

MS | RISK

# Maritime Security Review



Issue No. 9  
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## INCIDENTS AT SEA

Reporting Period: 26 February – 4 March 2018

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

**Piracy Levels are determined on a weekly basis as follows:**

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

**PLEASE NOTE:**

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

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

## GULF OF ADEN, ARABIAN SEA, RED SEA



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

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

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

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

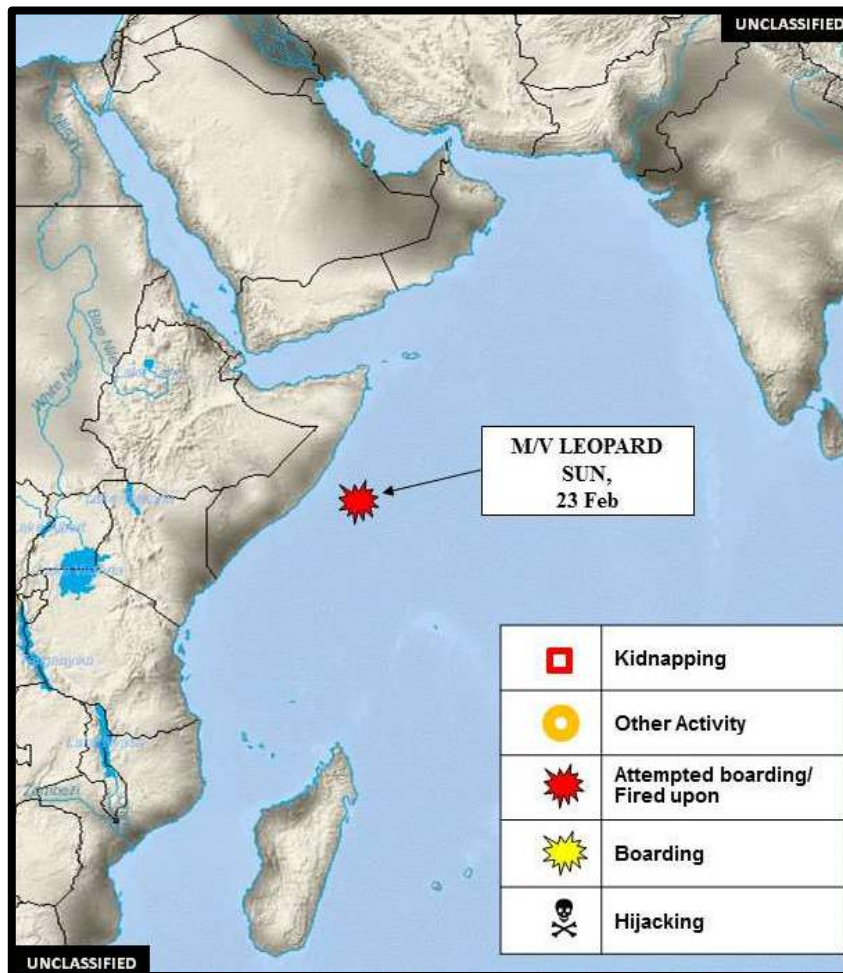
complacency may have set in and this year's successful hijacking is likely to result in potential copycat attacks, as pirate action groups head out in a bid to successfully hijack a commercial vessel.

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

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

Current  
Incidents:

1

**VESSEL HIJACKED**

- No current incidents to report

**UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES**

- No current incidents to report

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

- **23 February (Indian Ocean – Late Report)** – Singapore-flagged product tanker *LEOPARD SUN* was attacked by pirates near position 03:26 N – 050:27 E, 159 nautical miles off the central coast of Somalia. The tanker was approached by three skiffs and was fired upon by armed pirates. According to United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operation (UKMTO), the armed security team on board the vessel returned fire, preventing the pirates from boarding the ship. EUNAVFOR has reported that the crew and vessel are safe.

**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**

- **25 February (Netherlands)** – Dutch ship-owners with vessels passing regularly through areas frequented by pirates will now be able to carry their own security guards who are permitted to carry arms and fire if necessary. Public broadcaster NOS has reported that last week, a majority of MPs, including the coalition Christian party ChristenUnie, voted for the measure, which was favoured by the maritime community. Ship-owners have been asking to be allowed to employ private security guards who can use force for many years. MPs have now agreed, with the proviso that the guards are equipped with bodycams and a 360-degree sound camera mounted on the ship itself. This effectively means that officials can evaluate any incidences afterwards to determine whether force was actually necessary. Pirates have a heavy presence along the coast of Somalia and the Gulf of Aden and have seized many merchant vessels in the past, despite patrols by the European Union's (EU) anti-pirate mission. Denmark, Spain, Norway and Britain already allow shipping firms to use private security guards when travelling close to the coast of Somalia.

**WEATHER FORECAST: GULF OF ADEN, ARABIAN SEA, RED SEA****WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 1 – 7 MARCH 2018**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**SOMALI COAST:** Northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots and seas of 2 – 4 feet in the northern section of the coastline; with northeast winds of 10 – 15 knots, and seas of 4 – 6 feet in the southern section of the coastline.

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

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

- **Extended Forecast:** Northeast winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 4 – 6 feet.

