

Weekly Security & Risk Report

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MAKING THE
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MARITIME SECURITY PHYSICAL AND ASSET SECURITY RISK CONSULTING SECURITY SYSTEMS



T +44 (0) 1279 216726 E operations@mast-security.com W mast-security.com

Maritime Asset Security and Training (MAST) Ltd Thremhall Park, Start Hill, Bishops Stortford, Herts. CM22 7WE

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Issue 270 of the series reviews, analyses and threat assesses the fragile and conflict affected coastal states Libya, Somalia and Yemen. The Mediterranean migrant crisis, incidents affecting maritime security and influencing maritime news are also reported and analysed, focusing on the keys theatres of maritime instability.

Coronavirus Port and Terminal Restrictions

The situation remains extremely fluid. For the most recent updates on closures and re-openings, MAST Security recommends using the Wilhemsen Covid-19 Global Port Restrictions Map. [Please Click Here](#) to visit their site.

The Security and Risk Report Series focuses on:

- Operational risks in areas of instability which could affect the safety of commercial and private vessels and personnel ashore and at sea.
- In country reporting on key countries where civil conflict are directly impacting on maritime operations; and
- Reporting and analysis of incidents of terrorism, piracy and other related criminal activity.

MAST has a global reach and presence, delivering first hand, accurate and exclusive intelligence. MAST is entrenched and committed in continuing to support and promote the awareness of the very real risks that seafarers and other stakeholders face.

This Intelligence Report Series is a brief snapshot of MAST's Intelligence capabilities. MAST Intelligence specialises in providing clients with a suite of products and services, including; political and economic risk analysis, detailed port and vessel security briefs, vessel passage plans, threat and risk mitigation and travel risk management.

Working closely in conjunction with a host of experts, MAST Intelligence offers a market leading service pertaining to all maritime affairs.

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Editor: David Rider
www.mast-security.com

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Gulf of Guinea

Family members of 11 passengers abducted on Feb. 23rd by gunmen, suspected to be sea pirates from a passenger boat conveying them from the Bille Jetty in Port Harcourt to Bonny Island are becoming increasingly worried over lack of information on their whereabouts. Stakeholders in maritime business in Rivers State, are also expressing fears over lack of information or contact from the abductors of the passengers and inability of the police to rescue the abductees.

Incidents:

1. Unnoticed, robbers boarded an anchored France-flagged supply ship. The theft was noticed by the duty AB during routine rounds at 0230 UTC in position 08:45.12S - 013:17.08E, Luanda Anchorage, Angola. The crew conducted a search and reported ship's properties stolen. Incident reported to local port authorities. exported (IMB) 26th Feb.

Vessel attack 'fabricated' to mask security lapse

A private maritime security company falsely claimed two Nigerian Navy guards had been killed in a pirate attack on Feb. 24th off Brass, Nigeria in an apparent attempt to cover up its failure to show up for a security escort job, Lloyd's List reported on Mar. 1st.

Piracy Worsens Despite 120% Surge in Naval Budget

Nigeria's maritime environment is adjudged the world's most turbulent waters worldwide, according to an International Maritime Bureau (IMB) report analysed by THISDAY. This is despite, a 121% increase in budgetary allocation between 2011 and 2020 to the Nigerian Navy, an arm of the Nigeria Armed Forces, mandated under Section 214 of the 1999 Constitution to protect and secure Nigeria's territorial and international waters.

Secure Anchorage Area: Navy, NIMASA intensify efforts

The Nigerian Navy and Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) are intensifying efforts to protect, interdict, and deter threats around vessels anchored in the Secure Anchorage Area (SAA), off the coast of Lagos. Director General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, announced this in Lagos during a courtesy visit by the Shipping Association of Nigeria (SAN).

Nigerian Navy about to receive more C-Falcon interceptors

The Nigerian Navy will soon take delivery of another two C-

Falcon interceptors from France's Ocea. At the beginning of February, Mer et Marine reported that Ocea had completed another two C-Falcons (P273 and P274) and these would be delivered imminently. The first two of four ordered in 2018 by Nigeria (P271 and P272) were delivered at the end of last year along with FPB 110s NNS Sokoto (P193) and NNS Aba (P194).

Nigerian Navy slates consultancy over piracy report

The Nigerian Navy has expressed alarm over "inaccurate and unverified" reports on piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. The statement came after conflicting reports on an alleged attack. The Navy accused a UK security consultancy of reporting that the MV Odianosen had been hijacked. This, the Navy said, "turned out to be false and alarmist". It went on to allege that reports were "a deliberate ongoing effort to discourage maritime traffic as well as heighten freight and insurance cost in the region", Energy Voice reported on Feb. 26th.

To see MAST Services in the region, [please click here](#). And and to read Nigeria's country report, [please click here](#).

Gulf of Guinea Piracy & Maritime Crime Figures:

2021:

