

# Maritime Security Review

Issue No. 12

27 March 2017

MS | RISK



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## 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 comes becomes available.

We encourage our readers to confidentially report any incidents or suspicious activity to [info@msrisk.com](mailto:info@msrisk.com).

# INCIDENTS AT SEA

Reporting Period: 20 - 26 March 2017

Region	Current Incidents Reported	Late Reported incidents	Threat level
MAIN REGIONS			
Gulf of Aden/Arabian Sea	1	0	Low
Gulf of Guinea	0	0	Low
Southeast Asia	1	4	High
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	0	Low
Mediterranean/ Black Sea	0	1	Low
Arabian Gulf	0	0	Low
East Asia/Indian Subcontinent	0	1	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

# NOTE: PRESIDENT TRUMP IMMIGRATION BAN

On 3 February, a federal judge issued a temporary, nation-wide halt to President Trump's Executive Order (EO) on immigration and travel to the United States. Customs and Border Patrol have told airlines to resume pre-ban procedures.

Following the finding, the White House stated that the Department of Justice would file an emergency request to push the EO through. If the EO is upheld following the emergency request, please be warned that it may have implications for vessels calling at US ports.

The Executive Order calls for a blanket ban on travel and immigration from seven countries (Syria, Yemen, Sudan, Somalia, Iraq, Iran, and Libya) for a 90-day period. If upheld, crewmembers from these countries will be denied entry to the US while the ban is in effect. Shore leave will be denied for crewmembers from those nations, regardless of their visa status. However, it is not believed that ships with crews from this country will be denied entry into US ports. If a crewmember from a nation under the ban requires emergency medical treatment, an exception **may** be made to allow the member ashore for treatment.

Ship owners are advised to stay abreast of updates as they emerge.

## GULF OF ADEN/ARABIAN SEA/BAB EL-MANDAB/RED SEA



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

**Officials reported on 24 March that Somali pirates have hijacked a small boat to use as a base to attack larger ships, leaving ten Yemeni crewmembers on shore. This is the second such incident to take place this month. On 13 March, Somali pirates hijacked the Comoros-flagged tanker ARIS 13 in the same area. That vessel however was released several days later. There are now increasing concerns that the latest hijacked vessel will be used as a mothership to launch attacks in an attempt to hijack a merchant vessel.**

While international naval patrols and anti-piracy measures on board commercial vessels have practically eradicated Somali piracy since its peak in early 2011, poverty coupled with other factors that motivate pirates remain and some vessels transiting this region may have increasingly become complacent in the belief that the piracy threat had diminished. While the international community has over the past several years taken significant steps in order to improve security in the region, including boosting naval forces in the area and requiring ships to take protection measures, including reporting in and out of high risk areas, sailing at top speed as far away as possible from the Somali coast and travelling with armed escorts on board, the threat of an attack and hijacking remained as the real root of the cause on the ground in Somalia has never been properly addressed. After five years without a successful attack, analysts say that complacency may have set in and this week'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 advised to adhere to strict 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 continue 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, which in turn can escalate the potential for direct or collateral damage to vessels transiting the region. 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.

### HIJACKS

- **24 March (Somalia)** – A small vessel (assessed as a Dhow) has been hijacked in the vicinity of Eyl, Somalia. Some crewmembers have been put ashore and the vessel is now proceeding to sea; course, speed and destination currently unknown. Vessels in the vicinity are advised to exercise extreme caution.

### UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES

- No current incidents to report

### VESSELS FIRED UPON/ATTEMPTED BOARDINGS

- 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

### INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI





## MARITIME REPORTING

- **24 March (Somalia)** – Somali police reported on Friday that pirates have taken over a small Somali boat used as a base to attack larger vessels. Officials have disclosed that the ten Yemeni crew aboard the boat were left on shore, with Abdirahman Mohamud, head of maritime police forces in the semi-autonomous Puntland region, reporting “we understand that pirates hijacked the fishing vessel to hijack a big ship off the ocean.” He went on to say that “they dropped its 10 Yemeni crew and a Somali guard inland and disappeared with the boat together with food, cook, captain and engineer.” Residents of the northern Somali city of Eyl have confirmed that pirates from their village had gone to seek potential targets.
- **20 March (Somalia)** – Somali officials whose forces freed a hijacked oil tanker and its eight Sri Lankan crewmembers last week have disclosed that NATO ships must do more in order to prevent the illegal fishing, which locals say sparked the latest attack. The hijacking, which occurred on Monday 13 March, was the first time that Somali pirates successfully hijacked a commercial vessel since 2012. Unlike previous hijackings, the vessel was freed swiftly and no ransom was paid after the Puntland Maritime Police Force intervened. Officials from the semi-autonomous region of Puntland are now blaming local anger over illegal fishing by foreign vessels for the attack, warning that more hijackings are likely to take place unless the problem is tackled. Somali pirates have often claimed that they attacked vessels in revenge for illegal fishing by foreigners, then broadening that out to include and foreign-owned vessel. Speaking to reporters on Sunday at Bossaso Port, Abdihakim Abdullahi Omar, the vice president of Puntland stated “we requested NATO warships to tackle the illegal fishing, but they replied it was not their mandate,” adding “we told them that if they cannot take measures against the illegal fishing vessels who come under their cover and those who pour wastes into our waters, then their presence is a burden rather than a benefit.”
- **20 March (Somalia)** – Officials have disclosed that the Somali government has condemned a helicopter attack on a boatload of Somali refugees off the coast of Yemen and has called on the Saudi-led coalition fighting in the country to investigate the incident. The United Nations refugee agency has reported that at least 40 Somali refugees were killed when a helicopter attacked the boat that they were travelling in late on Thursday, 16 March. It was not

