

MS | RISK

Maritime Security Review



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Table of Contents

INCIDENTS AT SEA	3
GULF OF ADEN, ARABIAN SEA, RED SEA.....	4
SPOTLIGHT ON YEMEN	10
ACTIVITY REPORTING.....	11
<i>Three Yemeni Soldiers killed in roadside blast</i>	11
<i>Defector warns: Houthis are “At their worst”</i>	11
<i>Saada: 15 civilians killed in saudi airstrikes</i>	11
<i>Saudi coalition foils Houthi attempt to smuggle missiles, weapons</i>	11
<i>66 die of diphtheria in Yemen</i>	12
<i>Houthis suffer major losses in Yemen's Hodeidah</i>	12
<i>Yemen offensive threatens heritage site</i>	12
<i>Yemeni forces secure key Al Qaeda stronghold</i>	13
<i>UAE intercepts Houthi missile fired toward Mokha in Yemen</i>	13
YEMEN PROCEDURE.....	13
WEST AFRICA, GULF OF GUINEA.....	15
SOUTHEAST ASIA	19
WORLDWIDE	23
.....	26
<i>Frontex Warns Migrant Numbers to Remain High this Year</i>	26
<i>More than 300 Migrants Intercepted in Boats off Libya</i>	26
<i>Tunisia Rescues Migrants from Sinking Vessel</i>	27
SPOTLIGHT ON LIBYA	28
ACTIVITY REPORTING.....	29
<i>Transparency International: Libya Ranks 171 out of 180 in corruption</i>	29
<i>Rival tribes reach UN-sponsored peace agreement</i>	29
<i>ISIS claims suicide attack on Haftar's forces</i>	29
<i>Libya’s El Feel Oilfield Evacuated After Shutdown Threats</i>	29
LIBYA PROCEDURE.....	31
ABOUT MS RISK	32

INCIDENTS AT SEA

Reporting Period: 19 - 25 February 2018

Region	Current Incidents	Late Reported Incidents	Threat Level
MAIN REGIONS			
Gulf of Aden/Arabian Sea	1	1	Medium
Gulf of Guinea	2	3	High
Southeast Asia	0	2	Medium
WORLDWIDE			
North America	0	0	Low
Central America/Caribbean/ South America	0	6	High
Atlantic Ocean Area	0	0	Low
Northern Europe/English Channel/Baltic	0	0	Low
Mediterranean/ Black Sea	0	2	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.

GULF OF ADEN, ARABIAN SEA, RED SEA



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

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

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

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

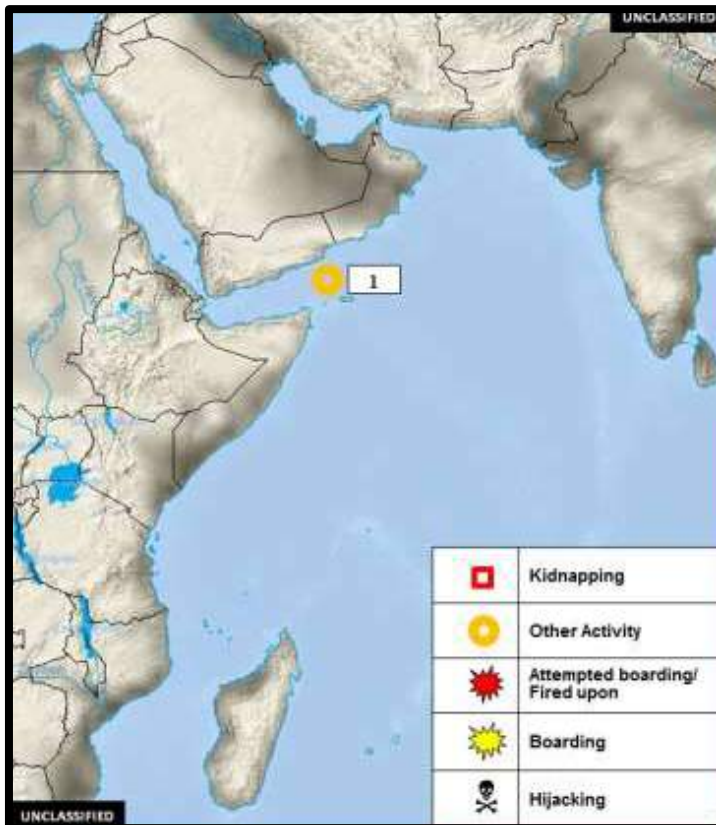
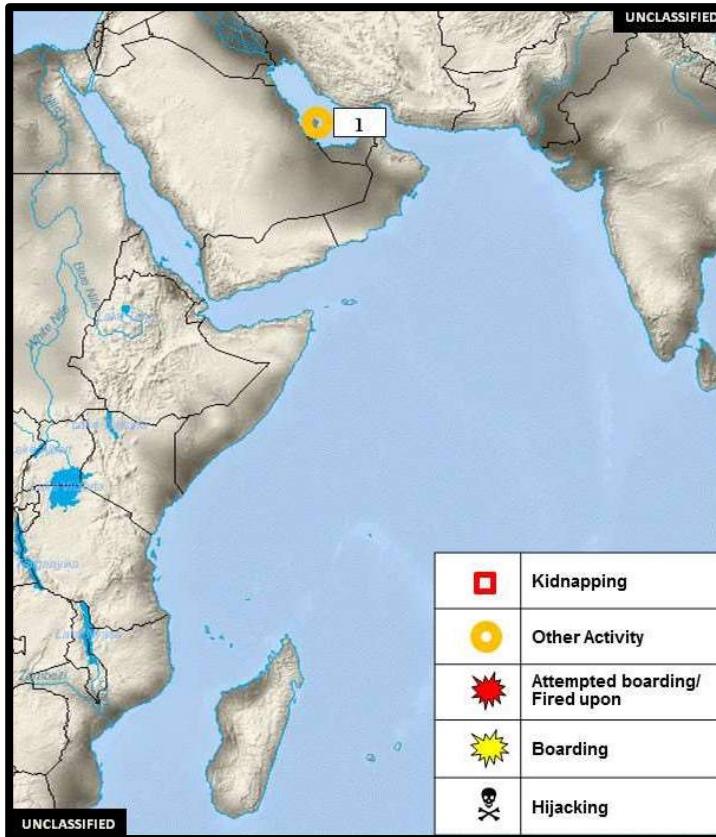
complacency may have set in and this year's successful hijacking is likely to result in potential copycat attacks, as pirate action groups head out in a bid to successfully hijack a commercial vessel.