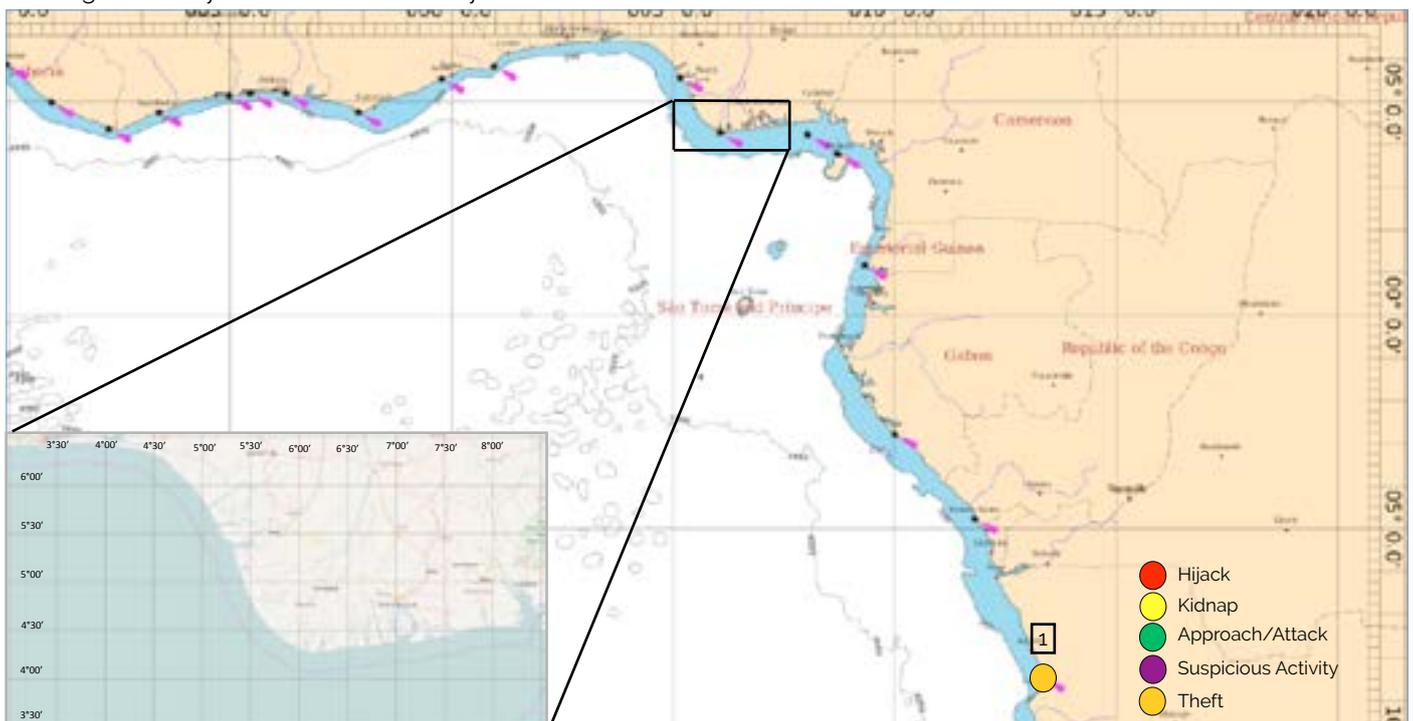
Incidents reported: 14 (MDAT-GoG)
Crew kidnapped: 24 (OCEANUSLive)
Vessels hijacked: 1 (MDAT-GoG)

2020:

Incidents reported: 132 (MDAT-GoG)
Crew Kidnapped: 130 (IMB)
Vessels Hijacked: 3 (IMB)

2019:

Incidents reported: 111 (MDAT-GoG)
Crew kidnapped: 121 (IMB)
Vessels hijacked: 4 (IMB)





Indian Ocean Region

The blast-damaged ro/ro Helios Ray has arrived at Dubai's Port Rashid, awaiting repairs and a thorough examination by security experts. On Feb. 25th, the Bahamian-flagged car carrier Helios Ray was transiting the Gulf of Oman about 45 nm northwest of Muscat when she experienced a series of explosions. The vessel had departed Dammam, Saudi Arabia on Feb. 24th and was bound for Singapore. On Saturday 27th, American defense officials told media that Helios Ray has four blast holes - two on her port side and two on her starboard side, all just above the waterline. The type of weapon and the perpetrator are not yet known.

Incidents:

1. UKMTO has been informed that an MV has experienced an explosion in position 2423N 05833E. Investigations are ongoing. Vessel and crew are safe and proceeding to NPOC. Position: 2423N 05833E (Approximately 44NM North of Muscat). Reported Feb. 25th via UKMTO.

2. Duty officer onboard Singapore-flagged bulk carrier spotted a skiff approaching the ship at 1905 LT in position 13:19N - 042:53E, off Hanish Islands, Red Sea. Ship took evasive measures, switched on lights and sounded horn. Skiff then stopped its pursuit. No crew injuries, and no ship damage. UKMTO informed. Reported (ReCAAP) 19th Feb.

Secretariat for Trilateral National Security Advisors on Maritime Security established

Sri Lanka, India, and Maldives jointly established a trilateral permanent secretariat on Maritime Security Cooperation at the Sri Lanka Navy Headquarters in Colombo Monday Mar. 1st. According to the Navy Commander Vice Admiral Nishantha Ulugetenne, the fully-fledged new Secretariat will be operational 24/7.

Russia warship docks in port Sudan

A Russian warship has entered a port in Sudan where Russia is planning to build a naval base, BBC News reported on March 1st. Russia's Interfax news agency said the Admiral Grigorovich was the first Russian warship to enter Port Sudan. Last November Vladimir Putin approved the creation of a Russian naval facility in Sudan capable of mooring nuclear-powered vessels.

UKMTO urges caution in Strait of Hormuz

UKMTO has issued Notice 008/FEB/2021 to global maritime operators in order to remind mariners and ship operators of the

recommended procedures for transiting the Strait of Hormuz. BMP5 remains the basis for merchant ship conduct, reporting and monitoring in the area. In addition vessels and companies will need to be aware of their own Flag State guidance. All vessels are strongly advised to remain within International Waters and, where practicable, should avoid transiting through Iranian TTW, including the areas claimed by Iran around the islands of:

- Abu Musa 250 52'N 550 02'E
- Greater Tunb 260 15'N 550 16'E
- Lesser Tunb 260 14'N 550 08'E