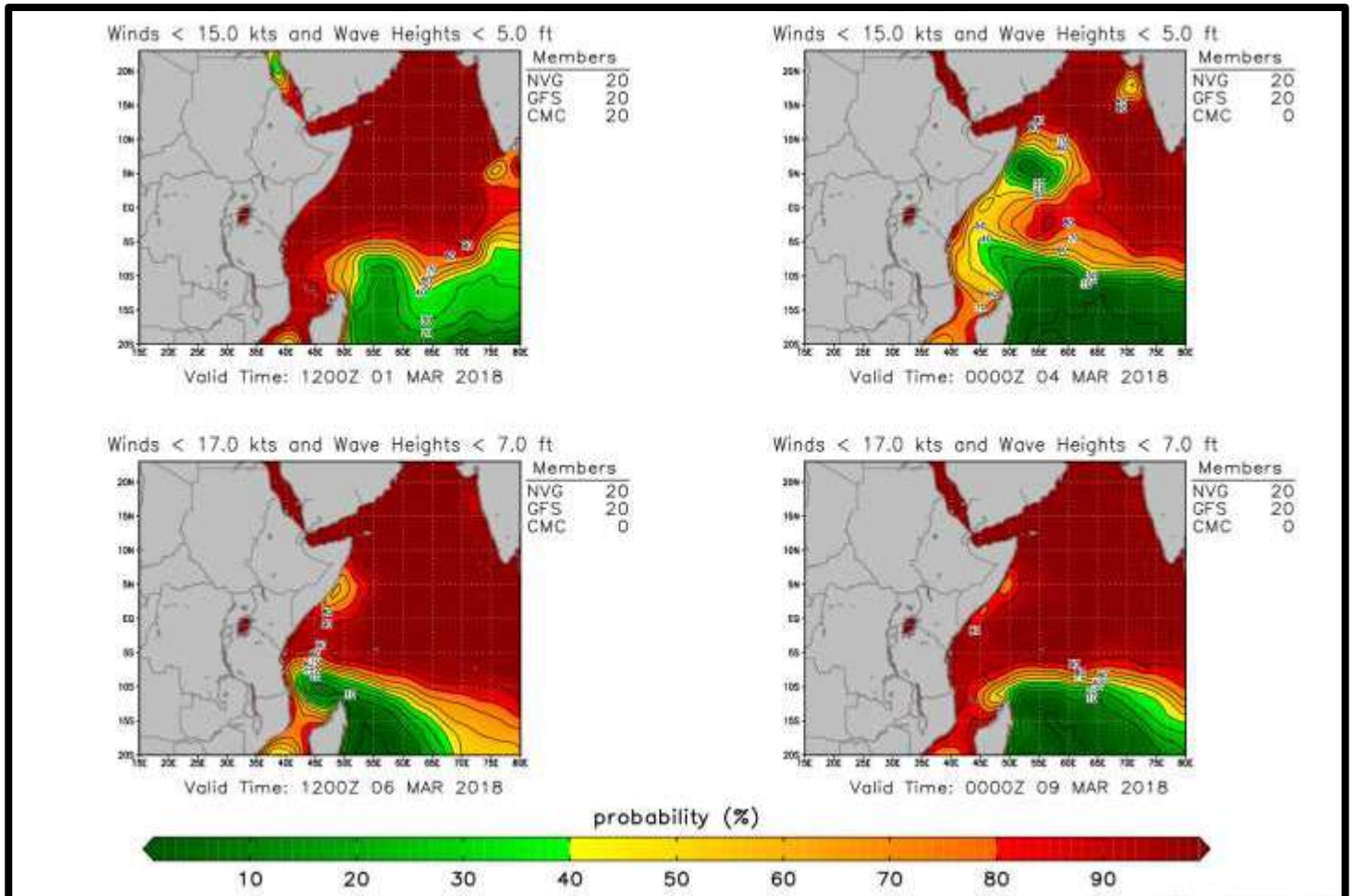
**MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL:** North-northwest winds of 5 – 10 knots, gusting to 15 knots, and seas of 3 – 5 feet in the northern Channel; with southeast winds of 15 – 20 knots, and seas of 6 – 8 feet in the southern Channel.

- **Extended Forecast:** Northwest winds of 15 – 20 knots and seas of 6 – 8 feet in the northern Channel; with southeast winds of 15 – 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots, and seas of 10 – 12 feet in the southern Channel.

**SURFACE CURRENTS:** The northern Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden currents are variable with most areas having an average speed of 1 knot. The Mozambique Channel currents are variable having an average speed of 2 knots. Currents' 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 4 MARCH 2018			
Port Name	Port Status	Risk Level	Notes
Aden Port	Open	High	Curfew: 2000 - 0600
Ash Shihr Oil Terminal	Closed	High	
Balhaf LNG Terminal	Closed	Closed	
Hodeidah Port	Open	High	The Saudi Royal Navy is using a holding area 60 NM west of Hodeidah port for vessels attempting entry into Salif or Hodeidah. Inbound vessels should plan on holding here prior to receiving clearance.
Mokha Port	Open	High	Considered unsafe; no activity reported since August 2015
Mukalla Port	Open	High	Capacity: 2 berths
Ras Isa Marine Terminal	Closed	Closed	
Saleef Port	Open to humanitarian aid	High	Capacity: 2 berths

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

## ACTIVITY REPORTING

## YEMEN ARMY MOVES TO RETAKE SANAA

- **2 March** – The Yemeni army moved to the north-east gate of the capital Sanaa advancing towards Arhab northeast of Sanaa. The move marks a significant milestone for the Yemeni army as they, supported by the Arab coalition forces, seek retake the capital Sanaa from Houthi control. Arhab is located northeast of Sanaa, north of Bani al-Harith Directorate near Sanaa. From the eastern side it is connected to Nahem, and both areas Arhab and Nahem constitute the majority of the capital's total area. Arhab also overlooks Sanaa International Airport and Delami Air Base. From Arhab, it is possible to move westward to Amran governorate to cut the road between Sanaa and Saada. The tribe of Arhab, where there is no significant support for Houthis, has many tribal clans reaching to the Shibam and Hamdan area in the north of Sanaa. The tribes might confront the Houthis after their backlash against them since the coup, and with the support of Hamdan tribe can circle Sanaa and close the roads connecting it with the governorates of Saada, Hajjah and Mahweet.

## SAUDI-LED COALITION DEMAND: INCLUDE HOUTHİ FIGURES IN UN SANCTIONS LIST

- **1 March** – The Saudi-led Coalition called on the United Nations to put Houthi militants, including Head of the Revolutionary Committee Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, in the list of sanctions issued under resolution 2140. The report submitted by the UN panel of experts, which is affiliated with the sanctions committee in Yemen, was welcomed by the coalition as it provided evidence on the involvement of the Iranian regime in supporting terrorist organizations, including the Houthi militia. Spokesman for the Saudi-led coalition Col. Turki al-Maliki welcomed concrete evidence, citing ballistic missiles, drone planes, speed boats, and mines, which contributed to aggravating the crisis in Yemen and spreading chaos in the region. Maliki also highlighted the importance of providing protection for Yemeni historical antiquities, explaining that some people had illegally sold items from the National Museum of Yemen in Sanaa. He welcomed the replacement of UN Envoy to Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed by Martin Griffiths and wished him success, noting that the coalition welcomed the opening of the office of the UN special envoy in Aden.

## SAUDI ARABIA DISMISSES TOP MILITARY COMMANDERS AS WAR IN YEMEN STALEMATES

- **27 February** – Saudi Arabia has dismissed its top military commanders as the war in Yemen, launched nearly three years ago, remains stalemated and relations with its campaign partner the United Arab Emirates come under serious strain. On the recommendations of his son, defence minister and crown prince Mohammed, King Salman summarily sacked the chief of staff and commanders of the air, land, and strategic missile forces as well as interior ministry officials. The generals' successors will be under pressure to win the Yemen war and overhaul the kingdom's poorly performing military. The sweeping changes are meant to tighten the crown prince's grip on power by realigning the kingdom's armed forces and appealing to the younger generation of Saudis, for whom he says he has initiated his social, political and economic reform and liberalisation programme. The Saudi-Emirati air and land offensive against Houthi rebels in Yemen, the region's poorest country, was launched by the crown prince at the end of March 2015 in the expectation that victory would be achieved within weeks. This was a major miscalculation as the Houthis are veteran fighters and they were reinforced by northern units of the Yemeni regular army.

