



UNCLASSIFIED

## (U) **WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report** **3 December 2018 – 2 January 2019**



2 January 2019

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#### 1. (U) **Scope Note**

1. (U) The Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) message provides information on threats to merchant vessels, the shipping industry, and other maritime stakeholders worldwide in the last 30 days. This report is produced primarily to inform merchant mariners and naval forces.

#### 2. (U) **Warnings and Advisories:**

A. (U) **MDAT-GOG WARNING 001/JAN/2019**: Category: Attack. Description: A merchant vessel was attacked in position 05:28N – 002:21E, 55 nm south of Cotonou, Benin, around 0000Z. Mariners are advised to exercise extreme caution in this area. Source: Phone call. Any queries regarding this Warning Notice ring 0033 298 22 88 88 for further information. MDAT-GOG Watchkeeper email: watchkeepers@mdat-gog.org, emergency tel: +33(0) 298 22 88 88.

#### 3. (U) **Summary:**

A. (U) BENIN: On 2 January, pirates attacked a small container ship 55 nm south of Cotonou. Several crewmen were kidnapped.

B. (U) GERMANY: On 1 January, the Dutch Coast Guard issued a navigational warning after an ultra-large containership lost 270 containers in bad weather while underway in the North Sea.

C. (U) MALTA: On 1 January, customs authorities intercepted a shipping container at the Freeport containing 5,020 kilograms of hashish.

D. (U) ENGLAND: On 31 December, a group of 12 Iranian migrants were being interviewed by immigration officials after they came ashore near Lydd-on-Sea, Kent.

E. (U) TUNISIA: On 30 December, customs officers seized 14 hunting rifles at Tunis's La Goulette port.

F. (U) MOROCCO: On 27 December, Morocco's Navy rescued 367 migrants off the country's northern coast.

G. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 27 December, a US Navy Destroyer conducted a flag verification boarding of a dhow in the Gulf of Aden and found 11,000 pounds of hashish.

H. (U) TAIWAN: On 26 December, Pingtung District Prosecutors Office announced that law enforcement officials seized 470 kilograms of heroin being brought on shore.

#### 4. (U) Counter-Piracy and Maritime Crime Announcements

A. (U) GULF OF ADEN: Government of Japan convoy schedule for January 2019. To apply for JMSDF escort, visit [http://www.mlit.go.jp/en/maritime/maritime\\_fr2\\_000000.html](http://www.mlit.go.jp/en/maritime/maritime_fr2_000000.html), please contact directly the Anti-Piracy Contact and Coordination Office, Maritime Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), Japan: Tel: +81-3-5253-8932; Fax: +81-3-5253-1643. Email: INFO-PIRACY@mlit.go.jp (MSCHOA)

B. (U) GULF OF ADEN: China Navy convoy schedule for January 2019. For further information, please email: [planavy@navy.mil.cn](mailto:planavy@navy.mil.cn), or call Tel: 441 221 061 or 00870 773 120 215. (MSCHOA)

C. (U) GULF OF ADEN: South Korea Navy convoy schedule for January 2019. All merchant vessels wishing to join the convoy group must submit their application forms directly to the ROK naval warship carrying out the mission. The ROK MTG can be reached directly at (001)-870-776-444-280 or (001)-870-773-110-438. Email: [choiyoung981@navy.mil.kr](mailto:choiyoung981@navy.mil.kr) or [kes0539@hanmail.net](mailto:kes0539@hanmail.net) (MSCHOA)

#### 5. (U) Details: Monthly Incidents by Region

(U) This section lists reports of active violence against shipping, credible threats to shipping, or the potential for a situation to develop into a direct threat to shipping over the last 30 days. Every effort is made to ensure that incidents are not double-counted. In the event double-counting is detected, or an incident is later found to be different than initially reported, an explanation of the cancellation of the inaccurate report will be made in at least one message prior to dropping the erroneous report.

**A. (U) NORTH AMERICA:** No current incidents to report.

**B. (U) CENTRAL AMERICA - CARIBBEAN - SOUTH AMERICA:**

1. (U) U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS: On 21 December, a dinghy and outboard motor were stolen from a sailing yacht anchored in Elephant Bay. ([www.safetyandsecuritynet.org](http://www.safetyandsecuritynet.org))

2. (U) ANTIGUA: On 20 December, robbers boarded a sailing yacht anchored in St. John's Harbor. They ransacked the cabin stole cash and personal property. ([www.safetyandsecuritynet.org](http://www.safetyandsecuritynet.org))

3. (U) U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS: On 15 December, a dinghy and outboard motor were stolen from a sailing yacht anchored in Elephant Bay. ([www.safetyandsecuritynet.org](http://www.safetyandsecuritynet.org))