immediately clear who carried out the attack. In a statement, Somalia’s Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khaire’s office disclosed that “the prime minister condemns the unfair killing of the Somalis who were sailing on the shores of Yemen...the victims were innocent, unharmed and were mostly women and children,” adding “the prime minister has ordered an investigation of the act and those behind it.” In a separate statement, Somali Foreign Minister Abdusalam Hadliye Omer disclosed “we call on our partners in the Saudi-led coalition to investigate the raid.” So far, the Saudi-led coalition, which is fighting Houthi forces in Yemen, has disclosed that it did not conduct any operation or have any engagement on Thursday in the Hodeidah area, where the attack occurred.

# WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF ADEN/ARABIAN SEA

**NORTHERN ARABIAN SEA:** Northwest winds of 10 – 15 knots with seas of 2 – 4 feet.

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

**GULF OF OMAN:** Northwest winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the western section of the Gulf with northwest winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

- **Extended Forecast:** East-southeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with east-southeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

**GULF OF ADEN:** Easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

- **Extended Forecast:** Easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the western section of the Gulf; with easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the eastern section of the Gulf.

**SOMALI COAST:** Easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the northern section of the coastline; with easterly winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the southern section of the coastline.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the northern section of the coastline; with easterly winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the southern section of the coastline.

**CENTRAL AFRICAN COAST/INDIAN OCEAN:** East-northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.

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

**MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL:** Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the northern Channel; with southeast winds of 20 – 25 knots with 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 20 – 25 knots, with seas of 6 – 8 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 northeasterly averaging between 2 – 3 knots.

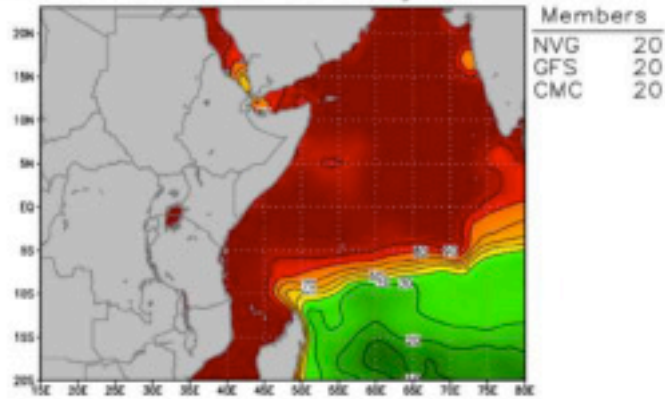
**SYNOPTIC DISCUSSION:** High pressure continues to dominate the weather over the region, producing light winds across the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. Expect increased wind flow through the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab el Mandeb Strait due to funneling effects.



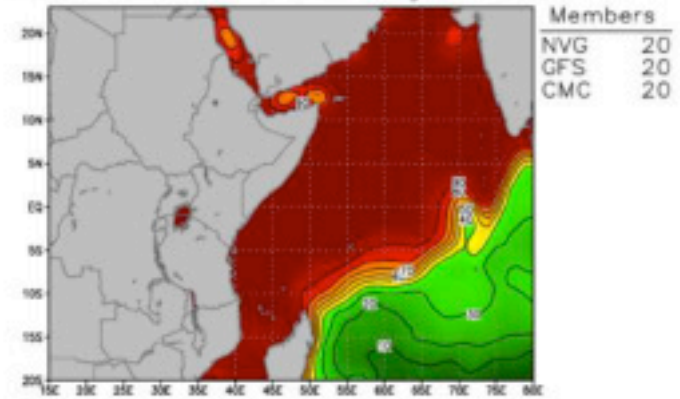
## WEATHER MAP

Source: ONI

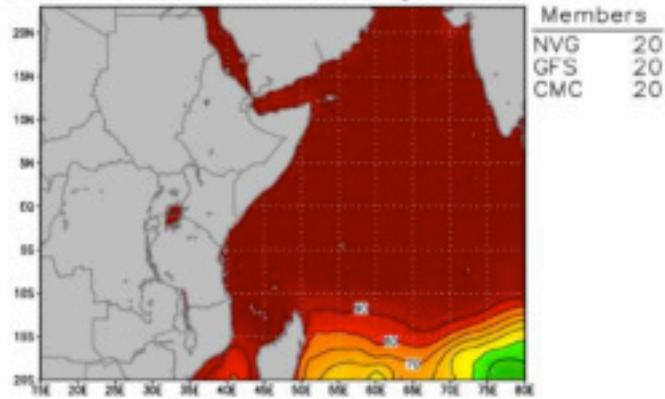
Winds < 15.0 kts and Wave Heights < 5.0 ft