**YEMENI MINISTER: UAE BUILDING ARMIES TO DIVIDE YEMEN**

- **26 February** – Yemen's Transportation Minister Saleh al-Gabwani said UAE-backed troops cut off his convoy on Sunday while he was en route to inaugurate a new port in Balhaf, a town that hosts the largest natural gas plant in Yemen and a major terminal - now occupied by the UAE forces. He said the so-called Shabwa Elite Force, one of several units that only answer to the UAE forces, told him the Emiratis ordered that he be stopped from reaching the port. "There are tribal and regional armies set up by the Emiratis," Gabwani later told a gathering of local and government officials. "We as a state can't accept continuation of this situation." Yemen has been engulfed in a civil war since 2015 with a Saudi-led coalition that includes the UAE fighting rebels known as Houthis to restore the internationally recognised government to power. But the government, now based in the southern port city of Aden, is at odds with the UAE forces based there - their official allies against the Houthis. The UAE has trained and financed Yemeni troops who only answer to the Emiratis and has also backed a newly formed pro-secessionist Southern Transitional Council. Supporters of the council battled in the streets of Aden last month, calling for the Yemeni government's resignation.

**UNVERIFIED: YEMENI FORCES FOIL HOUTHIS SCHEME TO PLANT NAVAL MINES OFF MIDI COAST**

- **26 February** – According to a one-off report by Asharq al-Awsat news, Yemeni military sources said that naval forces thwarted Houthi militias' attempt to plant naval mines around the coast of Midi in Hajjah Governorate. The report states that naval forces targeted Houthi boats as they attempted to plant naval mines 30 nautical miles from the coast of Midi. Anonymous sources added that the Yemeni army forces, with the support of the Saudi-led coalition, removed dozens of sea mines planted by the Houthis in the Red Sea, off the coasts of Midi, to target various ships and fishing boats and obstruct the navigation route. The report has not been corroborated by other sources.

**14 DEAD IN ATTACK ON YEMEN COUNTER-TERRORISM BASE**

- **24 February** – At least 14 people were killed and 40 wounded when Islamist car suicide bombers and gunmen tried to storm the headquarters of a counter-terrorism unit in the southern port city of Aden on Saturday, security and medical sources said. Daesh, in a statement carried by its Amaq news agency, claimed responsibility for what it described as two "martyrdom operations" targeting the camp in Tawahi district in south-western Aden. The agency provided no immediate evidence for the claim. Security sources said two suicide bombers detonated two cars laden with explosives at the camp's entrance while six gunmen tried to storm the facility. They were all killed by guards and their bodies taken to a military hospital, a medical source said. Aden police said in a statement on its Facebook page that security forces had foiled a major attack on the camp. "All the ... terrorists were liquidated immediately before they could reach the outer gate of the anti-terrorism headquarters," a police statement said. Security sources and medics said three security men, a woman and two children died in the attack, while 40 other people, many of them civilians, were wounded. The attack was the first of its kind in southern Yemen since gun battles erupted in January between southern separatists and President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi's government over control of the city. Residents described two large explosions in the area that sent up a cloud of grey smoke while ambulances raced to evacuate the wounded. In a statement carried by the state-run Saba news agency, Hadi described the attack as a "cowardly act aimed to destabilize security in the temporary capital ... but it will not dissuade people from their will to achieve security, safety and decent living." Al Qaeda and Islamic State have exploited the war in Yemen to carry out assassinations and bombings, mostly in lawless southern Yemeni areas nominally controlled by the government.

## 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:

6

### WARNING:

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

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

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

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

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

#### VESSELS HIJACKED

- No incidents to report

#### UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS/ROBBERIES

- No incidents to report

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

- **24 February (Nigeria - Late Report)** - Two skiffs with 2 – 3 armed pirates in each skiff chased and fired upon a bulk carrier near position 03:38 N – 006:37 E, 45 nautical miles southeast of Brass. The vessel increased speed, crew was mustered in a safe place and the armed guards were on standby. Due to the hardened measures, the pirates aborted the attempt.
- **24 February (Nigeria – Late Report)** – Ten pirates in a speedboat, armed with automatic weapons, chased and fired upon a vessel underway near position 03:38 N – 06:42 E, 40 nautical miles south-southwest off Bonny Fairway buoy. The armed guards onboard the vessel returned fire, resulting in the pirates aborting the attack and moving away. All crewmembers have been reported safe. The vessel sustained minor damage due to firing.
- **24 February (Nigeria – Late Report)** – Eight armed pirates in a speedboat chased a container vessel underway near position 03:33 N – 007:02 E, 50 nautical miles south-southwest of Bonny Island. The alarm was raised, SSAS activated, speed increased and all non-essential crewmembers were retreated into the citadel. Nigerian Navy was contacted. They informed the Master to rendezvous with their naval vessel in the vicinity. As the pirate boat closed in, the Master commenced evasive maneuvers. Due to the hardening, the pirates were unable to hook their ladder onto the vessel and subsequently moved away. The Nigerian Navy escorted the vessel to the pilot boarding point.

- **22 February (Nigeria – Late Report)** – A merchant vessel reported being attacked near position 03:30 N – 006:31 E, 67 nautical miles southwest of Bonny.
- **18 February (Nigeria – Late Report)** – A speed boat with six to seven armed pirates chased and fired upon a tanker underway near position 03:41 N – 006:37 E, 42 nautical miles southeast off Brass. Alarm was raised, crew was mustered, evasive manoeuvres were commenced and Nigerian authorities were contacted. Due to the vessel hardening, the pirates were unable to board the vessel and moved away. The vessel was escorted to Bonny anchorage by two Navy vessels. All crewmembers have been reported safe. The vessel sustained minor damage due to being fired upon.

#### VESSELS BOARDED

- **27 February (Benin)** – Five armed persons in a speedboat approached the tanker *ST MARSEILLE* anchored near position 06:21 N – 002:25 E, Cotonou Harbour. As they boarded the vessel, they commenced firing and injured one of the Benin Navy guard onboard the tanker. All crewmembers except the duty officer on the bridge retreated into the citadel. As the armed persons made their way to the bridge, they fired upon and injured another Navy guard. They took hostage the duty officer and demanded that the Master, chief officer and chief engineer come on the bridge. The armed persons demanded that the Master heave up anchor, however when they were notified that the tanker was in ballast they stole crew properties, kidnapped the Master and one engineer and left the vessel in the tanker's lifeboat. The Benin Navy was notified to medevac the injured guards. Once the armed persons were safely ashore, they released the Master and engineer who were able to make contact with the local police and later joined the tanker.