4. (U) VENEZUELA: On 14 December, four robbers boarded a crude oil tanker anchored near position 10:11N - 064:46W, Puerto Jose Anchorage. At daybreak crew searched the entire tanker. Nothing reported as stolen. Incident reported to port

authorities through agent. Port authorities sent a patrol boat to carry out a search of the surrounding waters. (IMB)

5. (U) PUERTO RICO: On 10 December, a speedboat that sailed without lights through the waters of the Caribbean was spotted by the crew of a US Coast Guard plane 65 miles north of San Juan, Puerto Rico, and when they managed to intercept it, it was carrying 2,606 pounds of cocaine. The Coast Guard reported that it intercepted the boat after 10 hours of chase in rough seas. ([www.maritimeherald.com](http://www.maritimeherald.com))

6. (U) GUATEMALA: On 7 December, robbers stole dinghy fuel tank, fuel line, spotlight and other gear from a sailing yacht anchored in Rio Dulce. ([www.safetyandsecuritynet.org](http://www.safetyandsecuritynet.org))

8. (U) COSTA RICA: On 5 December, authorities announced a joint patrol operations of the Costa Rican Coast Guard Service and the U.S. Coast Guard resulted in the arrest of four people who were transporting 1.5 tons of cocaine aboard a vessel intercepted 53 nautical miles from Punta Burica in the South Zone. The vessel, MIRIAM V, was taken to the port of Golfito in Puntarenas for further inspection. ([www.news.co.cr](http://www.news.co.cr))

9. (U) U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS: On 5 December, robbers stole an in-the-water 10' flex boat with 18-HP outboard from a yacht anchored in Elephant Bay. ([www.safetyandsecuritynet.org](http://www.safetyandsecuritynet.org))

**C. (U) ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA:**

1. (U) PORTUGAL: On 12 November, the 20-meter schooner S/V KLEEN BREEZE was hijacked from anchorage at Culatra. The incident was reported to the Maritime Police. ([www.noonsite.com](http://www.noonsite.com))

2. (U) PORTUGAL: On 10 December, authorities in Lisbon announced the arrest of two senior citizens on suspicion of cocaine smuggling. The drugs were found during a search of the couple's cabin on a cruise ship returning from the Caribbean. ([www.dailystar.com.uk](http://www.dailystar.com.uk))

