

Weekly Security & Risk Report

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



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Issue 304 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.

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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Contents:

	Page
Mast Services	2
Gulf of Guinea	4
Indian Ocean	5
Somalia	6
Yemen	7
South East Asia	8
European Waters	9
Libya	10
Central & South America	11
Severe Weather Warnings	12



Gulf of Guinea

Nigerian media reported on Oct. 23rd that HMS Trent and her complement of Royal Marines has arrived in Lagos as part of a three-month deployment to the Gulf of Guinea. UK Deputy High Commissioner, Ben Llewellyn-Jones said: "...The Royal Navy is here because the UK is a committed partner for Nigeria and the wider West African region. We will continue to work with the Nigerian authorities to address illegal activity; improve maritime security; counter-piracy and tackle the Illegal Wildlife Trade. To do this we will draw on the experience we have of cross and multi-agency co-operation in the UK to promote peace, development, and prosperity."

Incidents:

1. Underway Panama-flagged containership reported attacked and boarded by unknown number of attackers at 0815 UTC in position 02:13N - 004:50E, approx 150nm SSW of Brass, Nigeria. Vessel conducted evasive manoeuvring. Crew mustered in citadel. Attackers departed vessel at 1620 UTC. Naval patrol vessel despatched. Vessel and crew reported Safe. Reported (MDAT/Source) 25th Oct.

Russian Navy aids container ship

RT reported on Oct. 26th that the Russian missile destroyer, Vice-Admiral Kulakov, came to the aid of the MSC Lucia, after it was boarded by suspected pirates some 86nm off Nigeria. While the ship's crew sheltered in the Lucia's citadel, the Russian vessel deployed a helicopter with a complement of Marines onboard. The pirates reportedly spotted the helicopter and: the pirates left the ship, got into a fast boat and headed towards the coast at full speed," the Russian Defense Ministry said in a statement. The Marines landed on the ship and conducted a search to ensure it was clear and secure. The Russian vessel has been in the Gulf of Guinea on anti-piracy patrols since Oct. 11th.

Nigeria builds new vessels

Local media report that the Nigeria's Naval Shipyard Ltd has successfully constructed four new gunboats as part of an order for the country's Defence Headquarters. The new vessels will be used for patrols by the Nigerian Navy and can take a crew of seven and cruise at 35 knots. Nigeria's local shipbuilding efforts have been improved in recent months, as part of the government's effort to reduce dependency on foreign vendors.

Nigerian Navy records reduction of piracy incidents in its TTW

While the recent IMB report paints a better picture of maritime security (it should be noted that IMB only report incidents sent to it by Masters and shipping companies), the Nigerian Navy has stated that it has only recorded four confirmed piracy incidents in the country's waters in Q3 of 2021.

Huge cocaine seizure off Senegal

The authorities in Senegal have seized their largest ever cocaine consignment, BBC News reported on Oct. 19th. The drugs were located onboard a ship some 226 miles of the coast with the aid of the French Air Force. The country's navy then boarded and searched the ship, arresting five crew and seizing 2026kg of cocaine.