#### KIDNAPPING

- No incidents to report

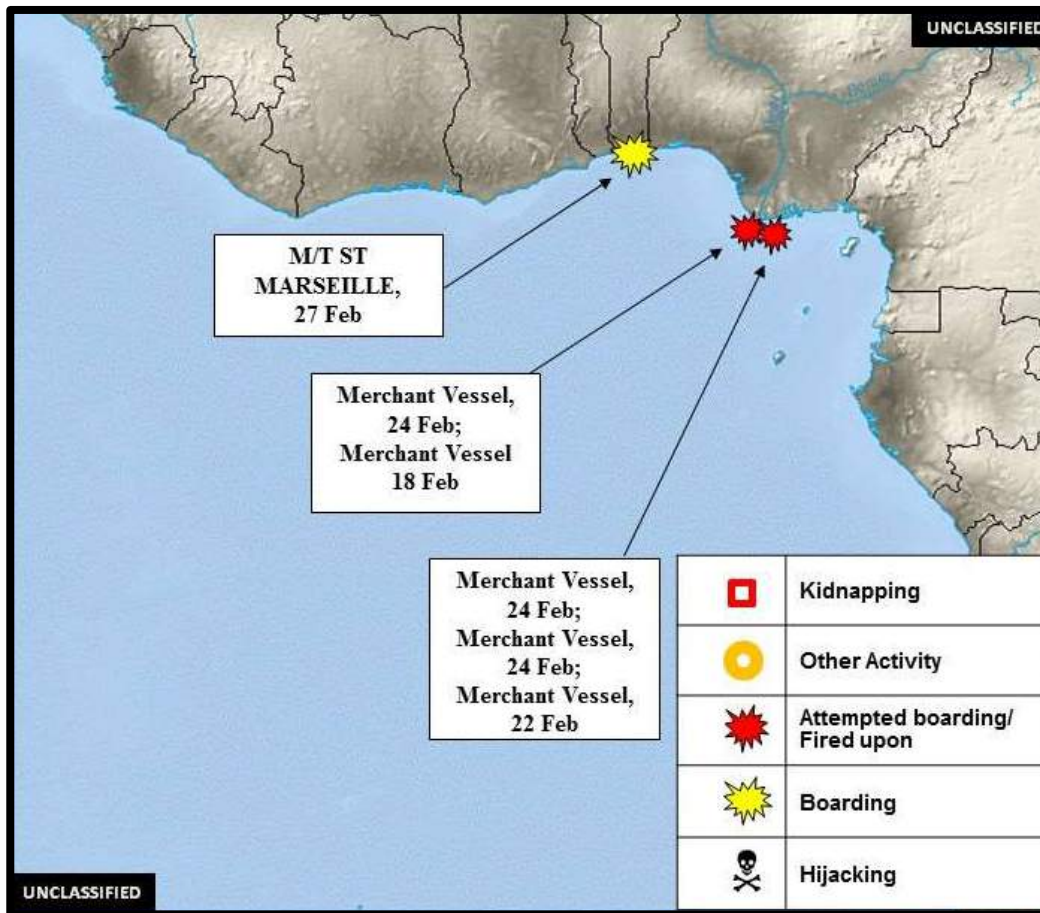
#### SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- 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 1 – 7 MARCH 2018

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

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

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

## SOUTHEAST ASIA



Current Incidents:

3

### 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

- **22 February (Malaysia – Late Report)** – A band of armed men attacked a fishing boat in Segama, Kinabatangan. The State Deputy Police Commissioner disclosed that the armed men were believed to have attempted to kidnap or rob the five fishermen in the boat but failed when they managed to escape. He disclosed “investigations revealed the armed men were from the Philippines based on the location of the incident near the national border with the Philippines.” The spokesman stated that police were in the process of identifying the group.

#### VESSELS BOARDED

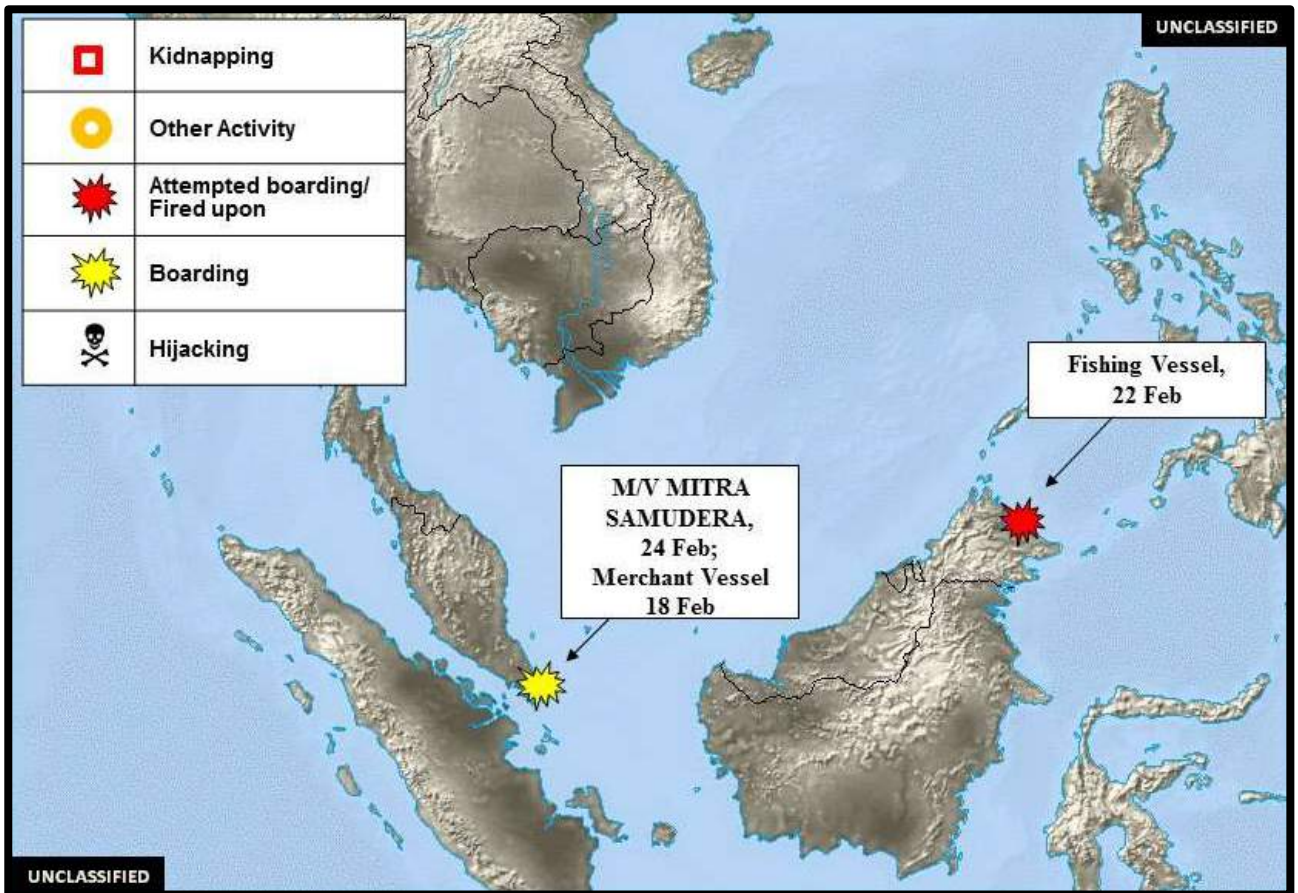
- **24 February (Singapore – Late Report)** – Tug *MIRA SAMUDERA 28* with 11 crewmembers on board, towing an empty barge, was boarded by four armed pirates in Karimun Regency waters, south of Singapore, while en route from Malaysia to south Sumatra after offloading cargo of coal. The crew was robbed, and one crewmembers was seriously wounded during the assault.
- **18 February (Indonesia – Late Report)** – Robbers boarded a tug anchored near position 01:09 N – 103:56 E, 3 nautical miles west of Batu Ampar Port. During routine rounds, the bosun reported the lock to the engine room hatch was broken. Investigations revealed several foot prints on the deck and a large number of spare parts missing.

#### SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- No current incidents to report

#### OTHER ACTIVITY REPORT

- No current incidents to report



**MARITIME REPORTING**

- No incidents to report

**WEATHER FORECAST: SOUTHEAST ASIA****WEATHER FORECAST VALID FROM 1 – 7 MARCH 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.

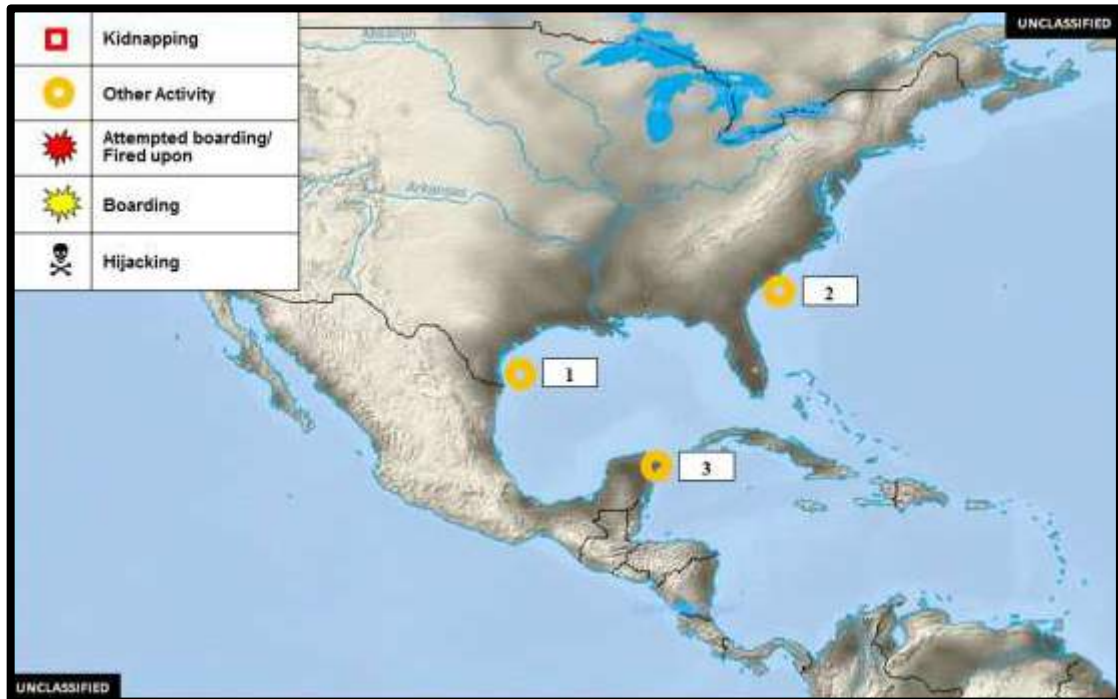
- **Extended Forecast:** Variable winds of 5 – 10 knots and seas of 1 – 2 feet.

**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

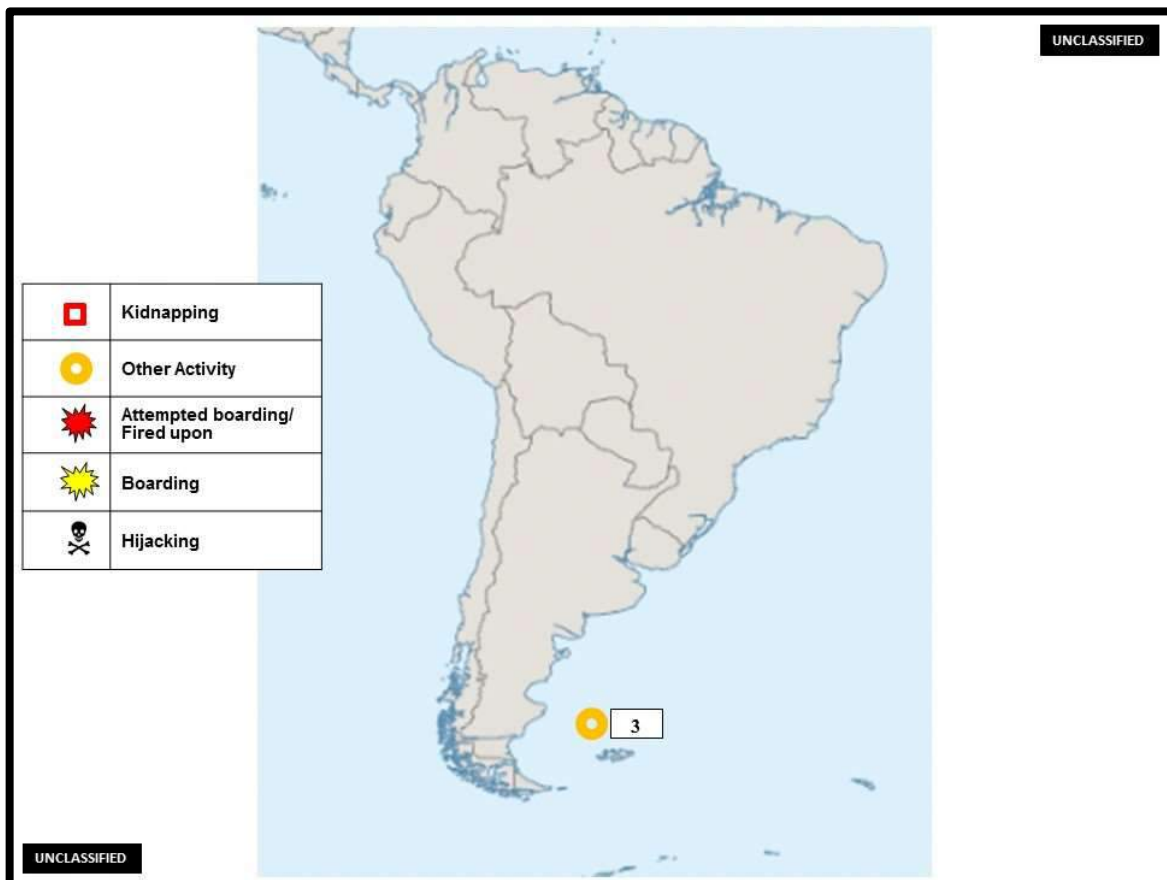
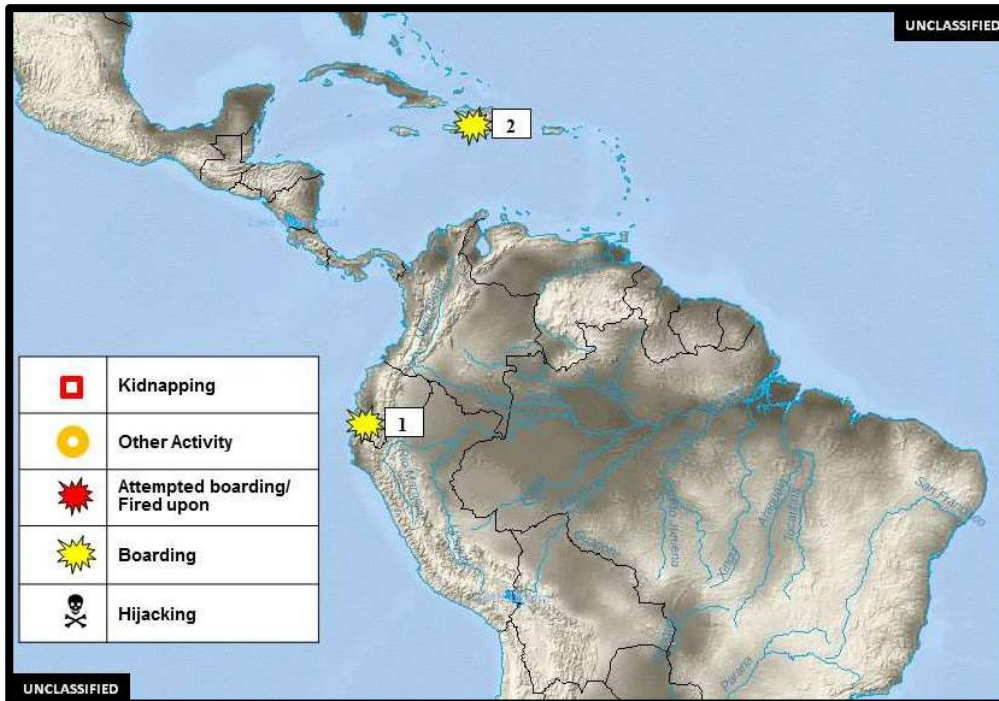
## NORTH AMERICA