## D. (U) NORTHERN EUROPE - BALTIC:

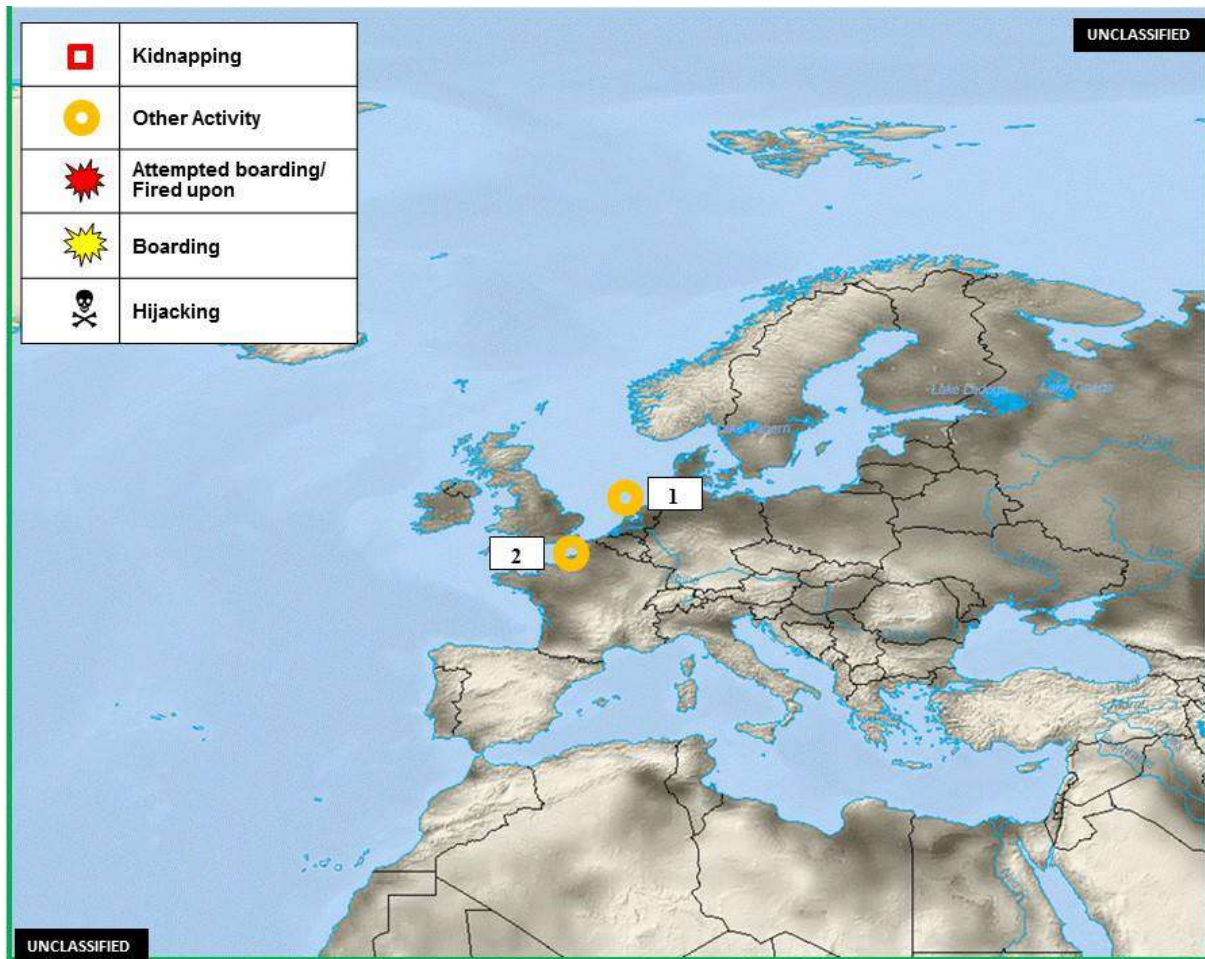


Figure 1. Northern Europe - Baltic Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) GERMANY: On 1 January, the Dutch Coast Guard issued a navigational warning after the Panama-flagged ultra large containership M/V MSC ZOE lost scores of containers while underway in heavy seas between Vlieland, Netherlands and the German Bight in the southeastern North Sea. The Coast Guard initially reported about 30 containers lost. However, an update stated that 270 containers went overboard. The contents of the lost containers have not been confirmed, but at least three are reported to contain hazardous materials. The Coast Guard is warning the public not to handle or approach any of the containers. ([www.gcaptain.com](http://www.gcaptain.com))

2. (U) ENGLAND: On 31 December, a group of 12 people, including a 10-year-old child, were being interviewed by immigration officials after they came ashore near Lydd-on-Sea, Kent. The people are believed to be from Iran. They were given a medical assessment before their transfer to Immigration authorities. ([www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com))

3.(U) ENGLAND: On 21 December, four stowaways, believed to be Nigerian, were taken into custody by authorities after they attempted to force the bridge crew of the M/V GRANDE TEMA to maneuver closer to the coast line in the Thames Estuary. They used iron bars in the attempt. UK Special Boat Service (SBS) operatives from Sabre Squadron fast-roped from helicopters on to the ship. They stowaways were then turned over to Immigration authorities. ([wwwgcaptain.com](http://www.gcaptain.com); [www.news.sky.com](http://www.news.sky.com))

4. (U) NETHERLANDS: On 12 December, authorities in Rotterdam announced the seizure of 1,188 kilograms of cocaine in a shipping container carrying 35 tons of avocados from Colombia. ([www.freshfruitportal.com](http://www.freshfruitportal.com))