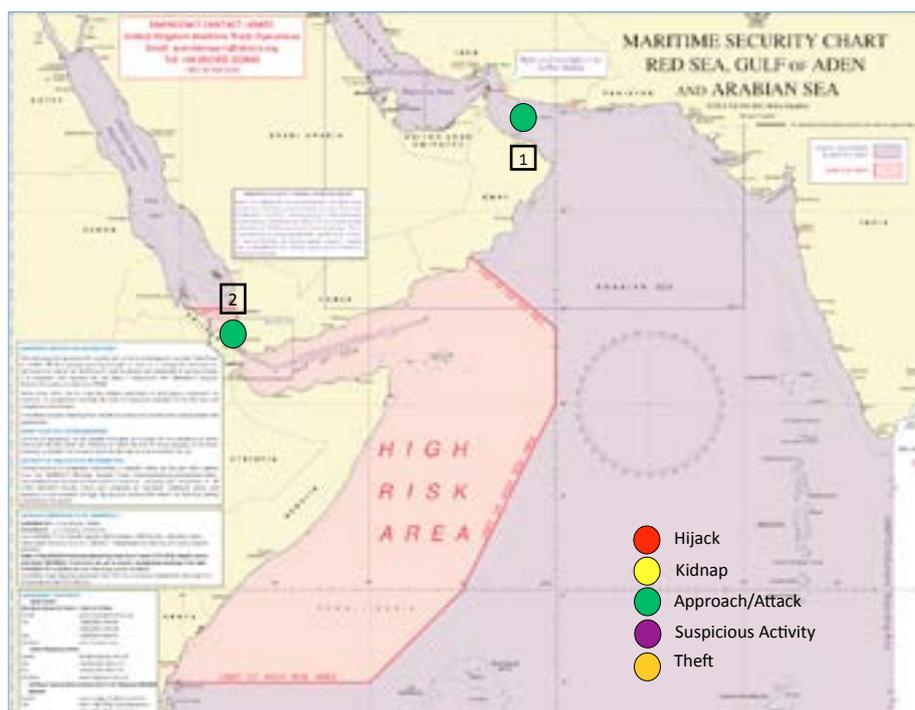
2 US Navy warships in the Middle East affected by coronavirus

Two US Navy warships operating in the Middle East have been affected by the coronavirus, authorities said Friday, with one already at port in Bahrain and another heading there now. A dozen troops aboard the USS San Diego, an amphibious transport dock, tested positive for COVID-19, said Cmdr. Rebecca Rebarich, a spokeswoman for the Bahrain-based 5th Fleet. The ship is at port in Bahrain.

Greece, USA Participate in Joint Naval Exercises in Arabian Gulf

Greece and USA Coast Guard and naval forces conducted joint exercises in the Arabian Gulf on Friday 26th. The U.S. Coast Guard patrol boat USCGC Maui and Greek guided-missile frigate HS Hydra participated in a passing exercise today in the Gulf, one of the busiest waterways in the world.

To see MAST's services in the Indian Ocean Region, [please click here.](#)





Somalia

At least nine Al Shabaab terrorists were killed when the al Qaeda-affiliated terror group mounted an attack on Sunday Feb. 28th morning on an army base in the country's southwest. Mohamed Mukhtar, the district deputy commissioner in the town of Qasahdhere in the Bay region, told local media that the army, backed by Ethiopian forces serving under the African Union peacekeeping mission forces in the Horn of Africa country (AMISOM) killed at least nine terrorists during the attack.

Coronavirus: Deadlier 2nd wave makes face masks mandatory

Somalia on Monday Mar. 1st made face masks mandatory after rise in COVID-19 cases amid a deadlier second wave. Omar Mohamud Mohamed Filish, mayor of Mogadishu, the largest and most populated city in the country, announced the use of face masks in all public places mandatory amid the rising numbers of coronavirus cases and deaths.

Bomb blast targets local district commissioner

A landmine explosion in the Somali capital targeted a local district commissioner in the second bomb blast in Mogadishu city on Sunday Feb. 28th, police said. The roadside mine targeted a convoy carrying Ahmed Abdullahi Aarif, the commissioner of the Yaaqshiid district, while traveling to the Darusalam village area in Mogadishu, local police officer Abdifatah Hassan told Anadolu Agency over the phone. In an earlier incident, two-bodyguards of the SNA deputy chief were killed after a landmine explosion on Abdikassim road in Mogadishu's Hodan region.

UN sanctions 3 top Al Shabaab leaders

Members of the UN Security Council unanimously approved sanctions for three leaders of the Al-Shabaab terror group after the US and Somali governments forwarded them for designation. The resolution slapped penalties on Abukar Ali Adan, Maalim Ayman, and Mahad Karate, allegedly responsible for numerous acts of terrorism in Somalia and in the region.

Somalia's opposition postpones anti-government protests

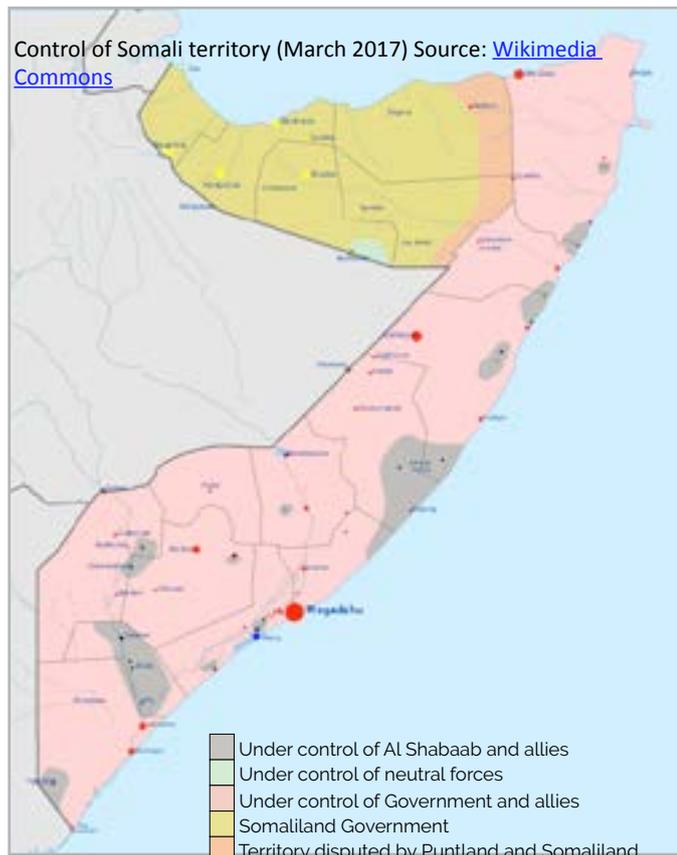
Opposition presidential candidates in Somalia postponed an anti-government protest planned for Friday following a meeting late Thursday with Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble. Opposition leaders threatened demonstrations in response to clashes between government forces and pro-opposition groups in the capital last week in which at least four people were killed. Somalia's civil society and traditional elders also held a mediation process between the two factions.