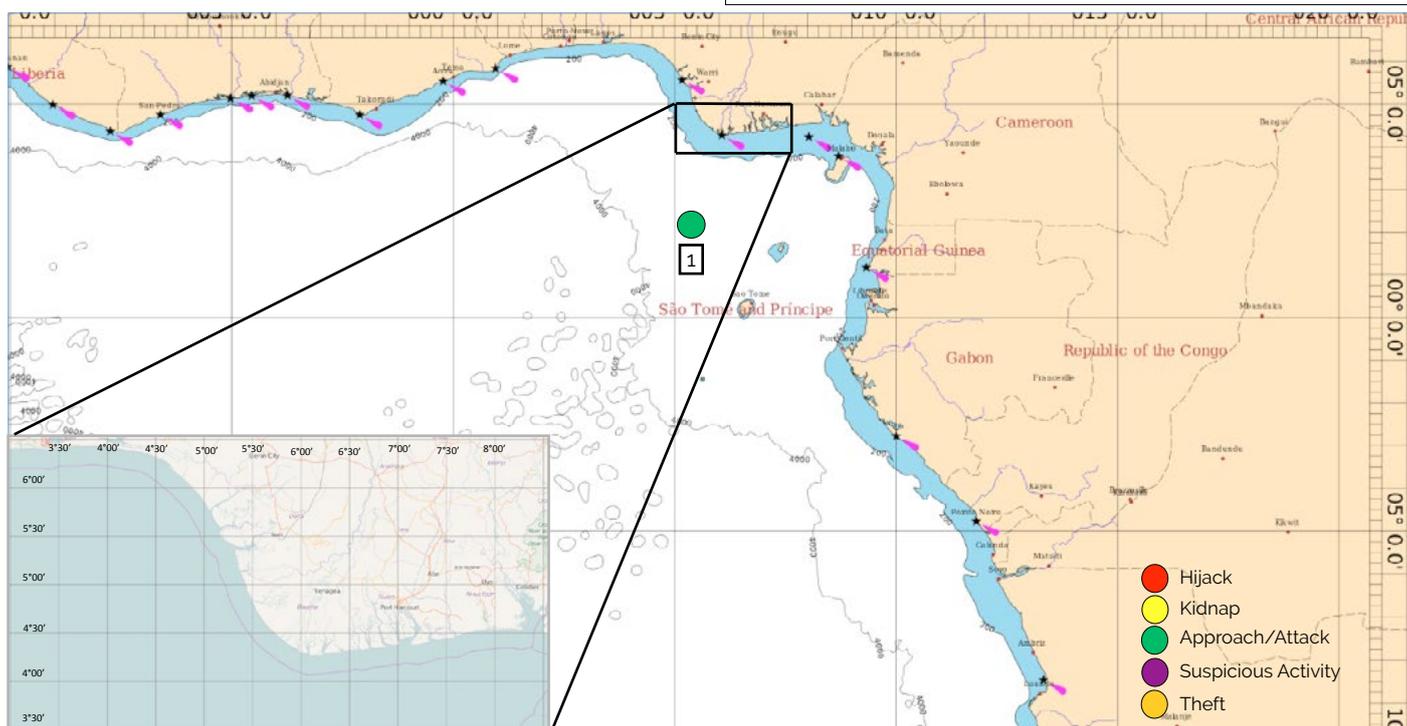
For further information and to see MAST Services in the region, [please click here.](#)

Gulf of Guinea Piracy & Maritime Crime Figures:

2021:
Incidents reported: 43 (MDAT-GoG/Others)
Crew kidnapped: 46 (IMB, MDAT)
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

Operation ATALANTA Operation Commander, Admiral Núñez Torrente and Force Commander Cuerda Lorenzo held a VTC with Mission Force Commander EUTM Mozambique, Brigadier General Lemos Pires, on Oct. 19th to begin discussions on possible synergies in the great region of Cabo Delgado and the Mozambique Channel, which lies at southern border of Atalanta's Area of Operation. The European Union has launched a military training mission in Mozambique (EUTM Mozambique) following a request from the Mozambican government to support their armed forces through a training and capacity building mission.

Incidents: Nothing significant to report.

Indian Navy arrives in Sri Lanka

LiveMint reported on Oct. 24th that the Indian Navy's first 'training squadron' has arrived in Sri Lanka as part of an operation to not only offer new Indian trainees their first overseas deployment but also improve the interoperability of both countries' navies. Five Indian Navy ships and Coast Guard Ship Vikram are all taking part in the four-day visit.

Netherlands hopes to join India's IFC-IOR

The Hindu reported on Oct. 24th that the Royal Netherlands Navy has expressed an interest in posting a Liaison Officer at the country's Information Fusion Centre, to improve maritime domain awareness and information sharing. While the Netherlands was unable to join the recent Malabar joint naval exercises, The Hindu said that Vice Admiral, René Tas, had said that he was keen to see greater cooperation and interoperability between the two countries' navies.

US Navy plans to use new tech in region

The US Navy's 5th Fleet is planning to deploy new robotic and AI-based technology in the IOR, National Defense reported on Oct. 21st. The Fleet's area of operation, including the Strait of Hormuz, Bab el-Mandeb Strait and Suez Canal, are perfect for real world systems evaluation. The new systems will enhance surveillance efforts in the region as part of a wider maritime security initiative.