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

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

Current Incidents:

2



VESSEL HIJACKED

- No current incidents to report

UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES

- No current incidents to report

VESSELS FIRED UPON/ATTEMPTED BOARDINGS/ATTACKS

- 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

- **19 February (Bahrain)** – Police foiled an attempt to smuggle a large shipment of liquor into the kingdom. According to the Director General of Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science, a gang of 21 individuals from different Asian countries were arrested during the operation. The smugglers used a sand carrier vessel to load the bottles from a boat further out to sea, and then offloaded them with help from their accomplices in the area reserved for the company at port.
- **18 February (Gulf of Aden – Late Report)** – A merchant vessel near position 13:59 – 051:14 E, near Point B in the IRTC, reported a suspicious approach by a skiff.

MARITIME REPORTING

- No current incidents to report

WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF ADEN, ARABIAN SEA, RED SEA**WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 22 - 28 FEBRUARY 2018**

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

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

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

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

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

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

SOMALI COAST: Northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 3 – 5 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.

- **Extended Forecast:** Northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots, gusting to 20 knots, and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the northern section of the coastline; with northeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 4 – 6 feet in the section of the coastline.

CENTRAL AFRICAN COAST/INDIAN OCEAN: Northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet.

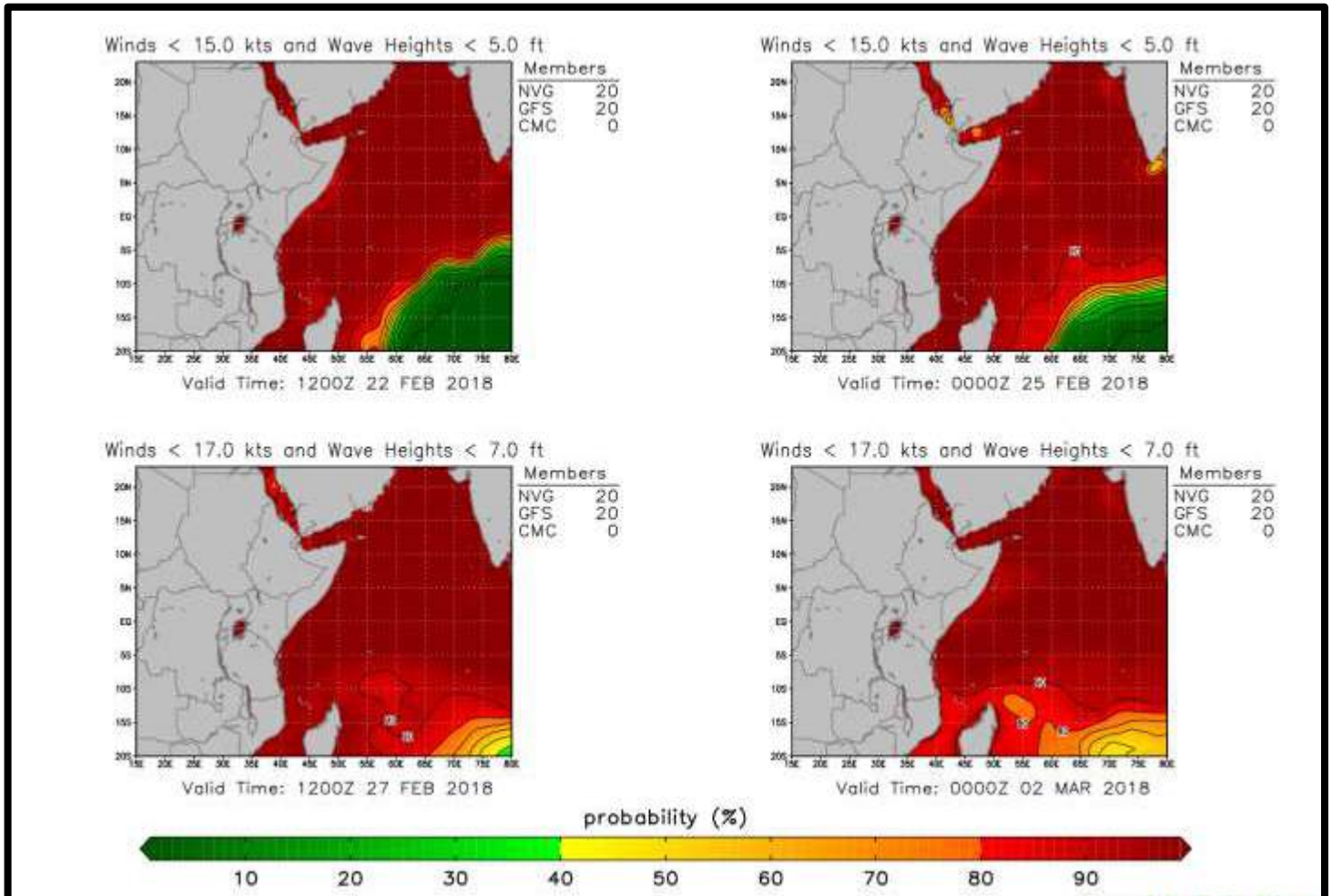
- **Extended Forecast:** Northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet.

MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL: North-northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet in the northern Channel; with southeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 5 – 7 feet in the southern Channel.