## E. (U) MEDITERRANEAN - BLACK SEA:

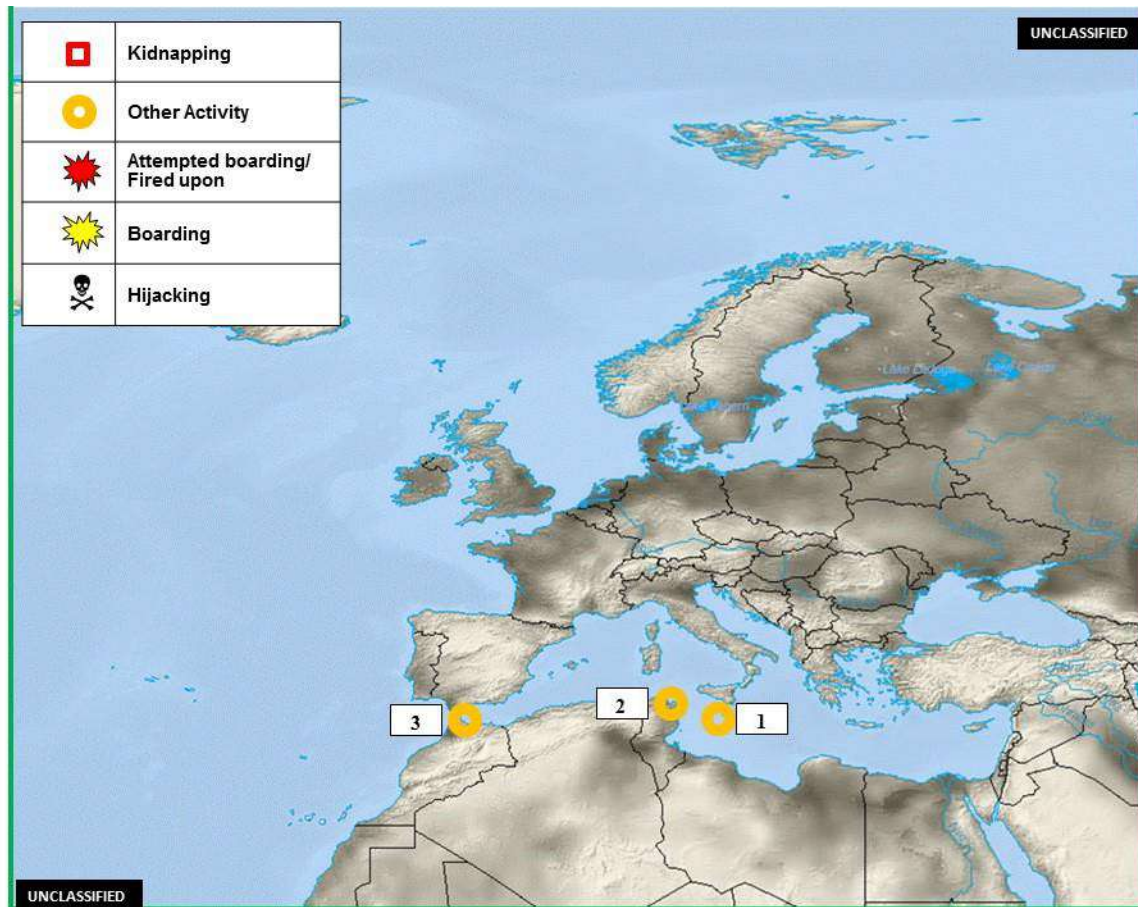


Figure 2. Mediterranean – Black Sea Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) MALTA: On 1 January, customs authorities intercepted a shipping container at the Freeport. During an initial scan of the container, officials found discrepancies, which led to a physical search of the container. 5,020 kilograms of hashish was found among the cargo of agricultural plastic sheets. ([www.timesofmalta.com](http://www.timesofmalta.com))

2. (U) TUNISIA: On 30 December, 2018, customs officers seized 14 hunting rifles at Tunis's La Goulette port. The weapons were seized aboard a vehicle belonging to a Tunisian national. ([www.pvilttd.com](http://www.pvilttd.com))

3. (U) MOROCCO: On 27 December, 2018, the Moroccan Navy rescued 367 migrants off the country's northern coast. The mostly sub-Saharan migrants had been trying to reach Spain when their vessels ran into trouble at sea. ([www.pvilttd.com](http://www.pvilttd.com))

4. (U) BULGARIA: On 22 December, armed men boarded the Libya-flagged tanker BADR in the port of Burgas. The armed men assaulted several crewmembers and forced the crew off the ship. The ship had reportedly been detained in port because of an ongoing commercial dispute. ([www.fleetmon.com](http://www.fleetmon.com); [www.tankershipping.com](http://www.tankershipping.com))

5. (U) GREECE: On 6 December, Coast Guard officials intercepted a Syria-flagged ship and took it to Ierapetra, southeast of Crete, on suspicion of carrying illegal cargo. ([www.fleetmon.com](http://www.fleetmon.com))