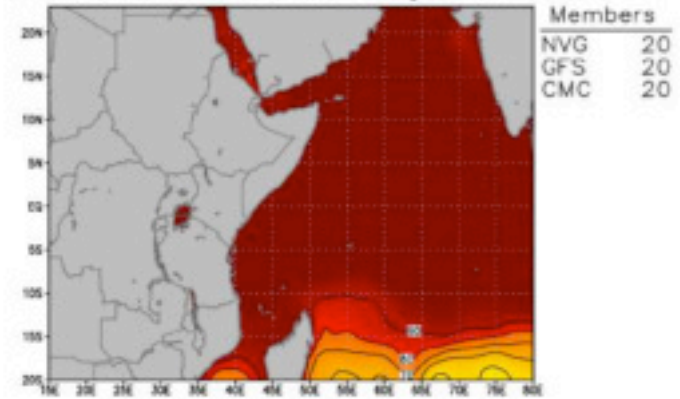
Winds < 15.0 kts and Wave Heights < 5.0 ft



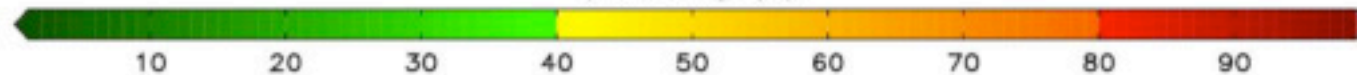
Winds < 17.0 kts and Wave Heights < 7.0 ft



Winds < 17.0 kts and Wave Heights < 7.0 ft



probability (%)



## SPOTLIGHT ON YEMEN

### PORT STATUS AS OF 26 MARCH 2017

Port Name	Port Status	Risk Level	Notes
Aden Port	Open	High	Curfew: 2000-0600
Ash Shihr Oil Terminal	Open	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	Closed	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	High	Capacity: 2 berths

*Security conditions surrounding **Hodeida** port are subject to change. Shipmasters and crew are urged to remain abreast of current conditions in the area, and ensure that security measured aboard vessels are in place.*

### ACTIVITY REPORTING

- 22 March** – Regional and Western sources say Iran is sending advanced weapons and military advisers to Yemen's rebel Houthi movement, stepping up support in the civil war. Sources with knowledge of the military movements said that in recent months Iran has taken a greater role in the conflict by stepping up arms supplies and other support. A senior Iranian official said Major General Qassem Soleimani, commander of the Quds Force - the external arm of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps - met top IRGC officials in Tehran last month to look at ways to "empower" the Houthis. "At this meeting, they agreed to increase the amount of help, through training, arms and financial support," the official said. Iran rejects accusations from Saudi Arabia that it is giving financial and military support to the Houthis, blaming the deepening crisis on Riyadh. Brigadier General Ahmed Asseri, spokesman for the Arab coalition fighting the Houthis, told Reuters: "We don't lack information or evidence that the Iranians, by various means, are smuggling weapons into the area. We observe that the Kornet anti-tank weapon is on the ground, whereas before it wasn't in the arsenal of the Yemeni army or of the Houthis. It came later." A Houthi leader said coalition accusations that Iran was smuggling weapons into Yemen were an attempt to cover up Saudi Arabia's failure to prevail in an intractable war.
- 22 March** – The world has got three to four months to save millions of people in Yemen and Somalia from starvation, as war and drought wreck crops and block deliveries of food and medical care, the International Committee of the Red Cross said. "We have probably a window of three to four months to avoid a worst-case scenario," Dominik Stillhart, the ICRC's director of operations worldwide, told a Geneva news briefing.
- 20 March** – The Saudi-led coalition has called for the UN to place Hodeidah port under its supervision. It has denied involvement in the deaths of 42 Somalis killed in an attack on a refugee boat nearby. The refugees, carrying

official UNHCR documents, were killed while travelling by boat from Yemen to Sudan in the Bab el-Mandeb strait about 30 miles from Hodeidah port. A Saudi statement said placing the port under UN control would: "facilitate the flow of humanitarian supplies to the Yemeni people, while at the same time ending the use of the port for weapons smuggling and people trafficking." The statement added, "We can confirm the coalition was not responsible for any attack on a refugee boat on Friday and [...] there was no firing by any coalition forces on Friday in the area of Hodeida." Pentagon spokesman Adam Stump on Friday denied US involvement, saying no US strikes had been conducted in Yemen in the previous 24 hours.

## YEMEN: PROCEDURE

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

MS Risk has previously assessed that the waters around Yemen may become the next affected area in a battle for regional influence. As Operation Golden Spear ensues along the western coast of Yemen, the potential for retaliatory measures is heightened. On the water, the battle has taken a turn as the US navy has discovered that the recent attack on the Saudi frigate, *RSN Al Madina*, was conducted via an unmanned, remotely controlled vessel. It is unknown how many similar vessels are currently in the hands of Houthi rebels. Attacks from ship-to-shore or vice versa could cause accidental damage to vessels or disruption to shipping routes.