Scores of Yemeni refugees arrive in Somalia

Yemeni refugees, mostly women and children, arrived in Somalia's coastal city of Bosaso. Somali authorities announced on Wednesday 24th, according to the Yemen Shabab, an independent website. This is the third boatful of Yemeni refugees to arrive in Somalia. It had 164 families on board.

UN extends African Union mission in Somalia

The United Nations Security Council voted on Thursday 25th to renew the mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), a peacekeeping force first deployed in the country in 2007. According to a statement issued by the UK at the United Nations, all UN members unanimously approved to extend the mandate of the mission in the country. The technical rollover resolution reauthorizing deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in its current form until 14 March 2021.



Analysis

The expulsion of Kenyan diplomats has been precipitated by the Kenyan government hosting a visit by the leader of Somaliland. The Somalis are further angered by the possibility that Kenya might also recognise the relatively successful (by comparison to Somalia) Somaliland as an independent state at some point. Of course, picking fights with neighbours is an age old trick by failing leaders down the ages to divert attention from internal failings and the poor performance of the government in the lead up to elections.

Threat Assessment

The political situation has seen increased tension between regional states and the Federal Government. Should this continue, there is an opportunity for criminal organisations to return to their previous maritime activities. Al Shabaab continues to challenge the government and efforts to disrupt its operations continue. The trade in illegal charcoal by terror and crime groups continues, although the Combined Maritime Forces and UN are working on measures to prevent it. Youth unemployment in Somalia has not improved with 67% of Somali male youths aged between 14 to 29 unemployed. Pirate financiers offer lucrative and attractive opportunities, and were seen to be increasingly active in the last inter-monsoon period. Recent incidents off Somalia have highlighted the robust protections offered by both BMP5 and well trained, vigilant armed protection teams. Illegal fishing has returned to the region and there are wider political concerns that it could spark a resurgence in maritime crime unless checked. There is a risk that complacency in some quarters has seen a reduction in PMSC presence in these waters that could result in a piracy success. A lack of adherence to BMP5 protocol, particularly not maintaining a safe distance off the coast, has increased risks to shipping. Merchant vessels would be wise to maintain the same distance from the coast, particularly ensuring that the Socotra Gap isn't taken. All vessels are advised to update risk assessments and register with UKMTO/MSCHOA prior to entering the Indian Ocean High Risk Area (HRA).



Yemen

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels on Sunday 28th claimed the attempted strikes that targeted neighboring Saudi Arabia overnight and threatened more attacks, as fighting in the grinding civil war escalates. Houthi fighters have intensified operations against the kingdom as air strikes by the Saudi-led military coalition pound rebel positions in the north of Yemen, in a bid to stop their offensive to seize the government's last northern stronghold of Marib.

Houthi ballistic missile hits central Yemeni city of Marib

A ballistic missile fired by the Houthis on Monday Mar. 1st killed one civilian and wounded nine others in the central Yemeni city of Marib, local officials said. It exploded inside Rawdha district, which hosts the city's largest concentration of displaced people, a health official told Arab News. Marib has a displaced population of more than two million.

UK urged to reverse huge cuts to Yemen aid

Yemenis and major charities have urged the British government to reconsider reported cuts of up to 50 percent of its support for humanitarian efforts in the war-torn country. The plea comes as the UN is looking to raise some \$3.85 billion from more than 100 governments and donors at a major virtual pledging conference on Monday Mar. 1st to avert Yemen's growing famine.

Five civilians killed in port bombardment

Five civilians including a child were killed on Sunday 28th when their house was bombarded near Yemen's strategic Red Sea port of Hodeida, the latest violence in the grinding civil war. The Saudi-backed government and Houthi rebels traded blame for the devastating attack near frontlines south of the Houthi-held port.

Yemeni gov't, Houthi rebels swap 36 prisoners after tribal mediation

The Yemeni government and the Houthi rebel group swapped on Sunday 28th 36 prisoners in the country's turbulent north-eastern province of Marib, a military official told Xinhua. Speaking on condition of anonymity, the local military source said the Houthi rebel group released 18 prisoners linked to the government forces following a tribal mediation. Meanwhile, the government forces released 18 fighters of the Houthi group seized during previous battles, the source added.

Fighting intensifies in Marib

Clashes between Yemeni government forces and Houthi rebels intensified Saturday 27th in the strategic province of Marib, with military sources saying a senior loyalist commander was

among dozens of fighters killed. Earlier this month, the Iran-backed Houthis resumed a push to capture Marib city, which lies close to some of Yemen's richest oil fields in the north of the country. AFP reported.