EU NAVFOR Somalia conducts a joint naval exercise with the Sultanate of Oman

On 19th Oct., Operation ATALANTA and the Royal Navy of

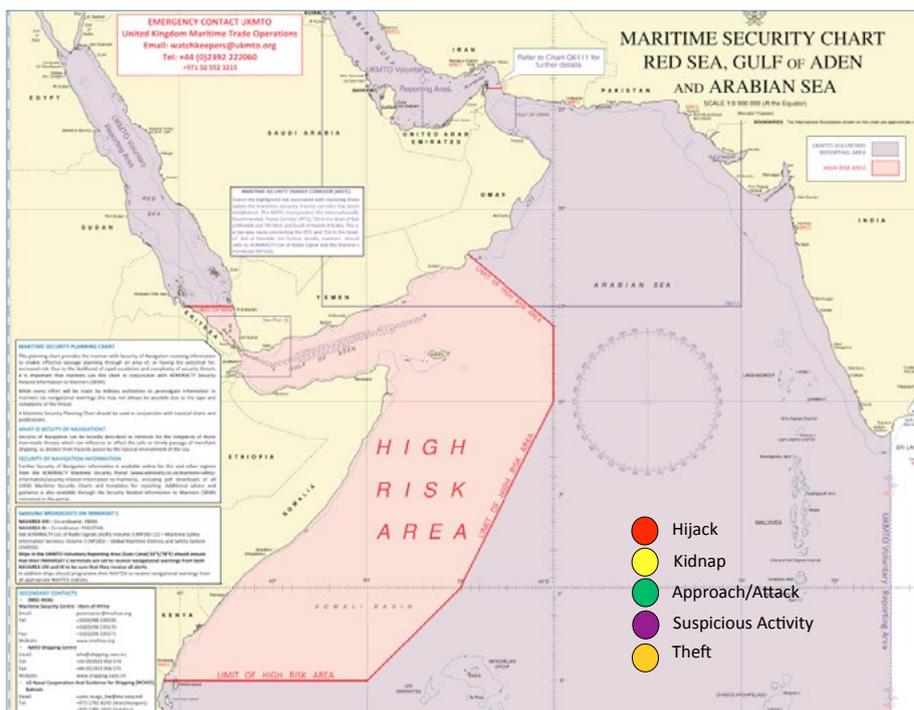
Oman conducted a joint naval exercise in the Arabian Sea off the coast of Salalah. Operation ATALANTA flagship, frigate ESPS Victoria, and Omani patrol boat AL MABRUKAH practiced naval communications, complex tactical evolutions at sea and search and rescue operations. After the exercise, ESPS Victoria, made a port visit at Salalah. Opportunities like these can reinforce relationships and understanding amongst partners that remain vital in continuing to successful maritime missions.

UK Strike Group to run joint exercises with Indian Navy

HMS Queen Elizabeth Carrier Strike Group is currently off Mumbai for joint exercises with the Indian Navy, Indian media reported on Oct. 21st. Part of the focus of operations will be interoperability and information sharing. Commodore Steve Moorhouse of the Royal Navy said, "We are visiting around 40 countries and will return to the UK in December. The focus will be on inter-operability and communication comparability with the Indian Navy for future joint operations. We are looking at being able to quickly and seamlessly share data with Indian ships and jets".

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

MAST Note: This chart will be replaced as soon as Admiralty UK releases the updated version.





Somalia

Al Jazeera reported on Oct. 22nd that Somalia's president and prime minister had finally struck a deal to move forward with the long awaited election process, after weeks of crisis in the country. "The leadership have agreed to accelerate the election process by calling on the federal member states to start the election of the [lower house of] parliament in the next couple of weeks," a statement by the two leaders said late on Thursday.

Fighting between army and militia group

Reuters reported on Oct. 24th that at least 30 people had been killed and more than 100 injured in fighting between the Somali National Army and the Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'a (ASWJ) in Galmudug. The ASWJ, former allies of the government in its fight against Al Shabaab, have accused the government of not doing enough in the fight against Al Shabaab and recently occupied territory, demanding a greater say in political decisions. The clashes started at dawn Saturday morning when government troops, who have been amassing on the outskirts of Guri-El, a central Somali town some 400 kilometers north of the capital, Mogadishu, attacked bases held by Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a (ASWJ) rebels, VOA reported. The UN reports that over 100,000 people have fled the area. On Oct. 25th, Reuters reported that the death toll had risen to 120 over the last three day period.

