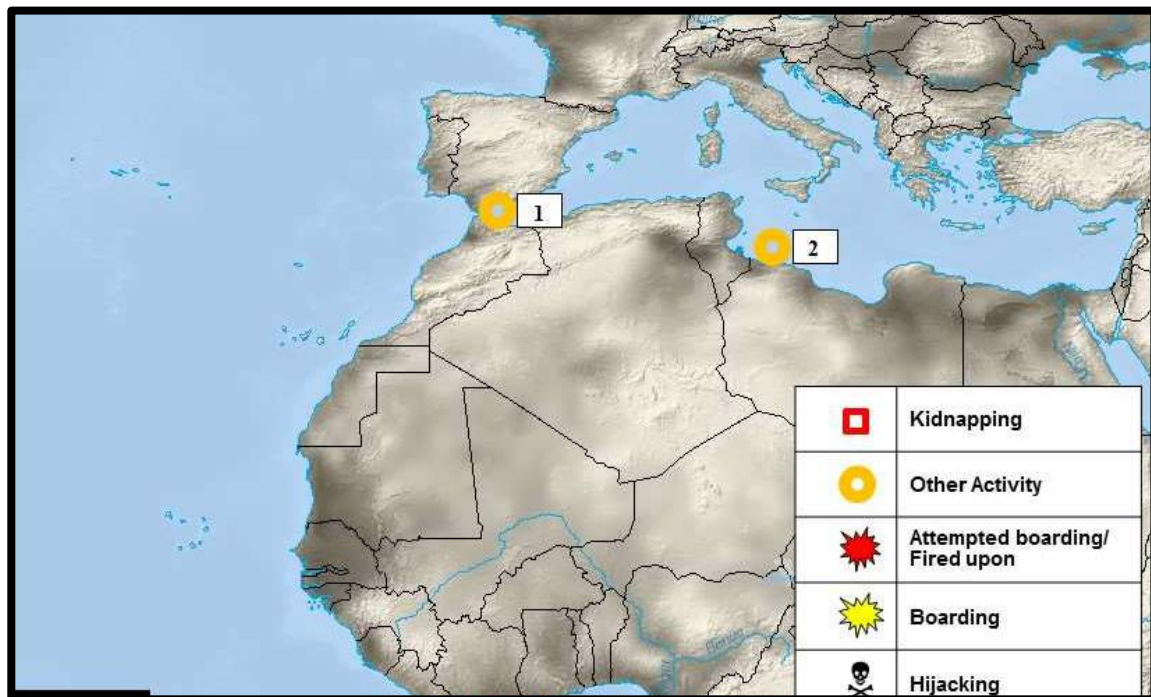
#### NORTHERN EUROPE/ENGLISH CHANNEL/BALTIC

- No current incidents to report

## MEDITERRANEAN/BLACK SEA



1. **18 March (Italy – Late Report)** – An Italian court seized rescue vessel *OPEN ARMS* on charges that its crewmembers helped illegal immigration by rescuing more than 200 migrants from boats before the Libya Coast Guard could move in to take them back to Africa. A day after the vessel arrived in the Sicilian port of Pozzallo, a court on the island ordered the vessel's seizure on suspicion that three Proactiva members, including the Captain, were operating it as part of a criminal association that favoured illegal immigration.



1. **22 March (Spain – Late Report)** – Spanish Civil Guard troops seized two tons of hashish from boats in the Guadalmesi coastal zone near Algeciras.
2. **13 March (Libya – Late Report)** – According to a spokesman, Libya’s naval forces seized a Togolese-flagged fuel tanker *LAMAR* and arrested its Greek crew on suspicion that they had planned to smuggle oil out of that country. The vessel was captured about 8 miles off Abu Kamash town, near the border with Tunisia.