Current  
Incidents:

8

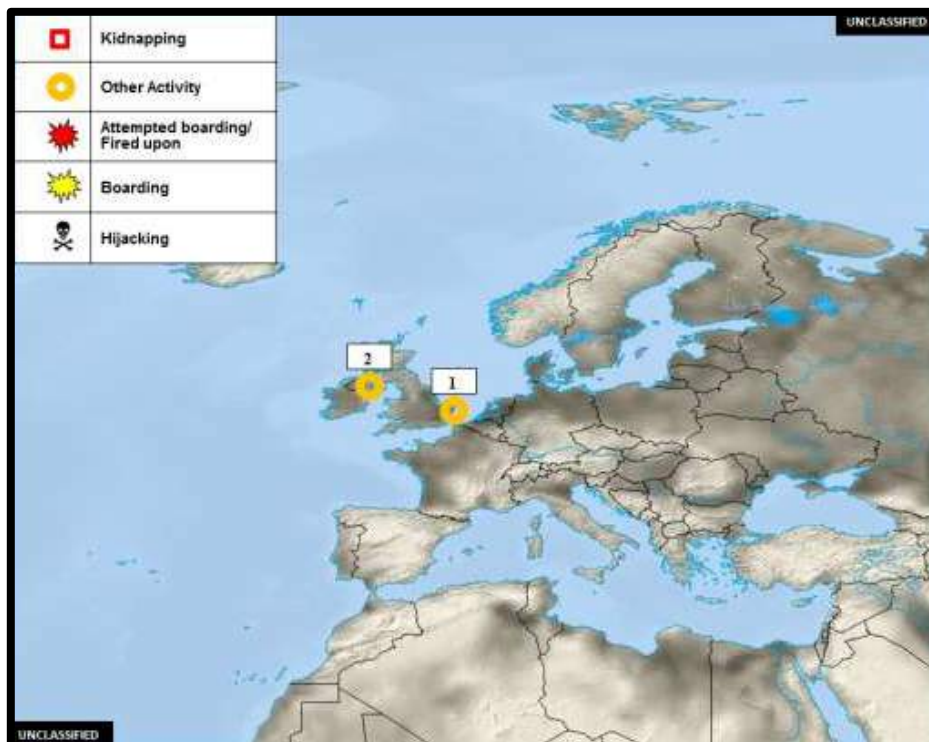
- 24 February (United States – Late Report)** – US Coast Guard (USCG) law enforcement crews interdicted a Mexican lancha boat crew engaged in illegal fishing in federal waters off South Texas. According to USCG, crews stopped one lancha with a total of four Mexican fishermen engaged in illegal fishing. The Coast Guard has reported that the lancha, with fishing gear onboard, was seized and the fishermen were detained.
- 22 February (United States – Late Report)** – Violations were issued east of Cape Romain, South Carolina after the US Coast Guard (USCG) saw the crew of a fishing vessel set and retrieve pots in a prohibited area. The Coast Guard found 800 pounds of illegally caught black sea bass aboard the vessel.
- 21 February (Mexico – Late Report)** – As many as 25 people were injured in an explosion aboard a ferry docked in Playa Del Carmen. Video of the incident shows several people on the dock at the time of the explosion. There were no reported deaths or life-threatening injuries. Twenty Mexicans, three Canadians and two Americans are amongst the injured. The cause of the explosion is under investigation.