Somalia gets vehicles, equipment from the UK to tackle roadside bombs

The UK has donated new vehicles and IED detection equipment to Somalia, Middle East Monitor reported on Oct. 22nd. The British Embassy in Mogadishu said: "Through our partnership with the Somali National Army, we are working towards a safer Somalia." IEDs are a main weapon for Al Shabaab, who frequently target both military and civilian vehicles.

Somalia Seeks Humanitarian Aid Over Worsening Drought

Somalia's federal government is asking U.N. humanitarian

agencies for urgent assistance to counter an ongoing drought and growing food insecurity, mainly in the southern part of the country. According to the U.N. Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, more than 5.9 million Somalis need urgent assistance, with 3.5 million of them facing acute food insecurity, VOA reported on Oct. 22nd.

AMISOM Admits Killing 7 Civilians in Lower Shabelle

Dalsan Radio reported on Oct. 22nd that a Board of Inquiry had established that AMISOM troops killed seven civilians in an incident in Lower Shabelle in August this year. The incident took place after a gunfight with Al Shabaab terrorists, the Board heard. AMISOM said that the troops involved, from Uganda, would likely face court martial for their actions. It is expected that the Ugandan government will make reparations to the bereaved families.

SNA troops kill Al Shabaab fighters in Bakool region

Garowe Online reported on Oct. 21st that the Somalia Army's 60th Division had engaged Al Shabaab terrorists in Wajid town, Bakool, killing at least four and injuring several others. The operation followed intelligence which suggested that the group were in the area, attacking food suppliers.

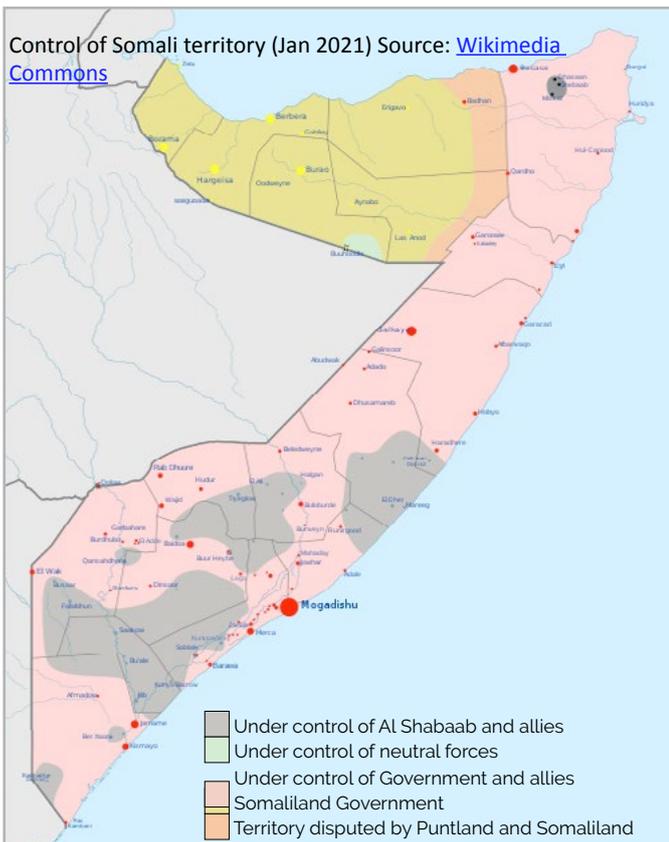
Threat Assessment

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).

Analysis

The ongoing political spat between the Somali president and prime minister once again threatens the country's election process. The stalled elections are widely seen as a crucial step to a more stable Somalia, but have been seized upon by terror group, Al Shabaab, as an opportunity to strengthen its hold on parts of the country. In South-west state, the group appears to operate with little resistance locally, installing its own governors in areas occupied by both AMISOM and SNA forces.