## F. (U) WEST AFRICA:

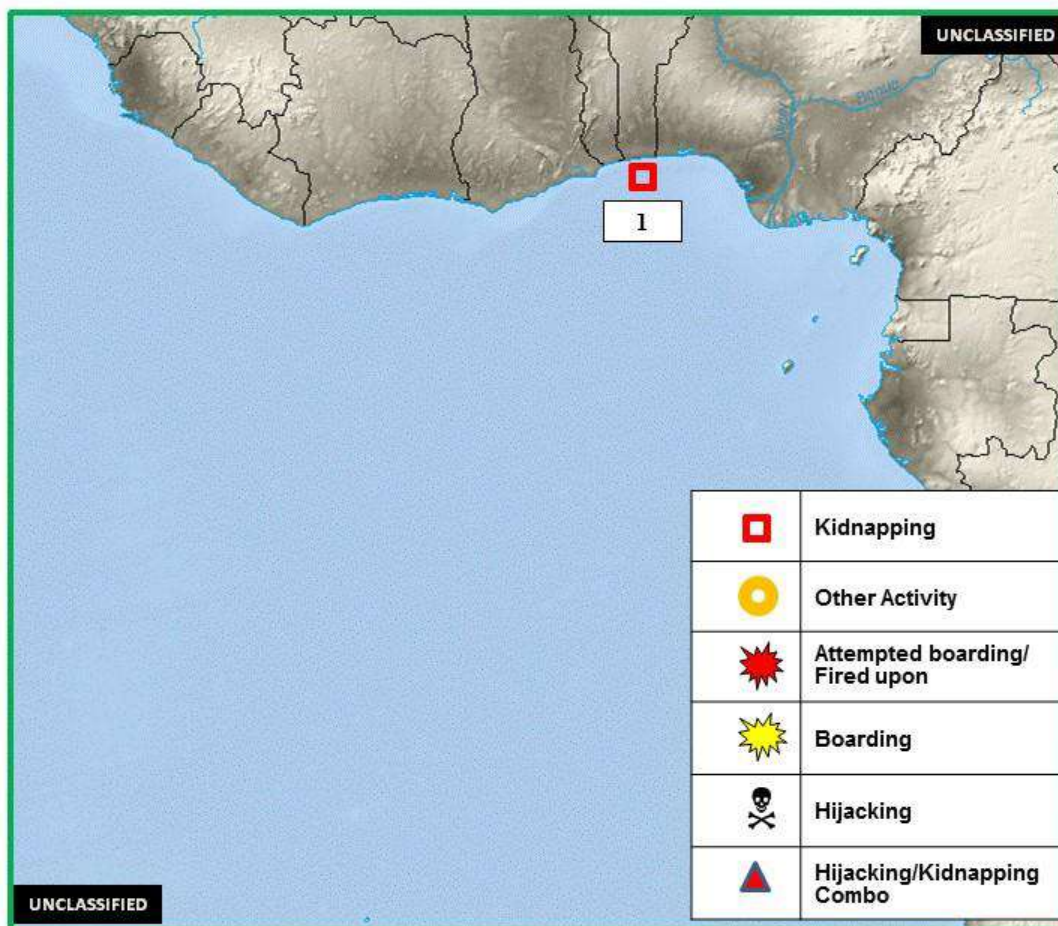


Figure 3. West Africa Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) BENIN: On 2 January, 2019, pirates attacked a small container ship near position 05:28N – 002:21E, 55 nm south of Cotonou. Several crewmen were reportedly kidnapped. The ship is owned by the Mediterranean Shipping Company. (MDAT-GOG; [www.pvilttd.com](http://www.pvilttd.com))

2. (U) REPUBLIC OF CONGO: On 22 December, four armed robbers boarded an anchored container ship via the anchor chain near position 04:44S – 011:45E, Pointe Noire Anchorage. The general alarm was raised, crew was mustered in citadel and rocket flares were fired. The robbers escaped. Upon investigation, ship's stores were reported stolen. Incident reported to Pointe Noire Port Control via VHF. (IMB)

3. (U) NIGERIA: On 18 December, press reported 11 abducted crew from M/V POMERENIA SKY were released. Pirates kidnapped the men on 27 October. ([www.swinoujskie.info](http://www.swinoujskie.info); [www.gcaptain.com](http://www.gcaptain.com))

4. (U) NIGERIA: On 14 December, a tanker was attacked by armed pirates near position 04:05N - 004:43E, 62 nm southwest of Bayelsa. All crew took shelter in the citadel and the armed security team onboard repelled the attack. Vessel and crew are safe. (IMB)

5. (U) NIGERIA: On 4 December, the offshore supply vessel SAAVEDRA TIDE was attacked near position 03:08N - 006:20E, 22.5 nm west-northwest of the EGINA Floating Production and Offloading Vessel (FPSO). SAAVEDRA TIDE was on its way from the Abo oil field to the EGINA FPSO. The vessel and crew are now safe. (MDAT-GoG; [www.offshoreenergytoday.com](http://www.offshoreenergytoday.com))

6. (U) NIGERIA: On 3 December, a duty crewman on anti-piracy watch onboard a product tanker anchored in Lagos Anchorage reported that he could hear the outboard motor of an unlit boat approaching. Duty officer raised the alarm, made PA announcement and blew the ship's horn. Hearing the alarm, the boat moved away. (IMB)

#### G. (U) ARABIAN GULF:

1. (U) ARABIAN GULF: On 24 December, the Royal Navy announced that HMS DRAGON conducted boardings of two dhows in a two-day period which yielded a total of 10 tons of hashish. (www.maritime-executive.com)