CENTRAL AMERICA/CARIBBEAN/SOUTH AMERICA



1. **25 February (Ecuador – Late Report)** – A duty crewman on routine rounds onboard a container ship anchored near position 02:21 S – 079:59 W, Guayaquil Inner Anchorage, saw five robbers on the aft deck. One robber, with a gun, was seen near the entrance to the steering gear room. The crewman retreated and informed the duty officer. The alarm was raised and port control was notified. A coast guard boat was sent the vessel. All crewmembers have been reported safe and nothing was reported stolen.
2. **22 February (Haiti – Late Report)** – A duty crewman on routine rounds onboard a tanker anchored near position 18:34 N – 072:24 W, Port Au Prince Anchorage, saw robbers armed with guns on the forecastle deck and immediately raised the alarm. The crew was mustered. Upon seeing the alerted crewmembers, one of the robbers fired a warning shot and escaped. The crew and vessel have been reported safe. The incident was reported to the local authorities.
3. **22 February (Argentina – Late Report)** – The Argentine Coast Guard opened fire on a Chinese boat caught illegally fishing within Argentina’s exclusive economic zone. The coast guard reported that the boat *JING YUAN 626* was caught sailing within Argentina’s exclusive economic zone along with four other vessels, all bearing Chinese flags. The authorities disclosed that the four vessels attempted to ram into the coast guard’s boat and carried out other manoeuvres putting the Argentine coastguard crew at risk. The fishing vessel’s pursuit lasted almost eight hours in adverse weather conditions before Argentina’s ministry of foreign affairs ordered the coast guard to tend the chase. In 2016, a similar discovery of a Chinese boat illegally fishing in Argentina’s exclusive economic zone ended with the sinking of the Chinese trawler *LU YAN YUAN YU 010*, forcing the crew to abandon ship.

#### ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA





1. **17 February (England – Late Report)** – 5.8 million smuggled cigarettes were seized at Dover’s Eastern Docks. Border Force officers stopped a Polish-registered truck, which had arrived at the Port on a ferry from Calais. Paperwork for the vehicle’s load declared that it was laden with pallets of insulation and “eco wood.” However when a search of the vehicle was carried out, only six pallets were found, along with 24 pallets of cigarettes.
2. **3 February (Ireland – Late Report)** – Authorities in the Port of Belfast seized 8 million smuggled cigarettes destined for sale in the UK. According to Border Force, the cigarettes were hidden on a ship from Singapore. The load was listed as bed linen, but during the search, officers discovered 40 pallets with a total of 800 boxes containing the cigarettes. This is the biggest single seizure of cigarettes at the port in six years.

#### NORTHERN EUROPE/ENGLISH CHANNEL/BALTIC

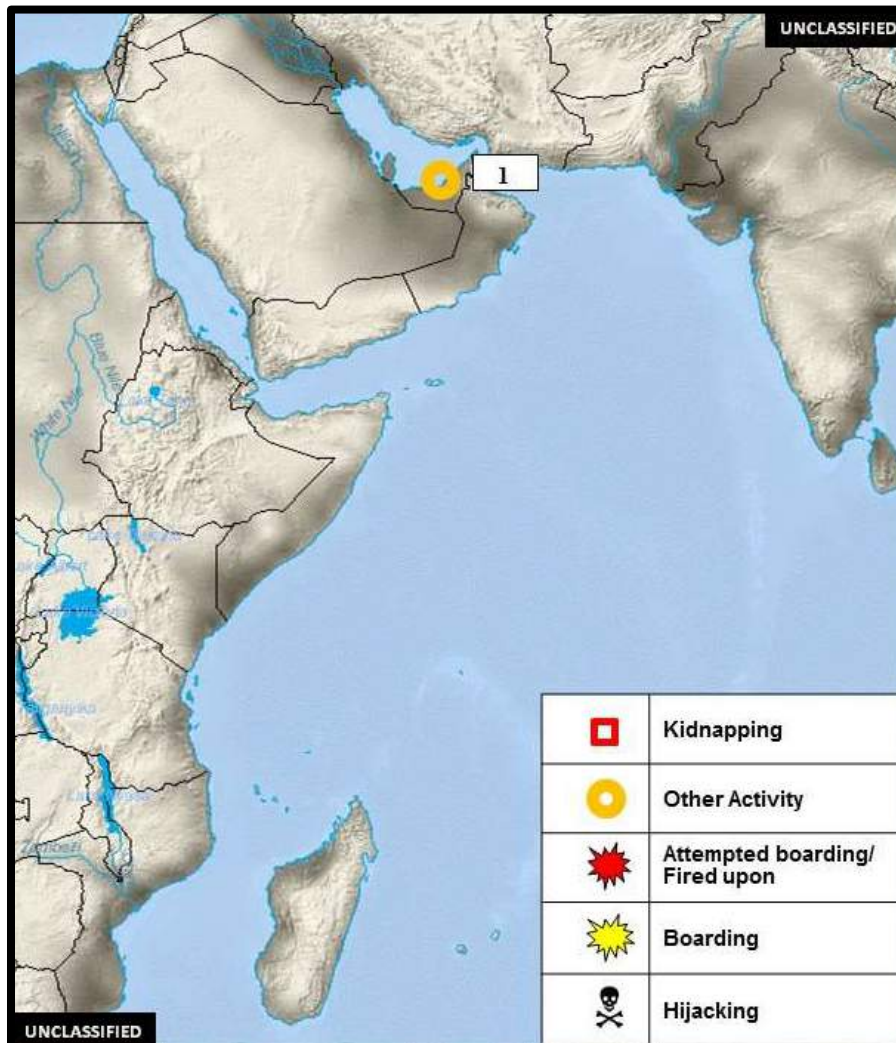
- No current incidents to report

#### MEDITERRANEAN/BLACK SEA



1. **27 February (Gibraltar)** – HM Customs Marine Section assisted Gibraltar Defense police officers seize approximately 150 cartons of smuggled cigarettes and arrested a Spanish national at Western Beach. The individual was arrested when spotted trying to swim across the harbour back to Spain pushing two large bags containing the cigarettes.

## ARABIAN GULF



1. **12 February (Dubai – Late Report)** – Police arrested five individuals who attempted to smuggle a large consignment of drugs hidden in a large drilling machine aboard a ship that arrived at Hamriyah Port. On dismantling the machine, police found huge quantity of pills, 783,800 in number, of three different drugs, concealed inside the cylinder in the front of the machine. In addition to this, 562 plastic bags with a total of 115 kg of captagon pills were found.

## 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

1. **17 February (Australia – Late Report)** – An Indonesian fishing vessel was apprehended approximately 390 nautical miles off the Western Australian Coast by Maritime Border Command (MBC), together with the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA). The vessel was approximately five nautical miles inside the Australian fishing zone. MBC, a multi-agency task force within the Australian Border Force (ABF), was alerted to the presence of the vessel after which it was detected by *HMAS MAITLAND* northwest of Broome on 16 February. *HMAS MAITLAND* was tasked to respond and subsequently intercepted the vessel in the early hours of 17 February. Royal Australian Navy and AFMA personnel boarded the vessel and located 15 crewmembers, 1,100 kilograms of yellowfin tuna and 200 live baitfish.