#### ARABIAN GULF

- No current incidents to report

#### EAST ASIA/INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

- No current incidents to report

#### EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

- No current incidents to report

#### 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.

*No major incidents reported during this period*

## SPOTLIGHT ON LIBYA



## PORT STATUS AS OF 1 APRIL 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

**ANTIQUES LOOTED IN LIBYA BY DAESH SOLD IN SPAIN, TWO EXPERTS ARRESTED**

**29 March** – Two Spanish art experts suspected of running a ring that sold antiques looted from archaeological sites in Libya by groups linked to the Islamic State terror group have been arrested, police said Wednesday. Officers seized "numerous works of art", including seven mosaics and a sarcophagus, during raids carried out in five locations in Barcelona and the nearby town of Argentona as part of their operation. The works were stolen from archaeological sites in Libya's eastern coastal region of Cyrenaica and northern region of Tripolitania, which are home to some of the finest Roman and Greek ruins in existence. The two men who were arrested as part of the operation are both Spanish nationals aged 31 who are experts in ancient art. One of the men appeared regularly on TV to discuss ancient art and even took part in several academic conferences that discussed the destruction of historical sites by the Islamic State group. "They led a network that illegally bought works looted from archaeological sites by groups linked to the terrorist group Daesh, helping to finance its activities," police said in a statement. "Some of the pieces also showed imperfections, bumps and marks that indicated they underwent a violent extraction from the subsoil, without the use of adequate archaeological techniques," it added. The two men are accused of selling the works, dubbed "blood antiques" on the black market according to Spanish police, at a gallery they run in Barcelona. They face charges of membership in a criminal organisation, document falsification, smuggling and financing terrorism.

**AT LEAST 5 KILLED BY CAR BOMB IN AJDABIYA**

**29 March** – At least five people were killed and six wounded when a suicide bomber drove a car laden with explosives into a checkpoint in the eastern Libyan town of Ajdabiya late on Thursday, medics said. The explosion hit the eastern exit of Ajdabiya, a town south of Benghazi. It is close to the oil export ports of Brega and Zueitina. No further details or claim of responsibility were immediately available. Some six cars were damaged by the blast, a witness said. The town is controlled, as is much of eastern Libya, by forces of Khalifa Haftar allied to a parallel government based in the east.

**GUNMEN SEIZE, THEN FREE TRIPOLI MAYOR ABDELRAOUF BEITELMAL**

**29 March** – The mayor of Tripoli was released hours after he was seized by gunmen, his family says. Abdelraouf Beitelmal was taken from his home early on Thursday. He is said to be unharmed. Sources close to his family say the attackers had fired guns and struck his son with a rifle, however the head of investigations at the general prosecutor's office said the mayor had been taken into custody to be questioned. The official, Sediq AlSour, gave no reasons for what he says was a legal arrest. Later on Thursday Tripoli's municipal council blamed "a foolish party" for the operation, suspended work in protest. Armed groups in Libya are known to threaten and attack government officials and civilians. It is often hard to assess the legality of an arrest because of the overlap between militias and government forces.

**US SAYS AIRSTRIKE KILLED TOP AL-QAEDA LEADER IN LIBYA**

**29 March** – A US airstrike last weekend in Libya's southwestern town of Ubari killed two al-Qaeda militants, including a top recruiter, the military's Africa Command said. Musa Abu Dawud was a high ranking official of the terror network's North Africa branch, known as Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb. His death was confirmed after "operational reporting" and "damage battle assessment" was completed, AFRICOM said in a Wednesday statement. "He provided critical logistics support, funding and weapons



to AQIM, enabling the terrorist group to threaten and attack U.S. and Western interests in the region," AFRICOM said. The statement did not identify the other militant killed in the strike, and added that no civilians were killed.

#### **SOUTH KOREAN EMBASSY DUE TO REOPEN IN LIBYA**

**29 March** – South Korea will reopen its embassy in Tripoli very soon, the Asian country's Chargé d'affaires announced Wednesday. South Korea submitted a proposal to hold protection and bodyguard training for the Diplomatic Police personnel in Seoul.

#### **MISRATA, ZINTAN DELEGATIONS MEET FOR "HISTORIC" RECONCILIATION AGREEMENT**

**28 March** – Leaders of the two most heavily armed towns in western Libya met Wednesday for the first time since they fought for control of Tripoli four years ago, hailing the reconciliation talks "historic". The towns of Misrata and Zintan were among the first to rise up against the regime of dictator Moamer Gadhafi who was killed in 2011. They shared strategic sites in Tripoli until 2014 when a coalition led by Misrata forced out the Zintanis after weeks of bloodshed. "This meeting is a first step which will be followed by others," said Zintan mayor Mustafa al-Barouni at the start of the discussions. Ahead of the next meeting, the two sides agreed to set up a committee to look into the main issues, such as the fate of prisoners and those who have disappeared. Mohamad Rajab, head of Misrata's military council, said Wednesday's first session would facilitate "reconciliation with other regions and tribes". Their statement said both sides stressed the need to bring the army and police under a civilian authority and to fight terrorism.