The 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 GUINEA



**WARNING:** 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.

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## HIJACKS

- No current incidents to report

## UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES

- No current incidents to report

## VESSELS FIRED UPON/ATTEMPTED BOARDINGS

- 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

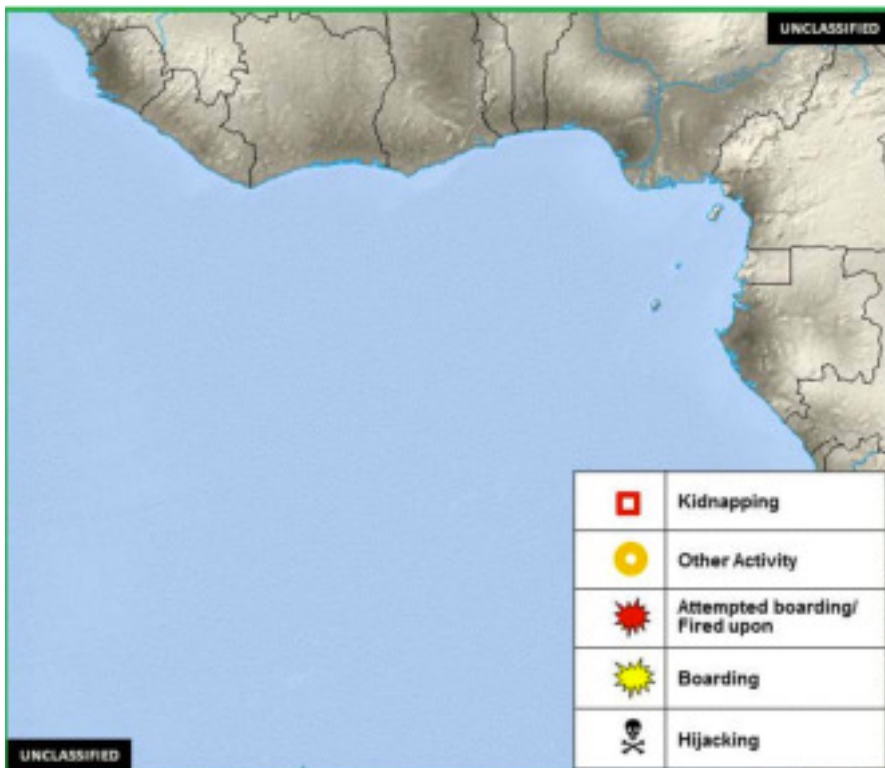
- No current incidents to report

## MARITIME REPORTING

- Nothing to report

## INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



## WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF GUINEA

**GULF OF GUINEA:** South-southwest winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet.

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

**SYNOPTIC DISCUSSION:** High pressure continues to dominate the weather in the region producing relatively light winds across along 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

**WARNING:** There are continuing concerns in regards to the situation of kidnapping of crewmembers from vessels while underway in the Sulu-Celebs Sea region. 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.



### HIJACKS

- No current incidents to report

### KIDNAPPING

- **23 March (Philippines)** – Probably Abu Sayyaf militants boarded the vehicle carrier *SUPER SHUTTLE RORO 9* approximately 19 nautical miles southeast of Sibago Island, in the Moro Gulf. Four crewmembers were kidnapped during the boarding, including the vessel's Master and Engineer.
- **23 March (Malaysia – Incident Update)** – On 18 July 2016, local authorities in Lahad Datu, Sabah, were notified about a possible abandoned tug and barge near Dent Haven. Upon investigation, it was found that tug *SERUDONG 3*, which was towing the barge *SERUDING 4*, had no crewmembers aboard and the main engine was still running. The tug carried a crew of five and one of the



crewmembers has reportedly contacted the shipping company owner to relay a ransom demand from the kidnappers. **Update (23 March)** – The Philippine military has announced that it has successfully rescued two of the Malaysian tugboat crewmembers held by Abu Sayyaf militants since July 2016. In a statement, Maj. Gen. Carlito Galvez of the Philippine Army disclosed that Malaysians Tayudin Anjut, 45, and Abdurahim Bin Sumas, 62, were freed after a “focused military operation” in Kalinggalang Caluang town in Sulu, particularly near Pata Island. Galvez went on to say that “the rescued kidnap victims are weak and in a sickly state when they were rescued by our troops. Military doctors are now attending to them.” Three other crewmembers from that boat remain in captivity.

- **15 March (Philippines – Incident Update)** – On 19 February 2017, pirates believed to be affiliated with the Abu Sayyaf group boarded the Vietnam flagged cargo ship *GIANG HAI* near position 06:09 N – 119:39 E, approximately 35 nautical miles northwest of Doc Can Island. The pirates abducted six crewmembers and killed one of the crewmembers. **Update (15 March)** – The Armed Forces of the Philippines confirmed that the Abu Sayyaf group killed one of the six Vietnamese seafarers abducted from the bulker *GIANG HAI*.

#### UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES

- No current incidents to report

#### VESSELS FIRED UPON/ATTEMPTED BOARDINGS/ATTACK

- No current incidents to report

#### VESSELS BOARDED

- **19 March (Indonesia – Late Report)** – Duty crewman on routine rounds onboard a tanker anchored near position 01:42 N – 101:28 E, 0.8 nautical miles off Pulat Rupert, Dumai, noticed one person attempting to climb on board the vessel by using a hook attached to a bamboo stick. The duty crewman informed the duty officer who raised the alarm. Upon seeing the alerted crew, the intruders aborted and moved away.

- **15 March (Philippines – Late Report)** – Robbers boarded a chemical tanker anchored near position 13:45 N – 121: 03 E, Batangas Anchorage. Duty crewman on routine rounds noticed that the forepeak store room lock was broken and immediately informed the duty officer on the bridge. A search was carried out throughout the tanker. It was reported that the ship’s properties were stolen.
- **11 March (Indonesia – Late Report)** – An unknown number of robbers boarded a chemical tanker anchored near position 01:42 N – 101:26 E, Lubuk Gaung Inner Anchorage, Dumai. The robbers stole ship’s properties and escaped unnoticed. The theft was noticed by the duty crew during routine rounds. The incident was reported to the local agents.
- **9 March (Indonesia – Late Report)** – Duty crewman onboard a product tanker anchored near position 05:52 S – 105:59 E, Merak Anchorage OPL, noticed a boat close to the stern and informed the duty officer. The alarm was raised and crew was mustered. Upon hearing the alarm, one robber was seen jumping overboard and escaping in a boat. Nothing was reported stolen.

#### SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

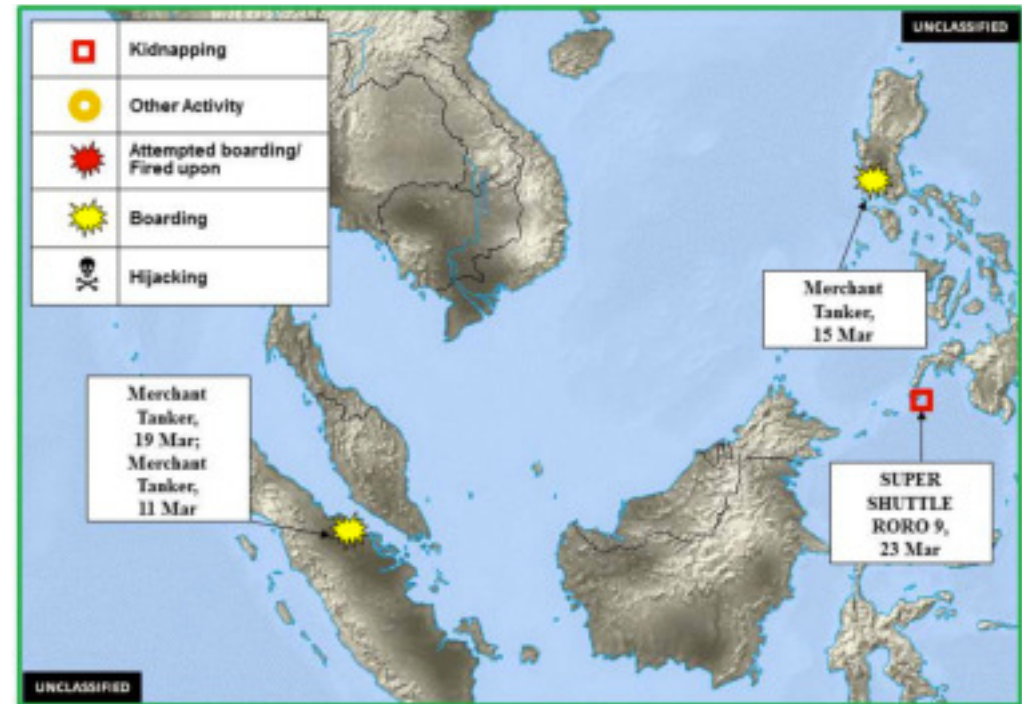
- No current incidents to report

#### OTHER ACTIVITY REPORT

- No current incidents to report

## INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



## MARITIME REPORTING

- **25 March (Philippines)** – According to a security official, Philippine Soldiers on Saturday rescued one of two Filipino cargo ship crewmen taken captive just two days ago by suspected Abu Sayyaf militants. Colonel Juvymax Uy, commander of the military's 104<sup>th</sup> Brigade and Joint Task Force Basilan disclosed that troops recovered Aurelio Agacac, the ship captain, in the remote village of Basakan in the southern Philippine province of Basilan. The kidnappers took Agacac and his companion Laurencio Tiro captive from a cargo ship off Basilan on Thursday, just hours after soldiers rescued two Malaysian held for about eight months on a southern island. Uy went on to say that the abductors were forced to abandon Agacac to delay the pursuing troops and evade a firefight. He added that soldiers had also captured a wounded suspect during the pursuit who died while being transported to the hospital in Basilan.

## WEATHER FORECAST FOR SOUTHEAST ASIA

**SOUTHERN SOUTH CHINA SEA:** Northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet with a northerly swell.

**MALACCA STRAIT:** Northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the northern Strait with northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the southern Strait.

- **Extended Forecast:** Northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the northern Strait; with northwest 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 knot, and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the northern section; with northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots, and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the southern section.

- **Extended Forecast:** Northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the northern section; with northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots, and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the southern section.

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

- **Extended Forecast:** North-northeast 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:** The return of monsoonal flow late in the forecast period will produce increased winds and seas throughout the South China Sea. Expect strong gusts in and around scattered thunderstorms throughout the Malacca Strait and the Andaman Sea due to funneling effects and daytime heating.

# WORLDWIDE

## NORTH AMERICA

- **12 March (United States – Late Report)** – Federal authorities in Florida arrested one man on charges of human trafficking. The incident occurred 2 nautical miles south of Key Largo. Federal officials boarded and inspected a charger boat and found eleven immigrants from three different countries.

### INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI

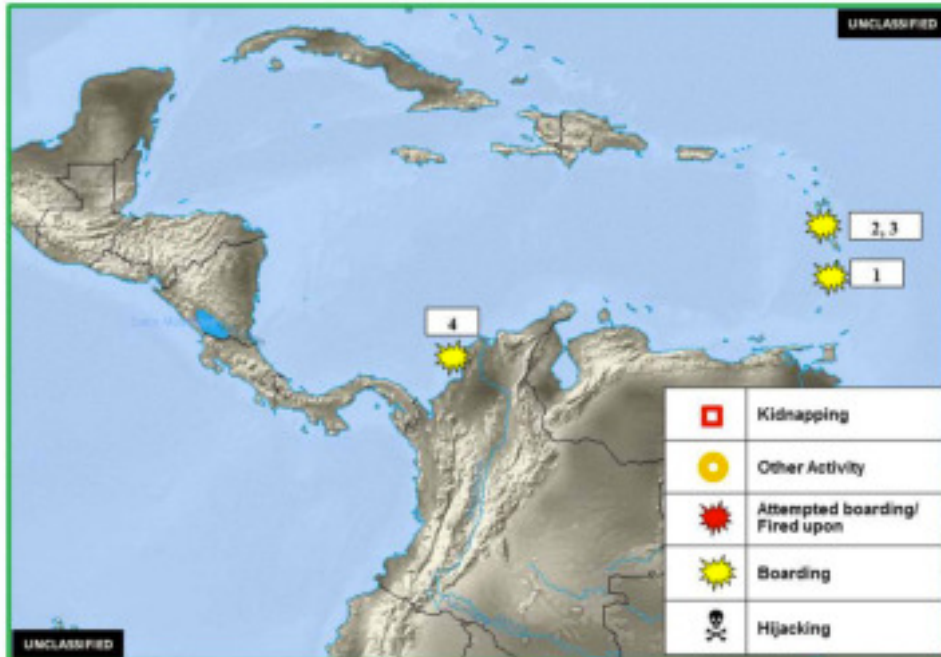


## CENTRAL AMERICA/CARIBBEAN/SOUTH AMERICA

1. **18 March (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines – Late Report)** – A catamaran anchored at Canouan Charlestown Bay was boarded at approximately 3 AM. The Captain awoke and yelled at the individual, who jumped overboard and swam away. The incident was reported to the local police.
2. **17 March (Martinique – Late Report)** – A sailing yacht anchored in St Anne had a tiller extension handle stolen from their dinghy at the main dinghy dock. The incident was reported to the local police.
3. **17 March (Martinique – Late Report)** – A sailing yacht anchored at St Anne reported that the outboard motor on the dinghy had been stolen from the main dinghy dock. The incident was reported to the local police.
4. **15 March (Colombia – Late Report)** – A sailing yacht anchored at Isla Baru was boarded by four men armed with a gun and a machete. They assaulted the Captain, hitting him with an oar, the machete and the gun. They ransacked the yacht, stealing a computer, an unopened safe and a jar of peanut butter. The incident was reported to the local police and the local Coast Guard.

## INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



## MEDITERRANEAN/BLACK SEA

- 15 March (Malta – Late Report)** – Customs inspectors discovered over 300 kilograms of cocaine while inspecting a container supposedly containing cans of pineapple at Malta Freeport. The haul was described as the biggest ever by the Customs Department. The container ship, which stopped in Malta on its way from Ecuador to Spain, was flagged as a potential high risk following risk analysis performed by the Customs Department.

## INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



## NORTHERN EUROPE/ENGLISH CHANNEL/BALTIC

- No current incidents to report

## ARABIAN GULF

- No current incidents to report

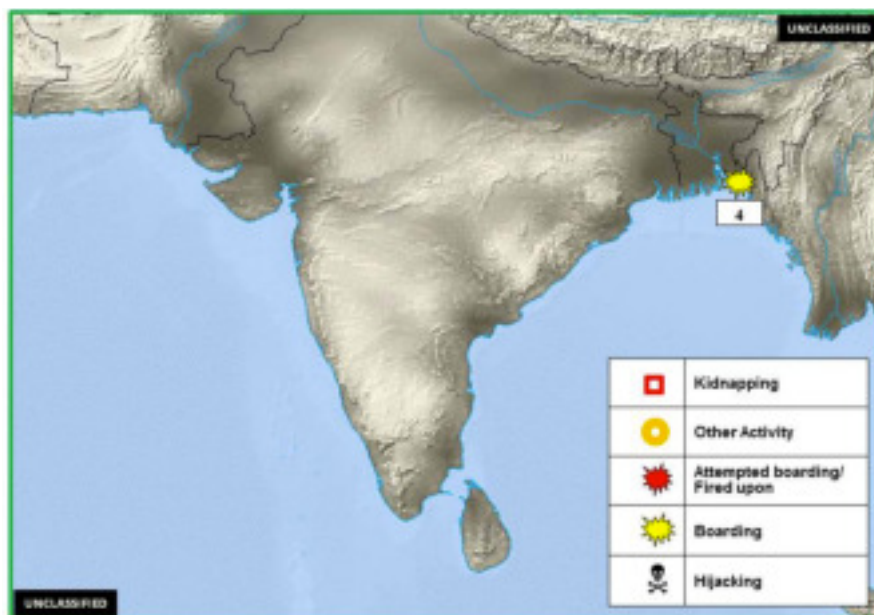


## EAST ASIA/INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

4. **19 March (Malta – Late Report)** – Four armed men boarded the container ship *SANTA FIORENZA*, anchored near position 22:05 N – 091:48 E, Chittagong Anchorage, and stole several gas cylinders. The Master reported the incident to the Bangladesh Coast Guard via VHF Channel 12. They are investigating the incident.