## MIGRATION



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

*No major incidents reported during this period.*

## SPOTLIGHT ON LIBYA

## PORT STATUS AS OF 4 MARCH 2018

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

## ACTIVITY REPORTING

## KIDNAPPING OF FOREIGNERS WORSENS SECURITY IN SOUTHERN LIBYA

- **3 March** – Rampant kidnapping of foreign workers by multinational criminal gangs has seriously worsened security in southern Libya, said a local security official on Saturday. Brig. Abdul-Qadir Al-Bakush, chief of Ubari Security Directorate, said an unknown armed group kidnapped a Pakistani engineer working in an oil field near the southern Libyan city of Ubari. "The continued kidnappings and absence of official security in the south are due to the lack of government support for the security and military departments as well as some tribal factors," said Ramadan Saleh, the security coordinator in Ubari municipality. "The claim that there are security and military agencies operating is not true, because tribes run things in the south, and this is the imbalance and the basis of the problem," Saleh explained. Ubari, one of the largest southern cities, has a population diversity of Arabs, Tuaregs and Tabus, where armed militants outnumber the police and the army. "The government cannot stand up to them, because fighting them means armed clashes and civil war," the security coordinator noted. Musbah Uheda, a Libyan Parliament member, also believes the absence of the government contributes to the expansion of kidnapping and criminal activities. The southern cities of Libya are increasingly vulnerable to human trafficking and arms and drugs smuggling because of their rugged and vast desert features.

## UN TO REOPEN OFFICE IN BENGHAZI

- **3 March** – The head of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) announced Friday that the mission will reopen an office in the eastern city of Benghazi for the first time in years. "We are preparing to reopen a UN office in Benghazi and I promise you to continue to engage with people and residents of Barqa" in eastern Libyan, Ghassan Salame said during a meeting in Benghazi with more than 60 tribal leaders and elders from eastern Libya. Salame is on a working visit to eastern Libya since Thursday to hold talks with local officials on reconstruction, mine clearance, assistance to displaced people, as well as support from international organizations. The UNSMIL pulled out staff from Libya in July 2014 due to deteriorating security conditions in the country.

## SOUTHERN LIBYA: SIX CIVILIANS KILLED IN CLASHES

- **2 March** – At least six civilians have been killed in clashes between rival tribes in the south of Libya that saw a hospital get hit repeatedly, the United Nations said on Thursday. The violence over the past month in the southern town of Sebha is the latest flare-up in a region regularly wracked by tribal violence. The UN mission in Libya said on Twitter that it was "deeply concerned by the escalation of armed conflict in Libya's Sebha, where at least 6 civilians killed and 9 injured." "The hospital was hit repeatedly. Indiscriminate use of weapons in densely populated areas must be stopped." Twelve people were wounded, including 10 civilians. The latest clashes in the marginalised Fezzan region - known for its smuggling routes - have seen the Awlad Suleiman tribe pitted against the Tubus. Since the 2011 revolution, Fezzan has been embroiled in conflict involving the ethnic Tubus and Tuaregs, as well as two Arab tribes, the Zuwaya and the Awlad Suleiman.

## UN REPORT: EGYPT, UAE HAVE VIOLATED THE ARMS EMBARGO IN SUPPORT OF HAFTAR'S FORCES IN LIBYA.

- **1 March** – Armed groups in Libya are continuing to receive foreign support from nations aiming to steer control of the nation, according to a panel of United Nations experts. A leaked report from the

UN's Libya sanctions committee has once again revealed violations of the arms embargo on Libya, where UN member states are banned from selling or supplying the war-torn country. The United Arab Emirates and Egypt are named in the report, as they have been in the past. The report, which is set to be submitted to the UN Security Council, mentions the repeated air raids by the Egyptian air force on specific oil areas in support of the forces of renegade General Khalifa Haftar. Haftar's Libyan National Army is aligned with the Tobruk-based House of Representatives and refuses to recognise the UN-backed government in Tripoli. The LNA has taken significant ground in eastern and central Libya over the course of the past year, including military bases, cities and oil facilities. The UN has banned the sale of weapons and military support of groups in Libya since 2011. The same UN panel reported in June 2017 that the UAE violated international law by supplying Haftar's forces with attack helicopters and military aircrafts. Pro-Haftar groups have been accused of kidnapping and torturing journalists, activists and religious figures in Eastern Libya.

#### AMERICAN ARRESTED TRYING TO TRAVEL TO LIBYA TO JOIN ISIS

- **27 February** – A California man was arrested overseas on charges of providing material support to terrorists, according to a law enforcement official. Bernard Raymond Augustine, 20, was arrested in Tunisia while in the process of trying to enter Libya to join the Islamic State terrorist group. Augustine was returned to the United States on charges of attempting to provide material support to terrorism and was expected to make his first appearance in federal court in Brooklyn sometime today, the official said. Augustine, who lives Central California farming community of Keyes, just outside of Modesto, was originally arrested in Tunisia 2016 when he arrived on a flight that originated in San Francisco, the official said. Court records show that he told U.S. Customs officials upon departure he was intending to travel to Tunisia for vacation. Someone from Augustine's hometown told authorities, "There was no legitimate reason for Augustine to travel to Tunisia," according to court records. A search of his computer revealed a song that extols ISIS and messages Augustine allegedly sent praising the terror group, the official said.

#### RUSSIA DISTANCES ITSELF FROM SHIP SEIZED BY TUNISIA FOR ITS MILITARY CARGO

**26 February** – A Russian diplomat says the ship held in Tunisia, reportedly with 24 unregistered containers full of military equipment on board, belongs to a Turkish company and has no Russian citizens among its crew members. "This ship belongs to the Turkish company Akdeniz Ro Ro, and on February 15 this year it got into a storm and requested a call to the Tunisian port of Sfax for additional repairs," the diplomat said. Speaking from the Russian embassy in Tunis, the source said the Ural – a Panamanian-flagged cargo ship designed to accommodate drive-off vehicles – was en route from Novorossiysk to the Cameroonian port of Douala with a cargo intended for the authorities of a Central African nation. The ship has been held in Sfax, Tunisia since 16 February, when authorities announced that armoured personnel carriers, military trucks and other unauthorized goods not listed in the bill of lading were found aboard the Ural. The Tunisian customs office detained the ship on suspicion of containing arms or ammunition, and continues a thorough investigation. There's been no public statement as yet from Akdeniz Roro or officials in Turkey.

## 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 JLT

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.

We work with yourselves, our network and the market to deliver a solution which is always tailored to your specific needs and always competitive and comprehensive.

Because of this our clients trust us. They have total confidence that the vital elements of their operations are covered, enabling their businesses to be even more ambitious and surpass expectations. This is why we now place insurance for more than 6,000 vessels, including one third of the world gas fleet and we handle more than USD350m marine insurance premium.

We know how we work makes us different. It's quite a claim but we're driven to deliver on it every single day.

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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.

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

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

### SECURITY CONSULTING

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

### PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Interim security
- Training
- Special assignments

### CRISIS RESPONSE

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

### VIRTUAL SECURITY DIRECTOR SERVICE

- For clients lacking a full-time security executive

References are always available.

More information is found at [www.msrisk.com](http://www.msrisk.com)

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