- **Extended Forecast:** Northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 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 25 FEBRUARY 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

THREE YEMENI SOLDIERS KILLED IN ROADSIDE BLAST

- **16 February** – At least three Yemeni soldiers were killed and several wounded in a roadside bomb explosion in the country's southern province of Abyan on Friday. The blast ripped through a security checkpoint near the main entrance of Mafad area, killing at least three soldiers and wounding several others at the scene. Investigation is underway; no group has claimed responsibility for the roadside bombing yet, but Yemeni government officials blamed the Yemen-based al-Qaeda branch. Al-Qaeda militants are intensifying their drive-by attacks on security checkpoints in the Yemeni southern provinces as UAE-backed government forces increase military operations against their hideouts in the war-plagued Arab country. During the past months, Yemeni government forces and the UAE armed forces operating in the southern province of Aden launched a new anti-terror offensive to root out al-Qaeda militants from their strongholds in neighboring southern province of Abyan.

DEFECTOR WARNS: HOUTHIS ARE “AT THEIR WORST”

- **14 February** – Brigadier General Jamil al-Maamari, who defected from the Houthis and went to Aden, told Al Arabiya News Channel that the Houthis are “at their worst” and many officers in Sanaa await the right moment to get rid of them. He added that the Houthis were also restraining officers’ and commanders’ movement as they now suspect everyone. Maamari said he defected because the Houthis did not keep their promises to end the Yemeni people’s suffering and to achieve national partnership. He added that the Houthis neglected state institutions, marginalized people and treated them unjustly and dragged young men into war. Maamari noted that the Houthis do not trust commanders and only want them to act as their media front.

SAADA: 15 CIVILIANS KILLED IN SAUDI AIRSTRIKES

- **22 February** – At least 15 civilians, mostly women and children, were killed on Wednesday when a Saudi-led coalition airstrike hit several taxis in Yemen's northern province of Saada, a provincial security official and medics said. The airstrike targeted the citizens' taxis in Safraa district while they were parking near a popular market on the highway, the official told Xinhua by phone on condition of anonymity. A medic at the district said the 15 dead were mostly women and children travelling in the taxis. He said around 10 others were critically wounded and being received treatment. 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.

SAUDI COALITION FOILS HOUTHİ ATTEMPT TO SMUGGLE MISSILES, WEAPONS

- **21 February** – Al Arabiya news reports that Saudi-led coalition planes raided various Houthi militia weapon stores and military bases in Sanaa, leaving several dead and others injured. The coalition also raided militia meeting points north-west of Taiz. According to sources from security personnel in Sanaa, the raids targeted weapon stores in Mount al-Nahdayn and a military training camp in Amd in the Sanhan district south of the Yemeni capital. The sources also said that the coalition’s raids foiled Houthi militia attempts to transport missiles and weapons from the weapon store in Nahdayn. As a result, several militia members were killed while others were injured, they added.

66 DIE OF DIPHTHERIA IN YEMEN

- **21 February** – The World Health Organisation (WHO) said that the number of deaths in Yemen from diphtheria has increased to 66 cases in the past several months. WHO reported that the cases were recorded in 20 out of the 23 governorates and in 163 out of the 333 districts. The report pointed out that 1,100 cases of infection were recorded in those governorates without specifying the exact duration. According to the report the disease has mostly spread in the provinces of Ibb in the centre and Hodeidah in the west. The outbreak coincides with the outbreak of a cholera epidemic in April 2017, which killed more than 2,200 people with more than one million suspected cases, according to previous WHO reports. The ongoing war has led to difficult humanitarian and health conditions and the closure of a large number of health facilities in one of the poorest countries in the world.

HOUTHIS SUFFER MAJOR LOSSES IN YEMEN'S HODEIDAH

- **20 February** – Yemeni troops liberated Al Garahi district from Houthis rebels as they look to recapture Hodeidah city and port from rebel control. Yemeni forces backed by the Arab coalition have also liberated Al Khourkhah and Haiys districts in the Hodeidah province. The spokesman for the western front, Col Naser Al Redhami, said troops affiliated with the public resistance in Tihama advanced to cut a crucial supply route. "The Houthis are suffering very big losses in Hodeidah after losing control of another main supplies route, which stretches from Ibb in the west of Al Hodeidah to Al Garahi and Zabeed in Hodeidah," Col Al Radhami said. "That has aggravated their already weakened situation after losing the supply line linking Taiz with Hodeidah as the army troops, along with the Arab coalition forces, captured Haiys last month." More forces will be committed to Hodeidah as a new front is to be opened in the next few days by Maj Gen Tariq Mohammed Abdullah, nephew of the recently deceased former president Ali Abdullah Saleh. On Monday Arab coalition jets targeted Houthi militia deployments. The strikes killed 12 rebel militants - among them a field leader called Abdulgabar Sharaf Abu Mohammed. In the outskirts of Al Garahi district, 29 Houthis were killed and more than 10 were wounded amid fierce fighting with army troops backed by the Arab Coalition air strikes. In northern Yemen, coalition jets "launched strikes targeting reinforcements and gatherings for the Houthis in the outskirts of Serwah area between Marib and Sana'a on Monday night", according to Al Arabiya net.

YEMEN OFFENSIVE THREATENS HERITAGE SITE

- **20 February** – Yemen's historic city of Zabid is under threat, as a government military offensive closes in, the International Committee of the Red Cross warned on Tuesday, calling on the warring sides to protect the site. "The fighting in Hodeida governorate is at the gates of the historic city of Zabid, fanning fears for the fate of its cultural heritage," said Alexandre Faite, ICRC's head of delegation in Yemen. Red Sea coastal site Zabid, which served as the capital of Yemen from the 13th to 15th centuries, is listed as a United Nations World Heritage Site for its unique architecture and deep connection to the spread of Islam. The city, according to UNESCO, is home to the highest concentration of mosques in Yemen — among them one of the world's earliest mosques, built by a companion of Islam's Prophet Mohammed. It now lies on the fault lines of Yemen's modern war, as government forces backed by Saudi-led air strikes press an offensive along the Red Sea coast. The offensive, which has been gathering momentum in recent months, is aimed at retaking the key port of Hodeida from the Houthi rebels. Zabid — under rebel control — lies on its path. "The frontline is only kilometres from Zabid. Any destruction of cultural property there would mean that people,

communities and all of humanity lose out,” the ICRC’s Faite said, calling on all parties to “protect and respect” the ancient city.