UAE Committed to Offer Additional \$230 Million to Yemen

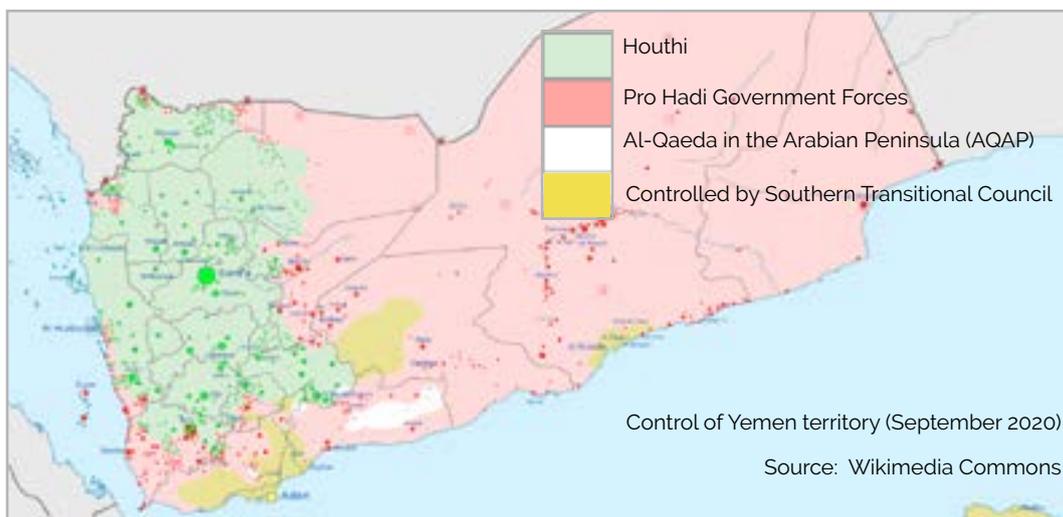
The UAE announced Friday 26th it is committed to offering \$230 million to the Yemeni people ahead of a UN Pledging Conference co-hosted between the Swiss Confederation and Sweden. "This support is in addition to ongoing bilateral UAE assistance efforts and will help fund international programs that meet the medical, nutritional, and food security needs of the country," Minister of State for International Cooperation Reem bint Ibrahim Al Hashemy said in a statement published by the WAM news agency.

UN Security Council extends international sanctions imposed on Yemen

The United Nations (UN) Security Council on Thursday 25th extended the international sanctions imposed on Yemen for another year, as well as the mandate of the group of experts on monitoring the arms embargo. The renewed resolution was issued under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which implicates the legitimacy of using armed force to implement the decision, such as the: "System of financial sanctions and travel bans against individuals and entities that threaten peace, security and stability in Yemen until 28 February, 2022," in addition to extending the mandate of the group of experts on monitoring the arms embargo until 28 March of the same year.

To see the latest threat analysis and Yemen port information in **MASTOPDEIA**, please click [here](#).

MAST recommends BMP measures be enforced and watches strengthened during transits in the region.





South East Asia

Singapore is testing unmanned surface vessels with a locally developed, AI-driven navigation algorithm that could be used for maritime security operations in the congested but strategically important waters around the southeast Asian island nation. Upon completion, the Republic of Singapore Navy is expected to then field four USVs in the role. The country's defense ministry said this will add another layer of surveillance and operational response for its maritime borders.

Incidents: Nothing significant to report.

China kicks off military drill in South China Sea

China on Monday Mar. 1st kicked off a month-long military exercise in South China Sea, state-run media reported. The drill by the People's Liberation Army will continue until March 31, the Global Times newspaper quoted the China Maritime Safety Administration as saying. "China is determined to maintain peace and stability in South China Sea and firmly opposes any country increasing its military presence in the area in the name of 'freedom of navigation,'" said the Defense Ministry.

Indonesia finds weapons on impounded Iranian tanker

Indonesian authorities said on Friday that firearms and ammunition have been found on an Iranian supertanker, one of the two vessels seized in the country's waters over a suspected illegal oil transfer last month. The Iranian-flagged MT Horse and the Panamanian-flagged MT Freya were impounded by the Maritime Security Agency (Bakamla) in waters bordering the South China Sea off Pontianak in January.

Japan gives \$5.5M worth of maritime safety and security equipment to Police

The Fiji Police Force received a major boost in their search and rescue operations at sea after the Japanese Government handed over \$5.5 million worth of maritime safety and security equipment. This includes one patrol boat, 22 rescue boats, 11 inflatable boats, underwater communication devices and cameras and 31 scuba diving equipment sets.

PH Navy's 2nd brand new, missile-capable frigate docks in Manila

The Philippine Navy on Friday Feb. 26th formally welcomed its second brand new missile-capable frigate, which would be

christened BRP Antonio Luna (FF-151). The warship recently finished its quarantine period in Subic Bay after arriving from the Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI) shipyard in Ulsan, South Korea last Feb. 9th.

Sabah's dusk-to-dawn sea curfew extended until March 16th

Sabah's dusk-to-dawn sea curfew which ends Sunday (Feb 28) has been extended for another two weeks until Mar. 16th. Sabah Police Commissioner Datuk Hazani Ghazali said the extension of the 6pm to 6am curfew was needed due to continuous threats from cross-border criminals, including from kidnap-for-ransom groups.

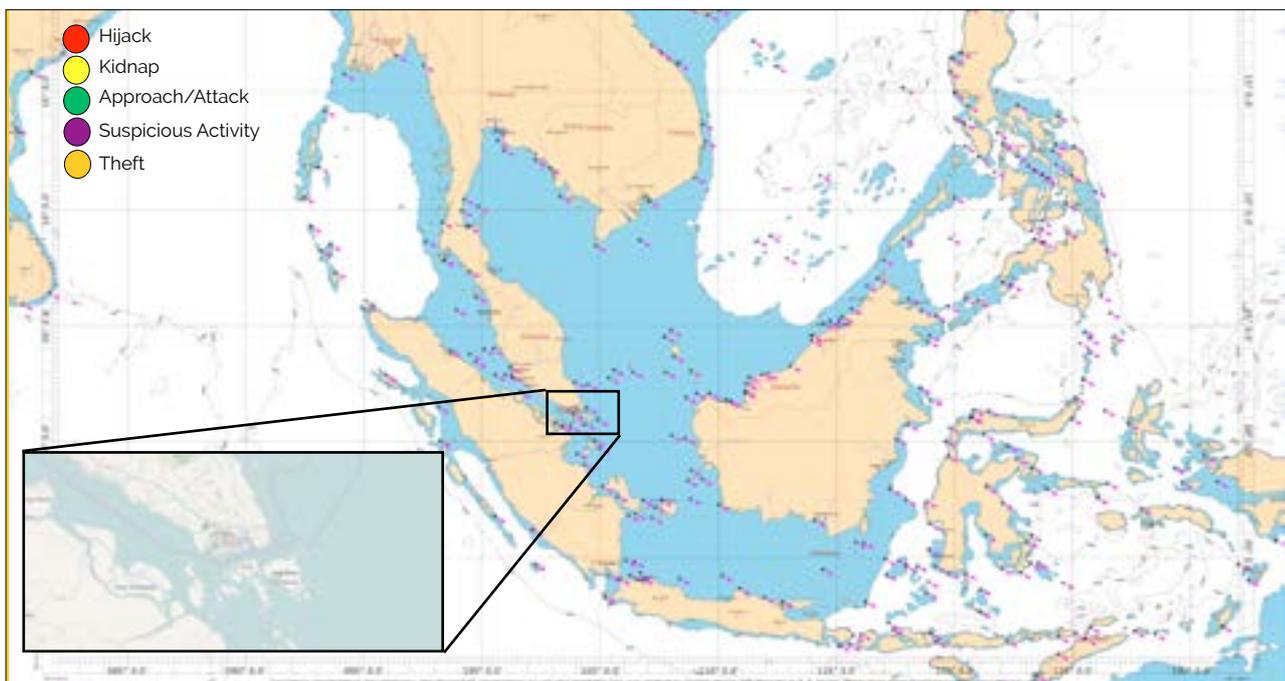
China and Singapore conduct joint naval exercise in South China Sea to 'address risks'