### INCIDENT MAP

Source: ONI



## 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



- **24 March** – The Dogan news agency has reported that five children were amongst eleven Syrians killed after their plastic boat sank off Turkey's Aegean coast on Friday, in what is the first such reported incident to occur in months on an illegal migrant route meant to have been all but shut down. The boat, which is believed to have been carrying 22 Syrian migrants, had been heading for Greece.
- **24 March** – On Thursday, more than 250 African migrants were feared drowned in the Mediterranean after a charity's rescue boat found five corpses close to two sinking rubber dinghies off the coast of Libya. The UN's refugee agency (UNHCR) disclosed that it was "deeply alarmed" after the Golfo Azzuro, a boat operated by Spanish NGO Proactiva Open Arms, reported the recovery of the bodies close to the drifting, partially-submerged dinghies, 15 miles off the coast of Libya. Proactiva spokeswoman Laura Lanzua disclosed, "we don't think there can be any other explanation than that these dinghies would have been full of people...It seems clear that they sunk," adding that the inflatables, of a kind usually used by people traffickers, would typically have been carrying

120 – 140 migrants each. Lanzua went on to say that the bodies recovered were African men with estimated ages of between 16 and 25. They had drowned in the 24 hours prior to them being discovered shortly after dawn on Thursday in waters directly north of the Libyan port of Sabratha. Vincent Cochetel, director of the UN Refugee Agency's (UNHCR) Europe bureau, disclosed that NGO boats patrolling the area had been called to the aid of a third stricken boat on Thursday afternoon, which has raised fears that others may have perished on what Proactiva called "a black day in the Mediterranean."

- **21 March** – The International Organization for Migration (IOM) reported on Tuesday that more than 6,000 migrants have been rescued on the central Mediterranean route from Libya to Italy in the last few days, as greater numbers are taking to the sea during the warmer weather. Speaking at a news briefing, IOM spokesman Joel Millman disclosed that some 500 migrants are believed to have drowned so far this year, including 22 deaths just reported by the Libyan coast guard, as more than 20,000 people arrived in Europe, mainly to Italy. Millman went on to say "we have yet to complete March, and we are already racing at a pace of arrivals that has exceeded anything we've seen before in the Mediterranean. This is typical of spring, getting busy...But it's not typical to have the numbers be so high this early and the corresponding deaths that go with it."
- **20 March** – According to the Italian coastguard, around 3,000 migrants were rescued off the coast of Libya on Sunday as they tried to cross the Mediterranean Sea to Europe. A coastguard official disclosed that "after some calm days, migrants are arriving in large numbers, taking advantage of a window of favourable weather." The rescue was undertaken in 22 separate operations that were coordinated by the Italian coastguard. One participant was the Aquarius, a humanitarian ship run by the NGO SOS Mediterranean and Doctors Without Borders (MSF), which said that it saved 946 people, including 200 unaccompanied minors. The migrants rescued by the Aquarius had been found drifting on nine wooden and rubber boats.



- **20 March** – According to the Italian government, as of Friday 17 March, 16,206 people have been rescued in the sea, compared to 11,911 by the same time last year.

## SPOTLIGHT ON LIBYA

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	High
Port of Benghazi	<b>Closed</b>	High
Port of Bouri (offshore port)	Open	Low
Port of Derna	<b>Closed</b>	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	<b>Open*</b>	High
Port of Tobruk	Open	Moderate
Port of Tripoli	Open	Moderate
Port of Zawiya (Zawia)	Open	Moderate
Port of Zueitina	Open	Low

\* Es Sider Port resumed activity on Saturday, 25 March. Sources indicate that Ras Lanuf port is expected to resume activity on 26 March.

### PORT STATUS AS OF 26 MARCH 2017

Risk level assessments take into consideration recent events, the likelihood of future outbreaks of violence, regional instability and other mitigating factors that may impact operations at the port.



## LIBYA ANALYSIS



**On Saturday, the first tanker docked at Libya's Es Sider terminal since fighting earlier this month forced a ten-day closure at Ras Lanuf and Es Sider ports.**

Greek-flagged *Demetrios* is loading at least 630,000 barrels of oil for export to China. Workers at Es Sider and Ras Lanuf ports returned to work after the LNA recaptured the vital terminals from rival militia, Benghazi Defence Brigades. Despite ground battles and air strikes in recent weeks, engineering and technical assessments indicate that the ports have not suffered significant damage. Oil production has increased to 700,000 bpd, and could reach 800,000 bpd by the end of March, inching closer to output levels prior to the civil war that began in 2011.

On 3 March, fighting erupted in Libya's Oil Crescent between the Benghazi Defence Brigades and the Libyan National Army over control of Ras Lanuf and Es Sider oil terminals. On 14 March, the LNA recaptured the terminals, and reinforced their security presence in the area.

The clashes at Ras Lanuf and Es Sider have compounded the rivalry between the UN-backed government in Tripoli and the nationally elected House of Representatives in Tobruk. Neither government recognises the authority of the

other, and the battle for Libya's largest ports complicates efforts toward a unity agreement. Last week, the House of Representatives called for an end to the deal which has unified the country's National Oil Corporation (NOC) since July 2016. The LNA said there was no immediate decision to hand over the ports to the Tripoli-based NOC, where oil and port revenue is controlled by the central bank and the UN-backed government.

The threat to break off from the NOC may be idle; eastern authorities have been unsuccessful in their attempts to sell oil independently, largely due to international sanctions. Mustafa Sanalla, chief of the National Oil Corporation in Tripoli, has said that he has been working with the LNA, and is confident that the unified NOC will resume full control of the terminals.

The growth of Libya's oil output, and the security of Libya's ports remains fragile. Renewed clashes could potentially arise based on two key drivers: 1) if Tobruk-led government ceases to engage in a unified NOC agreement, or 2) if militias in support of the UN-backed government attempt to forcibly retake the ports from LNA hands. In these events, renewed clashes could potentially pose a threat to vessels attempting to dock at contested ports, and fighting may spread to other regions, including Benghazi and Tripoli.