YEMENI FORCES SECURE KEY AL QAEDA STRONGHOLD

- **19 February** – On Sunday, eight soldiers and 19 suspected members of al-Qaeda were killed in Al Mousaini Valley, west of Mukallah, as the army launched an offensive against key outposts of the militants. General Faraj al-Bahsani, governor of Hadramawt province, said the army had entered the Mesini Valley, a major stronghold for al-Qaeda in southeast Yemen, and ensured full control over its entry points. Mukalla was the most populated Yemeni city under direct al-Qaeda control from 2015 to 2016, when the army and its regional military allies seized control of the port city. Over the weekend, special forces trained by the United Arab Emirates launched the offensive, code-named "Al-Faisal," against al-Qaeda cells in oil-rich Hadramawt province. Two soldiers were killed on Saturday in the offensive, which targets Al Mousaini and Amed valleys. A US drone strike targeting a car killed three members of the Yemen-based al-Qaeda branch, including a leader in the central province of al-Bayda on Saturday. A military official said that the unmanned US aircraft fired its missiles on a small pick-up truck of al-Qaeda in al-Bayda province, leaving three militants dead, including a local leader of the group. **UPDATE: 22 February-** Local security and military authorities in Hadramout province have declared that Al Mousaini Valley has been cleared from bodies of Al Qaeda fighters, booby traps and landmines.

UAE INTERCEPTS HOUTHII MISSILE FIRED TOWARD MOKHA IN YEMEN

- **18 February** – The UAE armed forces, part of Saudi-led Arab coalition, intercepted a ballistic missile launched by the Houthi militia. The missile was fired toward Mokha in the Taiz governorate before being intercepted by the UAE’s Patriot Missile Defense System. Coalition fighters also reportedly destroyed a ballistic missile launchpad belonging to the Houthis near Hodeidah airport, where rebels were preparing to launch a missile.

YEMEN PROCEDURE

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

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

United Nations Inspections

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

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

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

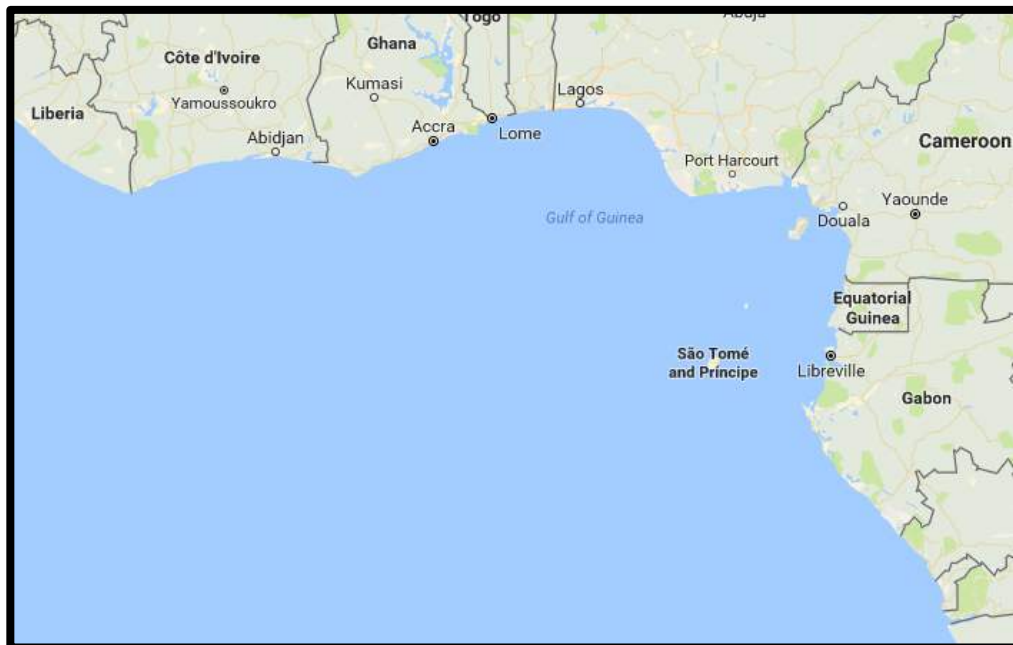
Saudi Coalition Inspections

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

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

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

WEST AFRICA, GULF OF GUINEA



Current
Incidents:

5

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.

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

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

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

VESSELS HIJACKED

- No incidents to report

UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES

- No incidents to report

VESSELS FIRED UPON/ATTEMPTED BOARDINGS/ATTACK

- **19 February (Nigeria)** - Six pirates armed with AK-47 rifles in a black hull speed boat approached and attempted to board a crude oil tanker underway near position 04:02 N – 006:34 E, 25 nautical miles southeast of Brass. The Master raised the alarm, activated SSAS, transmitted a distress message, increased speed, took evasive manoeuvres and crew secured all its access doors. The pirates made seven attempts to hook an aluminium ladder on the tanker’s railing however they were unsuccessful due to the evasive manoeuvres taken by the Master. They then fired at the tanker and moved away. A Nigerian Navy boat was in contact with the tanker and arrived at the location. The tanked and crewmembers have been reported safe.
- **15 February (Nigeria – Late Report)** – Four pirates in a speed boat chased and fired upon a container ship underway near position 03:42 N – 007:05 E, 40 nautical miles south-southwest of Bonny. The Master increased speed and commenced evasive manoeuvres. Due to the presence of a Nigerian naval escort boat, the pirates aborted and moved away. Crewmembers and the vessel have been reported safe.
- **4 January (Nigeria – Late Report)** – Armed pirates chased and attacked a product tanker underway near position 03:30 N – 006:20 E, 48 nautical miles south of Brass. The presence of armed naval personnel on board the tanker resulted in the pirates aborting the attack. The tanker and crewmembers have been reported safe.