The joint military drill between China and Singapore in the South China Sea shows the two countries are jointly addressing risks and challenges with the determination to safeguard regional peace and stability, Chinese military researchers said. A group of Chinese naval ships participated in a joint naval exercise with the Singapore Navy in the waters near Singapore, Chinese state media reported on Thursday 25th.

US warships in South China Sea, Vietnam appeals for peace

Vietnam has called for all parties to maintain peace in the South China Sea following recent presence of US warships near its Paracel and Spratly archipelagos to challenge Beijing's claims. Vietnam hopes all countries will continue contributing positively to maintaining peace and stability on the basis of international law in the East Sea, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Le Thi Thu Hang said at a media event on Thursday Feb. 25th.

To see MAST's services in the region, [please click here](#).





European Waters

Over 500 people have already crossed the English Channel this year, after dozens of migrants were intercepted and detained by Border Force on Saturday Feb. 27th. Home Office officials confirmed that 87 people made the treacherous crossing in four separate incidents at the weekend, as people smugglers took advantage of warm and calm conditions in the world's busiest shipping lane. They said all adults who have arrived today have been tested for Covid 19 with one person testing positive, the UK's Daily Mail reported.

People smugglers could get life sentences under new rules, says UK Home Office

People smugglers could be handed life sentences under plans to ramp up penalties in an effort to stop migrants crossing the Channel. At present, the maximum sentence for people smuggling is 14 years in prison. The Times reported that UK Home Secretary, Priti Patel, wants to lengthen jail terms because of her concerns that the average sentence received is three years.

NGO Accused of Taking on Maersk Etienne's Rescued Migrants for Pay

Prosecutors in the Sicilian city of Ragusa have accused an NGO rescue vessel operator of receiving money in exchange for taking 27 rescued migrants off of a Maersk product tanker last year. The vessel in question was the Maersk Etienne, which was stranded off Malta for more than five weeks after Maltese officials refused to allow a group of rescues to disembark. The tanker's crew saved 27 maritime migrants in the Mediterranean in August 2020, but when she transited to the nearest port of refuge - Valetta - she was turned away.

15 migrants feared dead, hundreds rescued off Libya

Between Friday Feb. 26th and Sunday 28th, some 550 migrants were rescued in the Central Mediterranean. While the private rescue organization Sea-Watch said it saved some 450 people, a Libyan patrol boat picked up nearly 100 from a shipwreck, in which 20 passengers are reported missing. After three consecutive days of rescuing migrants from distress in the central Mediterranean Sea, the crew operating the Sea-Watch 3 vessel handed over some of their rescues to an Italian coast guard vessel.

Libyan coastguard rescues almost 100 migrants

Almost 100 migrants were rescued off the west coast of Libya on Sunday Feb. 28th as they made failed attempts to reach Europe, while around 20 were missing, AFP reporters and the coastguard said. The Libyan coastguard rescued the mostly African migrants – the majority being from Cameroon, Sudan and Mali, as they attempted perilous sea crossings to Italy.

Eluding Libya's coast guard: Fewer migrants make it to Europe on central Mediterranean

In the central Mediterranean, the race against time to reach the EU is turning to a race against Libya's coast guard. With mounting reports on stand-offs between Libyan maritime authorities and NGOs in international waters, fewer migrants are succeeding in making their way to Europe. They are instead returned to Libya. Now there are also fresh reports that Libya's coast guard is increasingly interfering in the actions of NGOs operating rescue missions at sea, risking people's lives when they should be taking them to safety. The Michigan Journal of International Law (MJIL) reports that "(t)he Libyan government has banned NGO-operated vessels from conducting SAR within its territorial waters and its Coast Guard has fired upon, boarded, and threatened to kill the crew of any NGO-operated vessel that violates this ban.

UN and IOM call for Europe to resume search and rescue after latest Mediterranean deaths

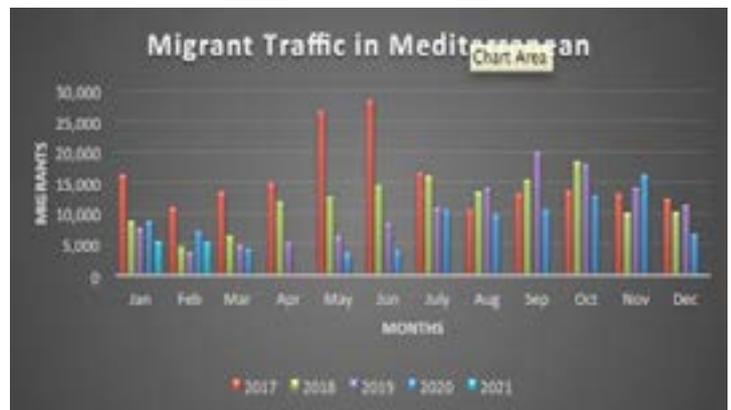
The UNHCR and IOM are calling for European countries to resume and strengthen Europe's search and rescue system after yet more deaths in the Central Mediterranean. At least 41 migrants drowned after their boat capsized over the weekend. Several children were among the dozens who perished after their dinghy took on water off the coast of Libya. A merchant ship rescued the survivors and took them to the Sicilian port town of Porto Empedocle in Italy. They were all tested for COVID-19.