In Galmudug state, the previously moderate Ahlu Sunna militia (ASWJ) has reportedly taken control of Guri'el town, with the backing of local clan elders, and are demanding a share of political power in a new headache for the country's administration. Previously, the group had been influential in forcing Al Shabaab fighters out of major areas of Galmudug, so maintaining good political relations with the group is key for Somalia as it struggles to control Al Shabaab in the country. Hopes that the country could unite behind the elections continue to fade, and it may take much greater international pressure to resolve the current political deadlock in the country.





Yemen

Two former German soldiers have been arrested on suspicion of trying to form a terrorist mercenary force to fight in Yemen's civil war, prosecutors say. Arend-Adolf G and Achim A face terrorism charges after police raids in southern Germany on Wednesday. They allegedly planned to recruit up to 150 men for a private army made up of former police officers and soldiers. They wanted to offer their services to Saudi Arabia's government for illegal missions in Yemen, prosecutors said, according to a report from BBC News on Oct. 20th.

Booby-Trapped Houthi Boat Destroyed off Yemen's Hodeidah

Asharq Al-Awsat reported on Monday 24th that Saudi coalition forces reportedly destroyed a further explosives-laden boat (see item below) off the coast of Hodeidah. The vessel was being prepared on Kamaran Island, off Salif port, Hodeidah. This is the fifth explosive-laden boat to be destroyed by coalition forces in two days, suggesting that the Houthi rebel movement is keen on disrupting maritime traffic in the Red Sea and Bab el-Mandeb Strait. **MAST recommends** that CSOs with vessels transiting the region should take note and plan accordingly.

Arab coalition destroys four explosive-laden boats in Yemeni province

Arab News reported on Oct. 23rd that Saudi coalition forces had destroyed four explosive-laden boats in Hodeidah province. A coalition statement said warplanes targeted Al-Jabanah coastal base, east of Hodeidah city, where the vessels had been prepared to attack international ships sailing through the Red Sea. Arab News said. Sources suggest that Al-Jabanah is home to three Houthi military bases and is known as the base for the construction of both explosive drones and boats.

Houthis abduct dozens of civilians in wake of deadly Marib siege

Arab News reported on Oct. 25th that Houthi rebels have kidnapped "dozens" of citizens in Abedia district, south of Marib, transporting them to unknown locations according to a Yemeni rights group. The Mothers of Abductees Association, an umbrella organization for thousands of female relatives of war prisoners, documented the abduction of 47 civilians in Abedia.

Saudi-led coalition says 105 Yemen rebels killed in Marib battle

Coalition forces on Monday 25th reported that airstrikes had killed at least 105 Houthi rebels near the city of Marib. The deaths are the latest among roughly 1,700 rebels the coalition claims it has killed in strikes over the past two weeks around Marib. France 24 wrote on Oct. 26th. "Thirteen military vehicles were destroyed and 105" insurgents were killed in strikes in the past 24 hours, the coalition said, according to the official Saudi

Press Agency.

Major party leader shot dead in southwestern Yemen

TRT World reported on Oct. 24th that unknown gunmen had shot and killed the leader of a political party in Taiz. Dhia al-Haq al-Ahdal, a prominent leader of the Al-Islah Party, was shot and killed by two men on a motorcycle as he left his home. There has been no claim of responsibility for the attack. Al-Ahdal, a prominent party leader in Taiz, played a major role in forming local vigilante groups to fight Houthi rebels, TRT wrote.