VESSELS BOARDED

- **20 February (Nigeria)** – Six robbers boarded an anchored merchant vessel near position 06:17 N – 003:14 E, southwest of Lagos. They jumped overboard once the vessel sounded the alarm. Nothing was reported stolen.
- **17 February (Benin – Late Report)** – The duty officer onboard a tanker anchored near position 06:17 N – 002:30 E, Cotonou Anchorage, noticed three armed persons on the deck and immediately raised the alarm. SSAS was activated and all crewmembers retreated to the citadel. The IMB Piracy Reporting Centre received the incident information from the CSO and immediately informed the Benin Authorities. Three patrol boats were dispatched to the location. They searched the waters around the tanker. A Navy team boarded the tanker. On confirmation from the team that the tanker was clear of pirates, the Master and crewmembers emerged from the citadel. Upon investigating, the ship's office porthole was damaged due to a gunshot and other ship's property was found damaged.

KIDNAPPING

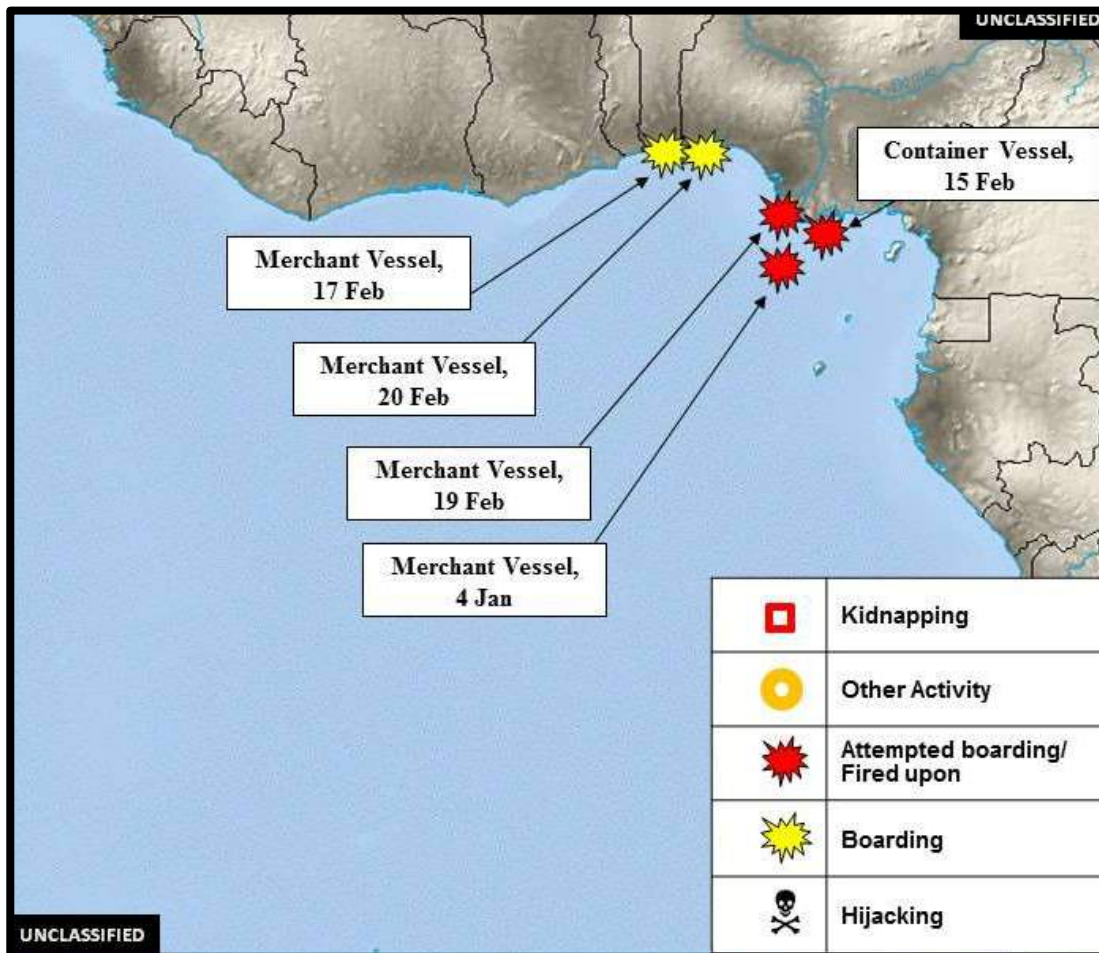
- No incidents to report

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- No incidents to report

OTHER ACTIVITY

- No incidents to report



MARITIME REPORTING

- No incidents to report

WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF GUINEA

WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 22 - 28 FEBRUARY 2018

GULF OF GUINEA: Southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 3 – 5 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Southwest winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 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 Somali and West African coasts with increased southerly wind flow through the Bab el Mandeb Strait due to funnelling effects.

SOUTHEAST ASIA



Current Incidents:

2

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

- **16 February (Philippines – Late Report)** – An attack by suspected Abu Sayyaf militants was thwarted after boiling water mixed with oil was poured on the men as they tried to board the vessel. The M/V KUDOS 1 was sailing off the waters of Basilan in the Philippines when it was attacked by men in three motorboats. After their boarding attempt failed, the pirates fired shots at the vessel and caused some damage and minor injuries as a result. The Western Mindanao Command Commander praised the actions of the crewmembers who foiled the attempt before naval and coast guard forces arrived at the scene. On arrival, Coast Guard personnel treated the injured crewmen and naval ships escorted the vessel to anchorage.