UK Border Force intercepts around 30 migrants

Border Force officials intercepted around 30 migrants crossing the English Channel on Feb. 25th. Migrants, who appeared to be Vietnamese, were also processed alongside women huddling red blankets for warmth. French authorities were also called to rescue a boat in difficulty around five miles north west of Calais.

'Freshwater Five' appeal hearing outcome due in weeks

Almost a decade after being convicted for smuggling £53million of cocaine, the hearing on an application for leave to appeal for 2 members of the 'Freshwater Five' has concluded at the Court of Appeal. Judgment, which has been reserved – meaning Judges will take time to look at all the evidence – is expected to be handed down in the next few weeks.



Migrant crossings 2017-2020. Source: [UNHRC](#)

The current migrant smuggling situation

Although crossing figures remain down, year on year, we are witnessing an increase in attempts by people smugglers to move more people from Libya, as the past week's rescues and loss of life illustrates. The English Channel, too, has seen an increase in crossings from France, which will continue to strain political relations between the two countries. As warmer weather and calmer seas approach, it is likely this pattern will continue without increased cooperation between French and UK maritime security assets.



Libya

A captured Russian-built missile defence system which was reported last month to have been taken by the US military is now said to have been shared between the US and Turkey, according to Libyan officials. In a report last month by the Times in London, the truck-mounted Pantsir S-1 missile battery – made by Russia and given to the UAE, which then gave it to Khalifa Haftar's forces in eastern Libya – was captured by militants affiliated to the Libyan government when they captured AL-Watiya Air Base in May last year.

Libya political process marred by bribes, UN report

At least three members of the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum have been accused of receiving bribes to elect Abdel Hamid Dbeibah as Prime Minister, according to a report by the UN expert panel on Libya. One of the delegates of the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum entrusted by the UN with electing a Prime Minister reportedly made a scene in the lobby of a hotel in Tunis when he discovered that his colleagues had been offered close to half a million dollars in bribes, compared to only 200,000 dollars he was given.

Gravesites of 4 Pinoy workers executed by ISIS found in Libya

The gravesites of four Filipino oil workers who were abducted and later on executed by Islamic State (ISIS) extremists in Libya were finally located after six years, the Philippine Embassy in Tripoli said Tuesday Mar. 2nd. Remains of Donato Santiago, Gregorio Titan, Roldan Blaza, and Wilson Eligue were found in a cemetery in the eastern coastal city of Derna on Monday, the embassy said.

New Libyan government claims migration issue beyond remit

The new Libyan Government of National Unity (GNU) has followed in the footsteps of its predecessor, the Government of National Accord (GNA) in describing the migration issue as "out of its control" and not among its priorities. In the first press conference held by the GNU after it was formed earlier this month, Prime Minister Abdel Hamid Dabaiba stated that "Libya is not able to handle this problem on its own. The problem of migration does not concern Libya alone" and that, instead "it is a global problem that concerns the entire world."

3 Turkish military cargo planes land in Wattayah and Misurata

Ankara continues to transfer arms and ammunition to cities in western Libya, as the head of the national interim government, Abdel Hamid Dabaiba, hands over the ministerial formation to the presidency of the House of Representatives. The "Radar Flight" website, which tracks air traffic, revealed that the Turkish military flights included an Airbus A400M plane that took

off from the Kayseri base in Konya, an Airbus A400M that took off from Ataturk base in Ankara, and a Lockheed C130E that took off from a military base near Antalya to Libya, Egypt Today reported on Mar. 1st.

Libya's NOC says Paris court confirmed that LERCO must pay it \$115 million plus interest

Libya's National Oil Corp (NOC) said on Sunday that a Paris court of appeal had upheld an award by a court of arbitration against Libyan Emirates Oil Refining Company (LERCO) regarding the Ras Lanuf refinery in Libya. NOC said on its Facebook page that the appeals court had confirmed that LERCO must pay NOC over \$115 million plus interest. It said this came to \$132 million, as of Feb. 28th, Reuters reported.

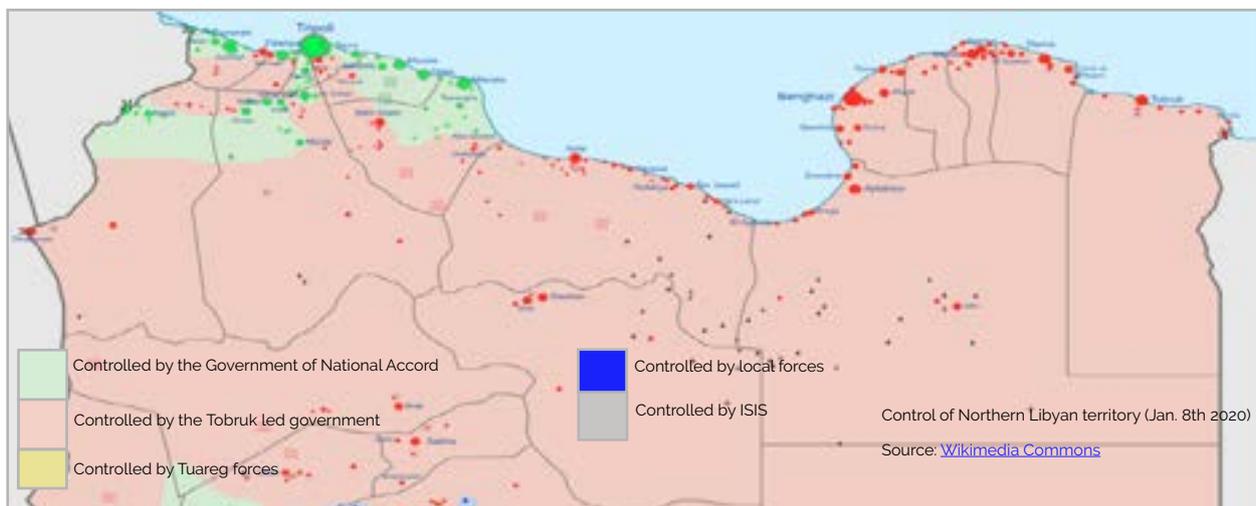
Libya speaker calls for 'representative' government

The head of Libya's parliament on Friday Feb. 26th called on the country's interim prime minister to form a government that represents all factions in the crisis-hit North African nation to overcome "differences". Interim prime minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah on Thursday said he had submitted a "vision" for a cabinet line-up that would help steer Libya to elections in December.