#### H. (U) INDIAN OCEAN - EAST AFRICA - RED SEA:

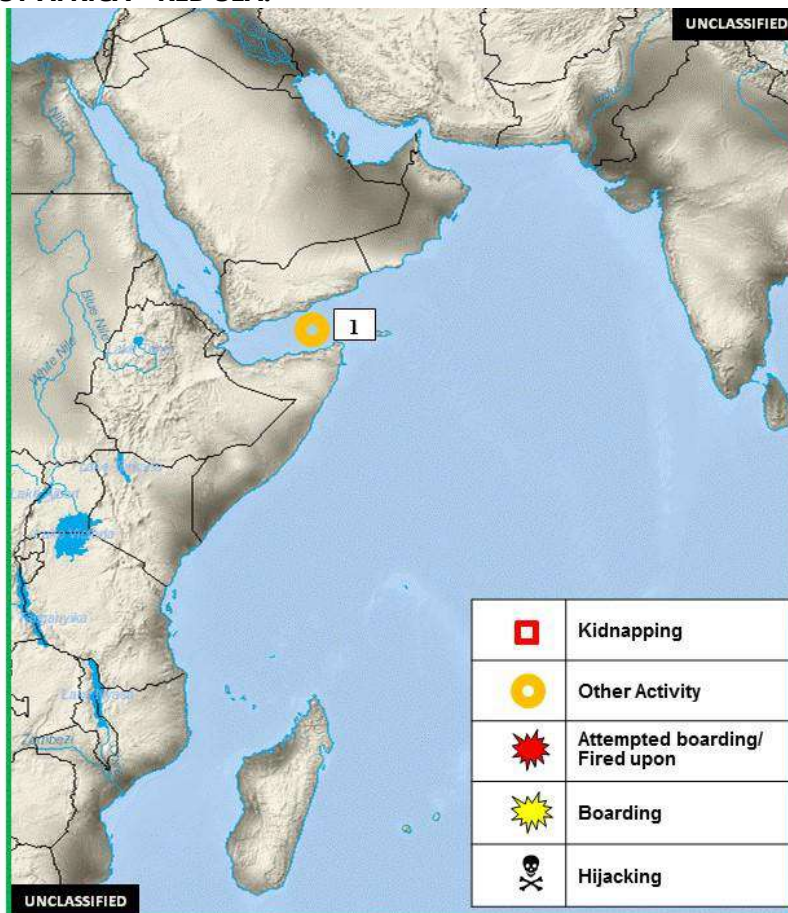


Figure 4. Indian Ocean – East Africa- Red Sea  
Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 27 December, a US Navy destroyer conducted a flag verification boarding of a dhow in the Gulf of Aden. The vessel was determined to be stateless. During the search, over 11,000 pounds of hashish were discovered. (www.marinelink.com; U.S. Naval Forces Central Command)

2. (U) MADAGASCAR: On 18 December, authorities boarded the general cargo ship M/V FLYING in Antongil Bay on suspicion of rosewood smuggling. (www.fleetmon.com)

3. (U) RED SEA: On 13 December, a merchant vessel reported a suspicious approach by a large number of skiffs near position 11:57N - 045:00E, 48 nm south-southeast of Aden, Yemen. The embarked security team fired warning shots. (UKMTO)

4. (U) INDIAN OCEAN: On 7 December, Indian Navy ship INS SUNAYNA boarded and searched a suspicious fishing vessel, approximately 25 nm off the coast of Somalia, in the vicinity of Socotra Island. According to an Indian navy spokesperson, during the search of the ship, it was found that the vessel was engaged in illegal fishing in the area and was also in possession of four AK-47s and one light machine gun, along with ammunition for these weapons. The vessel was thoroughly searched and allowed to proceed, after confiscation of the arms and ammunition, to prevent their illegal use later by the crew for piracy-related activities. ([www.sgardian.com](http://www.sgardian.com))

5. (U) PAKISTAN: On 26 November, authorities announced that during a joint maritime operation in Ormara town in Gwadar District in Balochistan, the Pakistan Navy and the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) captured approximately 1500 kilograms of hashish. ([www.dunyanews.tv](http://www.dunyanews.tv))