#### **LIBYAN SECURITY DESTROYS LIBYA'S LARGEST IDENTITY FRAUD NETWORK**

**27 March** – Libya security has destroyed a large identity fraud network. Osama Dresi, head of the Civil Status Investigation Department of the Libyan eastern city of Benghazi, confirmed that the department received information about individuals selling counterfeited identity documents. Some individuals were arrested inside a house with dozens of fraud identity and birth certification documents. The arrested individuals confessed of identity fraud with the help of officials in the civil authority and the passport department. Libyan security from time to time arrests individuals involved in similar fraud activities. However, the network identified on Monday in Benghazi is the largest in Libya.

#### **LIBYA COURT POSTPONES TRIAL OF FOREIGN FUEL SMUGGLERS**

**26 March** – The first court hearing for the five foreigners accused of smuggling Libyan fuel was postponed to the first of April. The defendants were arrested by Libya Coast Guard aboard the Togo-registered oil tanker Sovereign M. The tanker, operated by a Maltese company, was allegedly waiting for a shipment of fuel to be smuggled out of Libya when it was boarded. The hearing was postponed due to the absence of an interpreter for one of the defendants, according to the Ministry of Justice. The Ministry clarified that the five defendants are of various nationalities, including a Croatian, a Maltese, an Algerian and two Egyptians. The Ambassador of Croatia to Egypt attended the session at the Courts Complex in Tripoli on Sunday, as the diplomatic representative of his country in Libya.

#### **UN ENVOY SEEKS TO HOLD FINAL SESSION FOR AMENDING LIBYAN POLITICAL AGREEMENT**

UN envoy to Libya, Ghassan Salame, on Sunday said he would make a final attempt to hold a session between Libyan parties to amend the UN-sponsored political agreement. Salame also stressed the need to expedite holding public elections before the end of this year. The UN envoy made his remarks

following a meeting with Saleh in the eastern city of Al-Qubbah to discuss the latest political developments in Libya and preparations for the upcoming elections. The amendments, mainly related to executive authority, are part of an action plan Salame proposed in September last year to end the political crisis in Libya. The plan also includes holding parliamentary and presidential elections before the end of 2018.

#### FOREIGN MINISTER OF EASTERN LIBYA GOVERNMENT RESIGNS

**26 March** – The Foreign Minister of the Interim Government in eastern Libya Mohammed Eddairi said he resigned on March 04 and his resignation has not been accepted yet. He attributed the resignation to the hindrance of his work by the Prime Minister of the Interim Government Abdullah Al-Thanni, whom he said took decisions for the foreign ministry without going back to him. Eddairi also called on Al-Thanni to send the resignation letter to the House of Representatives for approval.

#### US SAYS AIRSTRIKE IN SOUTHERN LIBYA KILLS 2 MILITANTS

**25 March** – The United States military carried out its first ever drone strike against Qaeda militants in southern Libya, signaling a possibly significant expansion of the American counterterrorism campaign in the North African nation. Until now, the Pentagon had focused its counterterrorism strikes in Libya almost exclusively on Islamic State fighters and operatives farther north. The U.S. military says the airstrike in southwestern Libya killed two militants in Ubari. The strike was part of an effort to “disrupt and destroy terrorist organizations.” Videos and photos circulated online showed shrapnel-riddled cars outside a severely damaged house. The footage, purporting to show the aftermath of the strike, appeared to be authentic.

#### EAST LIBYA, SYRIA OPEN TRADE LINE

**24 March** – The Syrian Exporters Association of the Assad regime announced the reopening of the export line to Libya, launching their first cargo ship from Lattakia port to Benghazi. According to the official page of the association, the ship is carrying more than 300 tons of clothing. This shipment comes after prior arrangements with the Union of Exporters and Council of Libyan Businessmen; both are based in eastern Libya. Earlier, the Minister of Economy of so-called the Interim Government, Mounir Aseer, expressed his ministry's readiness to open a commercial line with Syria to facilitate the shipment and exchange of goods and commercial products between the two countries.

## 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](http://www.msrisk.com)

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