Libya to keep 'distinguished ties' with Turkey: Interim premier

Libya's new interim government will give particular importance to bilateral relations with Turkey in the new period, the country's prime minister said on Thursday Feb. 25th. "Our ties with Turkey will be distinguished. It is our economic partner and we support this partnership," Abdul Hamid Dbeiba told a news conference in the capital Tripoli.

To read MAST's Libyan Country report on MASTOPEDIA, [please click here](#).





Central and South America

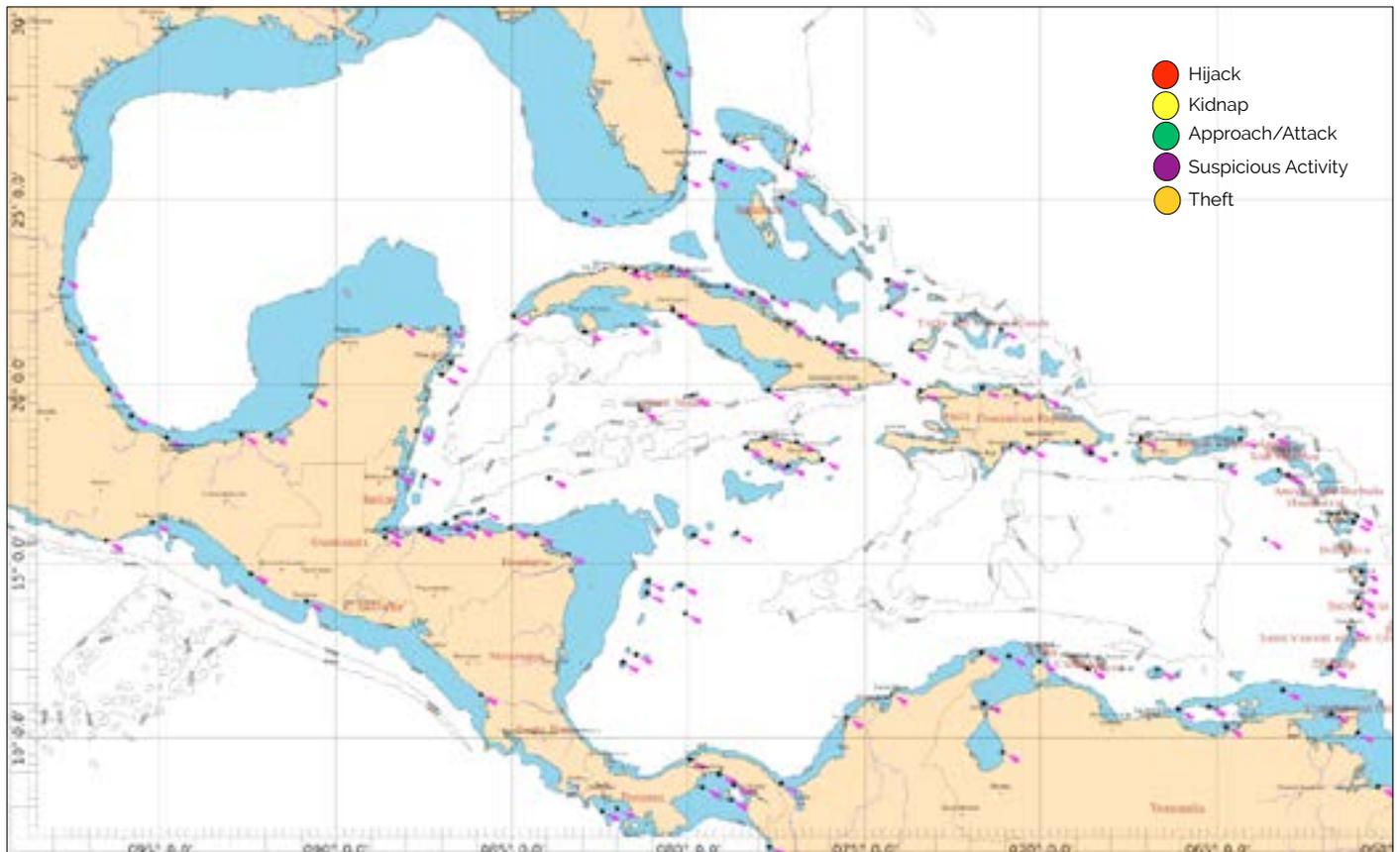
Nothing significant to report.

Incidents: Nothing significant to report.

Standing advice:

The repercussions of a vessel being caught acting as a mule with drugs stowed will depend on the type, amount and national laws, but may be disruptive and costly. When and if operating in these areas, especially Columbia and Peru, it is advised that:

- Potential stowage areas such as rudder shafts are denied as far as possible, and/or routinely searched.
- Access points are closely monitored by a vigilant watch for the duration of the vessel's call at port.





Severe Weather Warnings

Warnings detailed on this page are from the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and are issued by respective Regional Specialised Metrological Centres, Tropical Cyclone Centres or National Meteorological Services. For further information on severe weather warnings please click [here](#).

Nothing significant to report.

Note: The forecasts are correct as of the day before publication. For latest updates please follow the provided links.