**I. (U) EAST ASIA - SOUTHEAST ASIA - INDIAN SUBCONTINENT:**

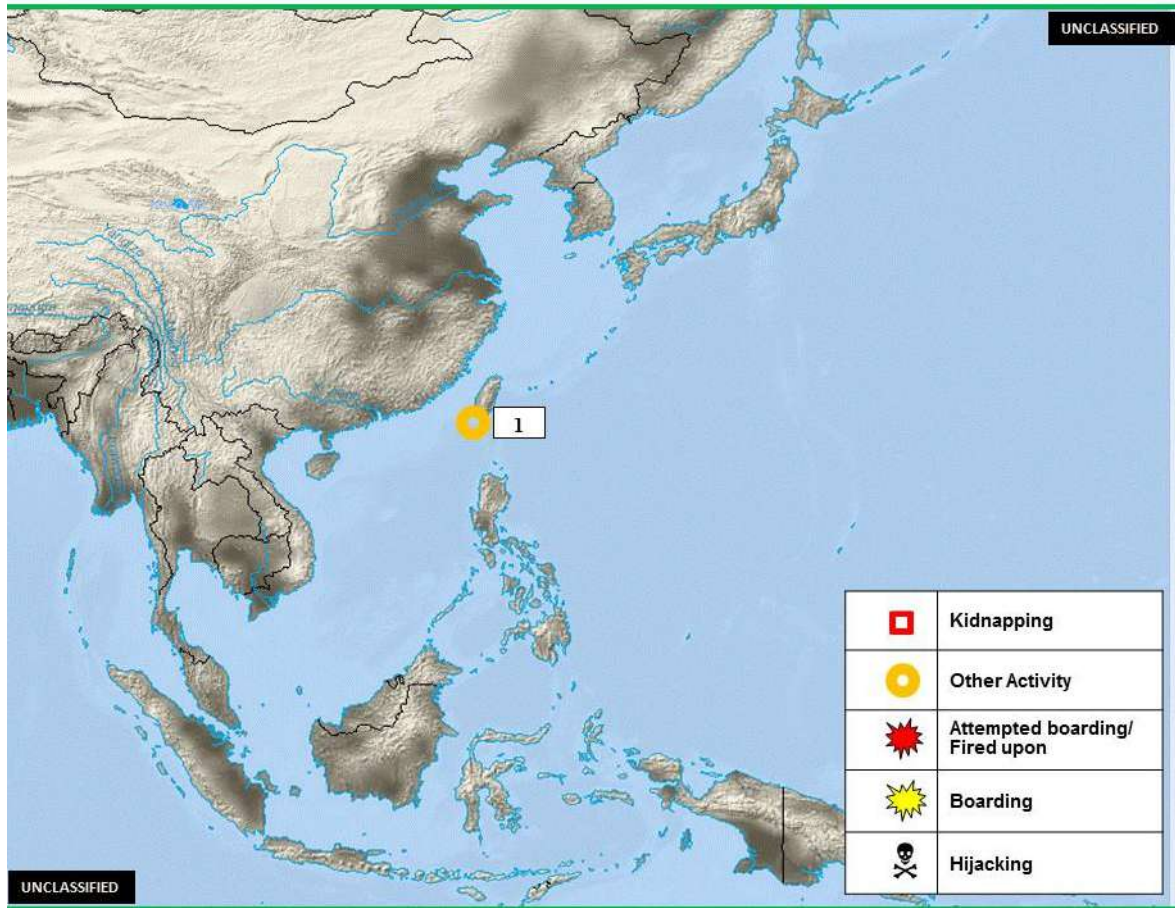


Figure 5. East Asia - Southeast Asia - Indian Subcontinent Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) TAIWAN: On 26 December, 2018, Pingtung District Prosecutors Office announced that law enforcement officials seized 470 kilograms of heroin. Prosecutors said the shipment came from Southeast Asia on fishing vessels, transferred to smaller dinghies and then brought in by smugglers with wetsuits and flippers. Ten people, including two minors, were arrested in the operation. ([www.channelnewsasia.com](http://www.channelnewsasia.com))

2. (U) THAILAND: On 13 December, robbers boarded a sailing yacht anchored in Ko Panyi, Phang Nga Province, near position 08:21N – 098:29E. A cellular phone and a substantial amount of cash were stolen. Report made to local authorities. ([www.noonsite.com](http://www.noonsite.com))



3. (U) VIETNAM: On 10 December, during routine security rounds, a duty crew onboard an anchored bulk carrier noticed robbers armed with knives and bamboo stick on the forward deck. The ship was anchored near position 20:55N - 107:17E, Campha Anchorage. Duty officer was notified, alarm was raised and crew was mustered. Seeing the crew's alertness, the robbers escaped in a wooden boat. Upon investigation, ship's stores were reported stolen. Local agents and authorities informed. (IMB)

4. (U) INDONESIA: On 10 December, a duty watchman onboard a container vessel anchored near position 06:00S - 106:54E, Tanjung Priok Anchorage Area 'ECHO,' saw three robbers on the aft deck. Duty officer notified. Alarm was raised, announcement on PA system made and all crew mustered on the bridge. Master contacted the pilot station and agents. Authorities boarded the vessel to render assistance and investigate. (IMB)

5. (U) MALAYSIA: On 5 December, police forces discovered a fishing boat drifting without any occupants, left with its engine running near position 05:38N - 118:57E, in the vicinity of Tambisan, Lahad Datu, Sabah. A police spokesman later stated that the boat skipper called his wife and said he and two others had been kidnapped and taken to a location in the Philippines which he could not reveal. When the boat was found, police were in the area investigating an earlier incident where another fishing boat was attacked and the crew managed to fight their attackers using a flare gun. (ReCAAP; IMB; www.hellenicshippingnews.com; www.maritime-executive.com)