VESSELS BOARDED

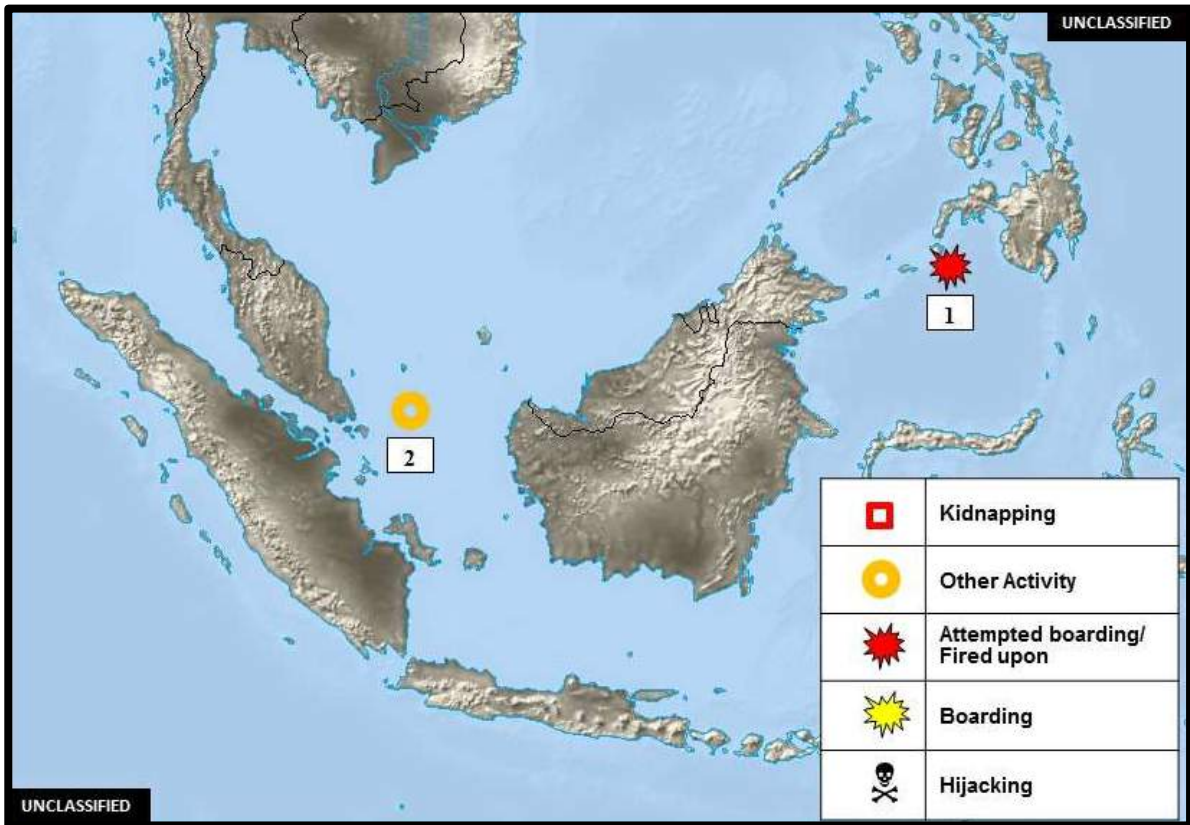
- No current incidents to report

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- No current incidents to report

OTHER ACTIVITY REPORT

- **13 February (Indonesia – Late Report)** – Customs officials arrested the vessel M/V JAYA INDAH 08 and four crewmen when the vessel was found to be carrying a large consignment of smuggled ammonium nitrate in the Riau Islands area. When the search was completed, 1,377 sacks, weighing 25 kilograms, was impounded.



MARITIME REPORTING

- No incidents to report

WEATHER FORECAST: SOUTHEAST ASIA**WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 22 - 28 FEBRUARY 2018**

SOUTHERN SOUTH CHINA SEA: Northeast winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 3 feet.

- **Extended Forecast:** Northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 3 – 5 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 northwest winds of 10 – 15 knots, and seas of 1 – 2 feet in the southern Strait.

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

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

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

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

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

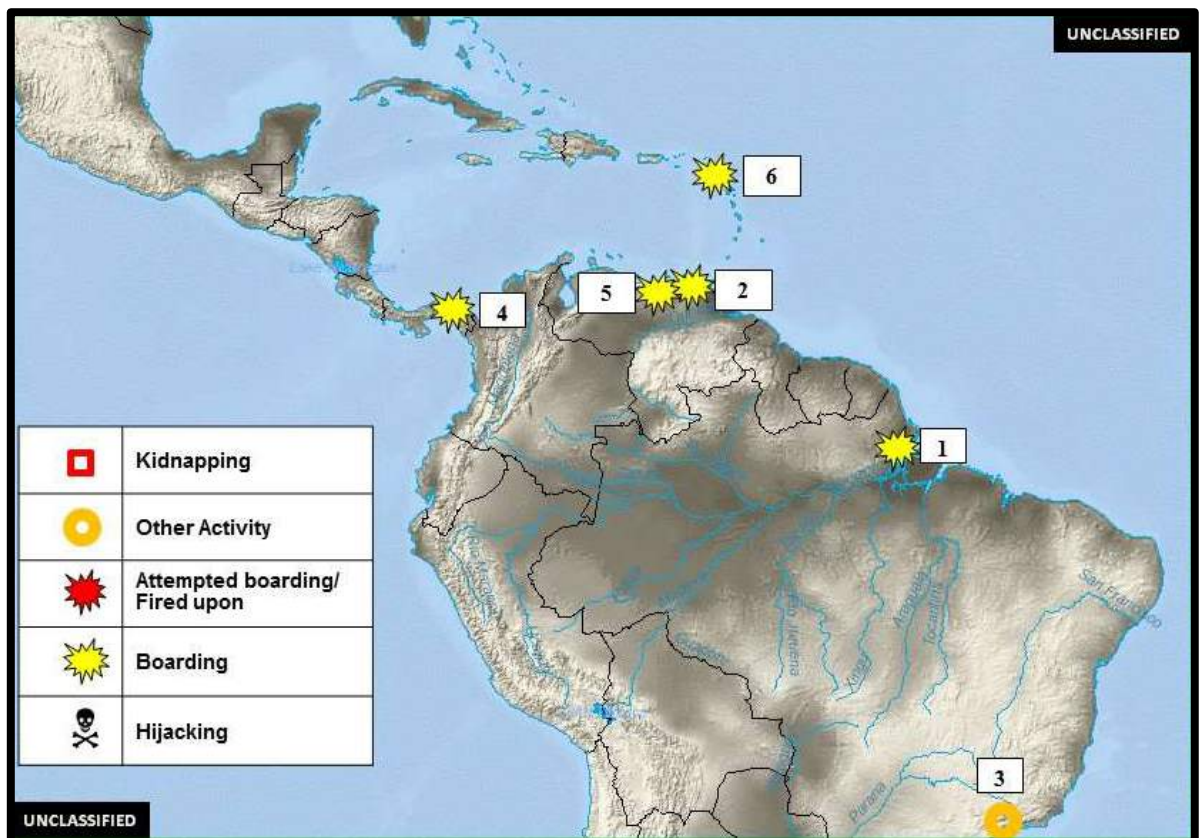
SYNOPTIC DISCUSSION: An area of low pressure moving off of China will produce slightly increased wind flow in the South China Sea. Expect strong gusts in and around scattered thunderstorms, throughout the Malacca Strait and the Andaman Sea due to funnelling effects and daytime heating.