In the long term, the Petroleum Facilities Guard (PFG) could play a key role in maintaining security of the ports. The PFG could serve as a neutral force between the rival governments, acting under the authority of the unified NOC. This solution could remove the ports as a military or political prize, alleviating some uncertainty around port security. While this proposal has been raised by the NOC, there is currently no indication that either of the rival governments has considered this option.

**In the absence of a diplomatic solution, MS Risk reiterates that the situation in Libya remains fluid.** While relative calm has been restored around the ports, oil terminals, air and sea ports continue to be targets for renewed clashes. Control of key ports could change hands with little notice, or militias could purposefully

destroy infrastructure and assets. Renewed clashes could potentially draw in more militias on either side of the conflict.

#### ACTIVITY REPORTING

- **25 March** – The Greek-flagged tanker *Demetrios* has docked at Libya's Es Sider terminal, the first vessel since east Libyan forces lost and regained control of the port. *Demetrios* is loading at least 630,000 barrels of oil for export to China.
- **23 March** – More than 250 African migrants were feared drowned after a rescue boat found five corpses near two sinking rubber dinghies off Libya. The UNHCR said it was "deeply alarmed" after the *Golfo Azzuro*, operated by Spanish NGO Proactiva Open Arms, reported the recovery of the bodies close to the partially-submerged dinghies 15 miles north of the Libyan port of Sabratha. The inflatables, of a kind usually used by people traffickers, normally carry 120-140 migrants each. The bodies recovered were African men aged between 16 and 25. They had drowned in the 24 hours prior to their discovery shortly after dawn on Thursday, according to the rescue boat's medical staff. Nearly 6,000 people have been picked up by Italian-coordinated rescue boats since the end of last week, bringing the number brought to Italy since the start of 2017 to nearly 22,000, a significant rise on the same period in previous years.
- **22 March** – Libya's oil production has reached 700,000 barrels per day (bpd), recovering from a drop earlier this month caused by fighting at two key oil ports. "We are working very hard to reach 800,000 barrels by the end of April 2017, and, God willing, we will reach 1.1 million barrels next August," NOC Chairman Mustafa Sanalla said in a statement. Libya's output fell to around 600,000 bpd after eastern security forces lost control on March 3 of the major oil terminals of Es Sider and Ras Lanuf, before regaining them 11 days later.
- **20 March** – Libya's major oil ports of Es Sider and Ras Lanuf are resuming operations and preparing to export crude after a two-week halt in shipments due to armed clashes in the holder of Africa's largest crude reserves. Jadalla Alaokali, a National Oil Corp. board member, said staff are returning to Es Sider and Ras Lanuf, and exports are set to restart in a week to 10 days. "Both ports are ready to restart exports," he said. An oil tanker, still to be nominated, is set to load 1 million barrels of crude from Es Sider on March 26, according to a person familiar with the situation, who asked not to be identified.
- **20 March** – Libya's National Oil Corporation has been coordinating with military forces from eastern Libya to regain control of the Es Sider and Ras Lanuf oil ports, NOC's chairman said. After the ports were recaptured by the LNA, the head of a Benghazi NOC office appointed by Libya's eastern government, Naji al-Maghrabi, said he was pulling out of an NOC unification deal, and an LNA spokesman said there would be no immediate decision on a handover. But Mustafa Sanalla, the Tripoli-based NOC chairman, said his staff had already been working with the LNA. "We have been coordinating our assessment of the facilities with them. We have no reason to believe control of the ports will not be handed back to NOC."
- **18 March** – Workers are gradually returning to the oil facilities at Es Sider and Ras Lanuf; officials say they show little sign of damage beyond what was wrought in previous rounds of fighting. "The port has not suffered damage that would hinder exports, just some stealing," said an engineer at Es Sider. "About 30 workers have returned to the port, though we have not started export operations yet." As the LNA regains control of the area, military checkpoints, shops, mosques, and petrol stations have reopened.
- **17 March** – Thousands of Libyans have staged mass demonstrations in a rare show of defiance against powerful militias encroaching into Libya's capital, Tripoli, after days of clashes that have effectively chopped the city into warring fiefdoms. Protesters chanted slogans against the militias and called for unified

army and police. Some voiced support for the eastern-based army commander Khalifa Hifter, who is opposed by his Tripoli-based rivals which include the U.N.-brokered government and militias in the capital. "We won't go home until our demands are met," said 27-year-old protester Mohamed Zein. "We ask for all militias that have come from outside of Tripoli to leave immediately." Pickup trucks mounted with anti-aircraft weapons attacked the Friday protests, forcing many to flee.

**WARNING:**

**THE SITUATION IN LIBYA CONTINUES TO BE EXTREMELY FLUID. 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. The reintroduction of the National Salvation government further complicates any endeavours at stability within the unstable nation. 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. **Vessels should avoid navigating in the coastal waters of Benghazi, Derna and Sirte.**
- 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 cautioned to avoid navigating in the coastal waters of Benghazi, Derna and Sirte. MS Risk advises that shipmasters and owners stay up-to-date on the volatile situation in this region.

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When it comes to advising ship owners and operators, shipyards and ports and terminal operators we take the time to really understand your world, your people and your very particular challenges. We work closely with you to consider your business both today and tomorrow, and to explore all the variables which may impact on it.

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