6. (U) MALAYSIA: On 5 December, four armed men boarded a tugboat at Pegasus Reef near Pulau Tambisan in Lahad Datu. The men fled in a four-engine speedboat after the shooting. The police were also investigating claims that the same men had attacked another boat with several crew members onboard, not far from the first incident, after boarding the tugboat. Police are also trying to ascertain if anyone was harmed or taken hostage from the second boat. (www.freemalaysiatoday.com)

7. (U) INDONESIA: On 3 December, three robbers armed with guns and knives boarded an LPG tanker anchored near position 05:52S - 106:04E, Merak Anchorage. The robbers took hostage two crew members and tied them up. They then entered the engine room, stole engine spare parts and escaped. (IMB)

**J. (U) NORTHEAST ASIA:** No current incidents to report.

**K. (U) AUSTRALIA - NEW ZEALAND - PACIFIC OCEAN AREA:** No current incidents to report.

## **6. (U) Appendix A: Further Contact Information and Resources**

(U) This appendix provides contact information for the author of the WTS as well as other entities that can be contacted with maritime crime reports. It also lists other resources where the WTS is posted and where piracy and maritime crime incident information can be found.

### **(U) Contact**

(U) Originator of this WTS report requests consumer feedback. Originator will incorporate all anti-shipping events and violence against the maritime industry into this weekly message where appropriate. To aid in our reporting, please add the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) to your normal corporate and organizational reporting requirements. The 24-hour watch can be reached at +1 (301) 669-4053.

### **(U) Other Resources**

(U) This Worldwide Threat to Shipping Report is posted at the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency's Maritime Safety site: <http://msi.nga.mil/NGAPortal/MSI.portal>. The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) also publishes a live piracy report based on reporting from the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, listing all piracy and armed robbery incidents in the last ten days: <http://www.icc-ccs.org/>. The PAWW and WTS reports are posted

weekly on the ONI Intel Portal: [http://www.oni.navy.mil/Intelligence\\_Community/piracy.htm](http://www.oni.navy.mil/Intelligence_Community/piracy.htm)

## 7. (U) Appendix B: Terminology and References

(U) This appendix is provided to promote consistent use of accurate terms of reference in reporting and also identifies those references that were used to gather the information contained in this report. ONI welcomes comment and suggestions for addition or amendment.

### (U) Terminology

(U) In order to promote consistent use of accurate terms of reference, the following have been adopted to describe the range of criminal anti-shipping activity and impediments to safe navigation in our worldwide reporting and analysis. Please note that these terms relate to observable activity and are independent of target vessel status and exclude actions by governmental powers in lawful pursuit of their authorities:

**(U) Attempted Boarding** – Close approach or hull-to-hull contact with report that boarding paraphernalia were employed or visible in the approaching boat.

**(U) Blocking** – Hampering safe navigation, docking, or undocking of a vessel as a means of protest.

**(U) Boarding** – Unauthorized embarkation of a vessel by persons not part of its complement without successfully taking control of the vessel.

**(U) Fired Upon** – Weapons discharged at or toward a vessel.

**(U) Hijacking** – Unauthorized seizure and retention of a vessel by persons not part of its complement.

**(U) Kidnapping** – Unauthorized forcible removal of persons belonging to the vessel from it.

**(U) Robbery** – Theft from a vessel or from persons aboard the vessel.

**(U) Suspicious Approach** – All other unexplained activity in close proximity of an unknown vessel.

### (U) Sourcing

(U) ONI derives information in this report from direct reporting and analysis of reports from the following agencies and commercial sources.

- Agence France Presse (AFP)
- Associated Press (AP)
- BBC News
- DNK Intelligence & Operations Centre (DNK IOC)
- EU Naval Forces (EU)
- International Maritime Bureau (IMB), London and Kuala Lumpur
- International Maritime Organization (IMO), London
- Lloyd's
- Maritime Administration (MARAD), U.S.
- Maritime Security Centre - Horn of Africa (MSCHOA)
- Marine Domain Awareness for Trade - Gulf of Guinea (MDAT-GoG)
- National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), Navigation Safety System

- Noonsite.com (Noonsite), website
- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC)
- Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia, Information Sharing Center (ReCAAP ISC)
- Reuters
- Royal Australian Navy (RAN)
- Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN)
- The Maritime Executive (website)
- United Kingdom Maritime Trade Organization (UKMTO)
- United Press International (UPI)
- U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)

**(U) ICOD:** 26 December 2018

(U) The PAWW and WTS reports are posted each week on the ONI Intel Portal and can be found at:  
<http://www.oni.navy.mil/Intelligence-Community/Piracy>