WORLDWIDE

NORTH AMERICA

- No current incidents to report

CENTRAL AMERICA/CARIBBEAN/SOUTH AMERICA



- 1. 15 February (Brazil – Late Report)** – The duty officer onboard a bulk carrier anchored near position 002:02 N – 051:04 W, Macapa Anchorage, saw the forecastle door open and unauthorized persons walk out onto the forward deck. The alarm was raised and the crew was mustered. Upon seeing the alerted crew, the robbers escaped. On searching the vessel, ship’s stores were reported stolen. Port authority was notified via local agent.
- 2. 15 February (Venezuela – Late Report)** – Three robbers armed with knives boarded an anchored tanker near position 10:14 N – 064:44 W, Puerto La Cruz Anchorage. Duty crewman on routine rounds saw the robbers and notified the duty officer. The duty crewman was threatened by one of the robbers. Alarm was raised and the crew was mustered. Upon seeing the alerted crewmembers, the robbers escaped with stolen ship’s

stores. The incident was reported to the Puerto La Cruz VTS. A Coast Guard patrol boat was dispatched to investigate.

3. **14 February (Brazil – Late Report)** – A diver was spotted near the container ship MSC MELINE, docked at Santos at dawn. The diver fled, leaving behind him a floating waterproof bag with 28 kilograms of cocaine in it. Police surveyed the ship’s hull and later that day and found two more bags locked in a steel box, containing 57 kilograms of cocaine.
4. **10 February (Panama – Late Report)** – A sailing yacht anchored in San Blas Nargana was boarded and an iPad was stolen.
5. **6 February (Venezuela – Late Report)** – Four robbers boarded an anchored tanker near position 10:10 N – 064:47 W, Puerto Jose Anchorage. Duty crewman on routine rounds noticed the robbers and immediately notified the duty officer, who raised the alarm and mustered the crew. Upon seeing the alerted crew, the robbers escaped in a small boat with stolen ship’s properties. The incident was reported to the Port Authorities.
6. **5 February (St Kitts and Nevis – Late Report)** – A catamaran was boarded while anchored in Basseterre, St Kitts. The thief took cash, computers and cell phones before departing in the yacht’s in-the-water and not locked dinghy. The dinghy was later recovered ashore and a police report was made.

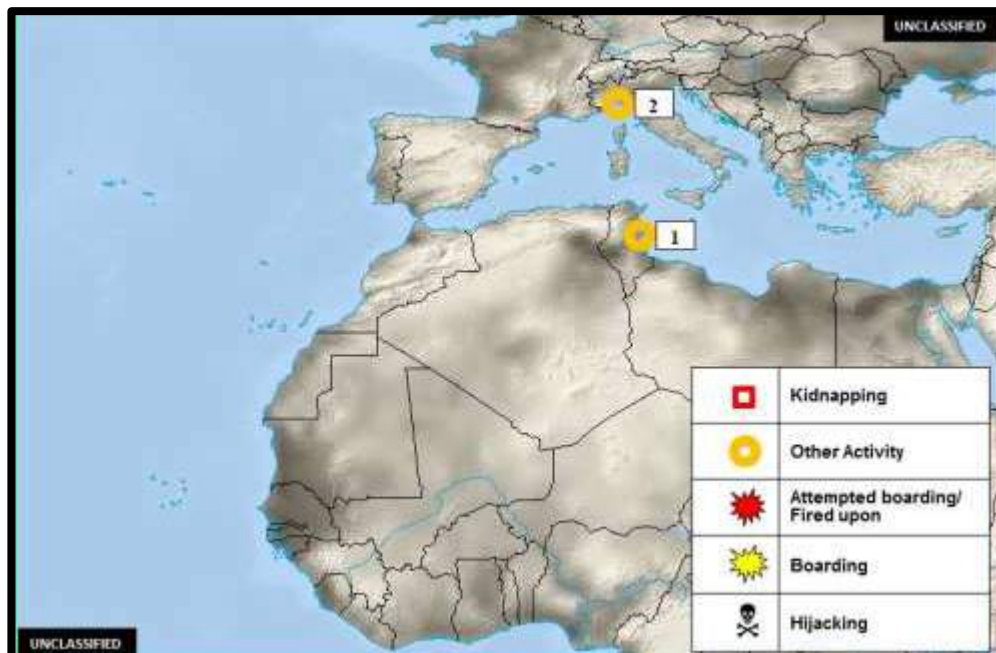
ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA

- No current incidents to report

NORTHERN EUROPE/ENGLISH CHANNEL/BALTIC

- No current incidents to report

MEDITERRANEAN/BLACK SEA



1. **16 February (Tunisia – Late Report)** – Authorities detained the RO-RO ship URAL in the port of Sfax for a more thorough search after a consignment of weapons was found on board.

2. **16 February (Italy – Late Report)** – 300 kilograms of cocaine were found on board the container ship M/V Dimitris C in Genoa. Plastic bags with cocaine were found by the ship’s all-Ukrainian crew and reported to Italian authorities. The authorities commended the crew in finding and seizing the drugs. Prior to Europe, the ship was calling a number of South and Central American ports.

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.

FRONTEX WARNS MIGRANT NUMBERS TO REMAIN HIGH THIS YEAR

20 February – On Tuesday, the head of the European Union's (EU) border agency Frontex reported that the number of migrants trying to reach Europe through the Mediterranean will remain high this year, noting that more are expected to arrive through Spain. Fabrice Leggeri told reporters on Tuesday that "the irregular migration pressure on the southern borders in the Mediterranean will remain at a very high level." He went on to say that "especially the western Mediterranean route is under scrutiny." Last year, about 21,000 unauthorized migrants, mostly from Morocco, Algeria and Guinea, entered Spain. Leggeri further noted that overall numbers have decreased since 2015, when 1.8 million people entered Europe, adding that crossings into Greece are also down 80 percent from last year, though "of course there is still pressure." He also expressed concern that EU countries are sending fewer unauthorized migrants home.

MORE THAN 300 MIGRANTS INTERCEPTED IN BOATS OFF LIBYA

19 February - The Libyan coastguard has reported that 324 migrants were picked up on Monday as they were trying to leave the North African country on board two rubber boats. In a statement, coastguard spokesman Ayoub Qassem disclosed that the migrants intercepted about seven miles off the western town of Zuwara on Monday included 35 women and sixteen children, adding that they were mostly from four sub-Saharan countries; Chad, Ivory Coast, Nigeria and Mali. The statement went on to say

that “there are some others from Tunisia, Pakistan and Morocco. There are also 32 persons including eight women and six children from Libya, and three families among them.”

TUNISIA RESCUES MIGRANTS FROM SINKING VESSEL

19 February - According to the interior ministry, Tunisia’s coastguard has rescued 48 Tunisian migrants whose boat began sinking as they tried to reach Italy. In a statement, the ministry disclosed that a patrol spotted the vessel on Friday night off Jebeniana, 210 km (130 miles) south of Tunis, adding that the 9 metre craft “was sinking after taking on water.” The statement went on to say that the passengers were all Tunisians aged 16 to 40 from the governorates of Medenine and Sfax. While Tunisians regularly try to cross the Mediterranean to seek a better future in Europe, departures peaked last September. According to NGO’s, the uptick reflected frustration amongst young people who have been hard hit by unemployment.

SPOTLIGHT ON LIBYA

PORT STATUS AS OF 25 FEBRUARY 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

TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL: LIBYA RANKS 171 OUT OF 180 IN CORRUPTION

- **24 February** – Libya ranked 171st out of 180 countries ranked on the latest Transparency International Corruption Perception Index 2017. Regionally, it ranked behind every Arab country – except Yemen and Syria. Transparency International said that this year's Corruption Perceptions Index highlights the fact that the majority of countries are making little or no progress in ending corruption, while further analysis shows journalists and activists in corrupt countries risking their lives every day in an effort to speak out. It went on to note that in a region stricken by violent conflicts and dictatorships, corruption remains endemic in the Arab states while assaults on freedom of expression, press freedoms and civil society continue to escalate. Nineteen of 21 Arab states score below 50 in the Corruption Perceptions Index for 2017, which captures levels of corruption in the public sector. The worst performing Arab states in the index – Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen – all suffer from weak public institutions, internal conflict and deep instability. Such situations allow corruption to become rife with little to no checks on official abuse. Amid ongoing violence, as well as internal wars and conflicts, all forms of good governance have eroded.

RIVAL TRIBES REACH UN-SPONSORED PEACE AGREEMENT

- **24 February** – UNSMIL on Friday said Libya's southern rival tribes Tebu and Zway have reached a UN-sponsored reconciliation agreement. "Representatives from the Tebu and Zway tribes of Kufra District signed a Reconciliation Agreement after a two-day meeting in Tunis, organized by UNSMIL with the support of UNDP (United Nations Development Program)," the Mission said in a statement. "The agreement sets out key principles for reconciliation that include freedom of movement, individual accountability for crimes, and equal access to services without discrimination," the Mission said, adding that the two tribes have agreed to form a high commission for peace and reconciliation in Kufra within a month. "Moreover, the participants called for the establishment of a neutral security force in Kufra to safeguard institutions. They also demanded social services and development projects in the area," the statement said. In February 2012, armed clashes erupted between the two tribes, killing more than 100 people and displacing almost half of the residents in Kufra, an oasis in southern Libya with a population of 40,000 people.

ISIS CLAIMS SUICIDE ATTACK ON HAFTAR'S FORCES

- **23 February** – The Islamic State group has claimed a suicide car bomb attack in Waddan region, central Libya which killed three militiamen loyal to Khalifa Haftar. The attack is the first claimed by the group in Libya since October. The blast, which ISIS claimed a day later, wounded two others at a checkpoint on the road leading to Tripoli, said commander Ahmed al-Mesmari. Fighters from the Islamic State group remain active in central and southern Libya despite being forced out of their northern stronghold Sirte in 2016. The group's Amaq propaganda arm said in an online statement that the blast at a checkpoint of the "apostate militia of Haftar" was carried out by a suicide bomber.

LIBYA'S EL FEEL OILFIELD EVACUATED AFTER SHUTDOWN THREATS

- **22 February** – Libya's National Oil Corporation has evacuated its workers from the El Feel oil field amid threats from the field's guards who are locked in a pay dispute with the company. The guards are

from the Petroleum Facilities Guards that held all of Libya's oil export terminals under a blockade for more than a year until September 2016. There has also been chatter about a wider disruption to oil production, which may affect Sharara, Libya's largest oilfield. The evacuation comes following emergency talks between NOC and representatives of the Tubu tribe who demanded more frequent fuel supplies to their region, threatening El Feel with a shutdown as well. Shutdown could deliver a painful blow to Libya's oil production, the main source of income for the nation. In 2017, Libya reached 1-million-bpd, however still remains short of its pre-war output of 1.6 million bpd. Shutting down oil fields has become a popular way of making a point among various groups holding grudges against the government or the oil companies operating in the country. Sharara alone was the target of shutdowns at least three times last year. El Feel oil field is operated by Mellitah, a joint venture between Libya's National Oil Corporation (NOC) and Italy's Eni. Sharara and El Feel both send oil to the Zawiya refinery.

LIBYA PROCEDURE

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

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

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

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

ABOUT MS RISK

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

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

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

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

SECURITY CONSULTING

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

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Interim security
- Training
- Special assignments

CRISIS RESPONSE

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

VIRTUAL SECURITY DIRECTOR SERVICE

- For clients lacking a full-time security executive

References are always available.

More information is found at www.msrisk.com

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