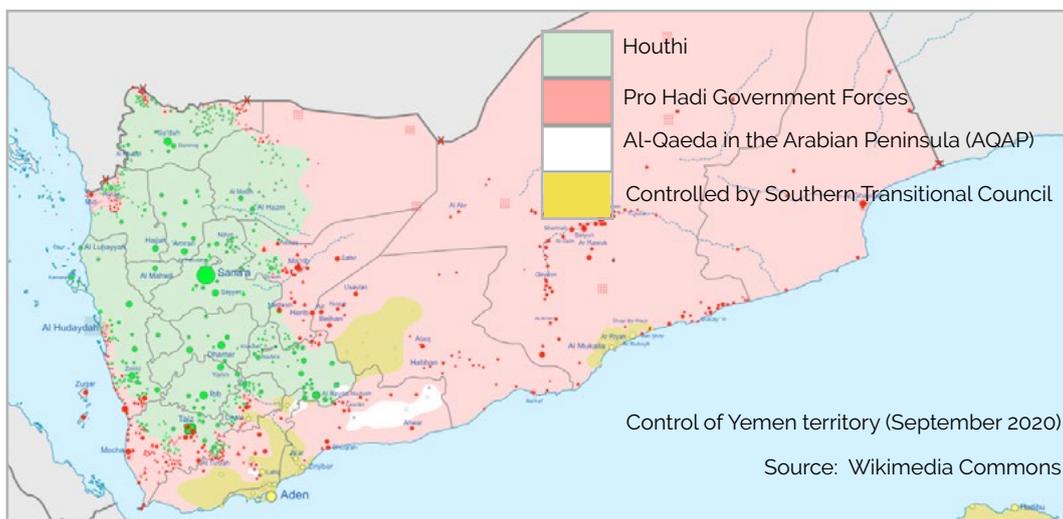
Saudi-led coalition says it killed more than 260 Yemen rebels

Al Jazeera reported on Oct. 24th that Saudi coalition forces claim to have killed more than 260 Houthi fighters in the area around Marib over a three-day period. The claims could not be verified, but Saudi coalition airstrikes in the region have been conducted on an almost daily basis. "Thirty-six military vehicles were destroyed and more than 264" rebel fighters were killed in raids in the past 72 hours, the coalition said, quoted by the official Saudi Press Agency. The attacks were carried out in Al-Jawba, 50km (30 miles) south of Marib, and Al-Kassara, 30km (17 miles) to the northwest, Al Jazeera said.

Arab coalition strikes military sites in Houthi-held Sanaa

Arab News reported on Oct. 21st that Saudi coalition airstrikes had been conducted against Houthi military sites in Sanaa. Coalition spokesperson Brig. Gen. Turki Al-Maliki said the coalition launched airstrikes on a number of military locations in Sanaa believed to host explosive-laden drones and ballistic missiles, as the coalition clamps down on their production and deployment sites.

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



South East Asia

Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Izumo-class helicopter destroyer JS Kaga (DDH 184) and U.S. Navy Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 1 are conducting bilateral operations in the South China Sea for the first time since Vinson Carrier Strike Group (VINCSG) deployed this summer. While in the South China Sea, Japan and U.S. Navy units are conducting maritime security operations, to include flight operations, coordinated tactical training between surface and air units, refueling-at-sea evolutions, and maritime strike exercises, the US Pacific Fleet news site reported on Oct. 25th.

Incidents:

- Five unauthorised persons boarded a general cargo ship underway and attempted to enter the engine room at 1809 UTC in position 01:16N – 103: 52E, Singapore Straits. Alert crew noticed the attempted break-in and raised the alarm resulting in the persons escaping empty handed. Reported (IMB) 19th Oct.
- Late report: Underway Singapore-flagged chemical tanker boarded by 7-8 robbers armed with knives at 0040 LT in position 01:14.60N - 104:02.59E, around 3.2nm from Nongsa Lighthouse, Batam Island, Indonesia (Eastbound lane TSS).Duty oiler spotted robbers in engine room workshop. Perpetrators tied up the duty oiler. Upon release, duty oiler reported incident to C/E who informed the bridge. Alar activated and search conducted. Robbers escaped with some stole engine spares. No damage to ship and no crew injuries. Reported (ReCAAP) 15th Oct.

Sabah's dusk-to-dawn sea curfew extended

The dusk-to-dawn sea curfew in Sabah, designed to prevent maritime crime and incursions by Abu Sayyaf Group terrorists, has been extended. The new deadline will be Nov. 11th, local media report. The curfew covers areas up to three nautical miles off Tawau, Semporna, Kunak, Lahad Datu, Kinabatangan, Sandakan and Beluran.

China harasses Malaysian oil and gas vessels on a 'daily' basis, Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative says

The South China Morning Post reported on Oct. 25th that a US-based think tank had said that Chinese vessels have harassed commercial vessels around the Luconia Shoals on a daily basis for the last two years. The area contains Malaysia's state-owned oil and gas fields, run by Petronas, the paper reported. The article claimed that China was harassing vessels involved in "any new exploration or drilling operations".

Australia and Indonesia conduct combined maritime patrol

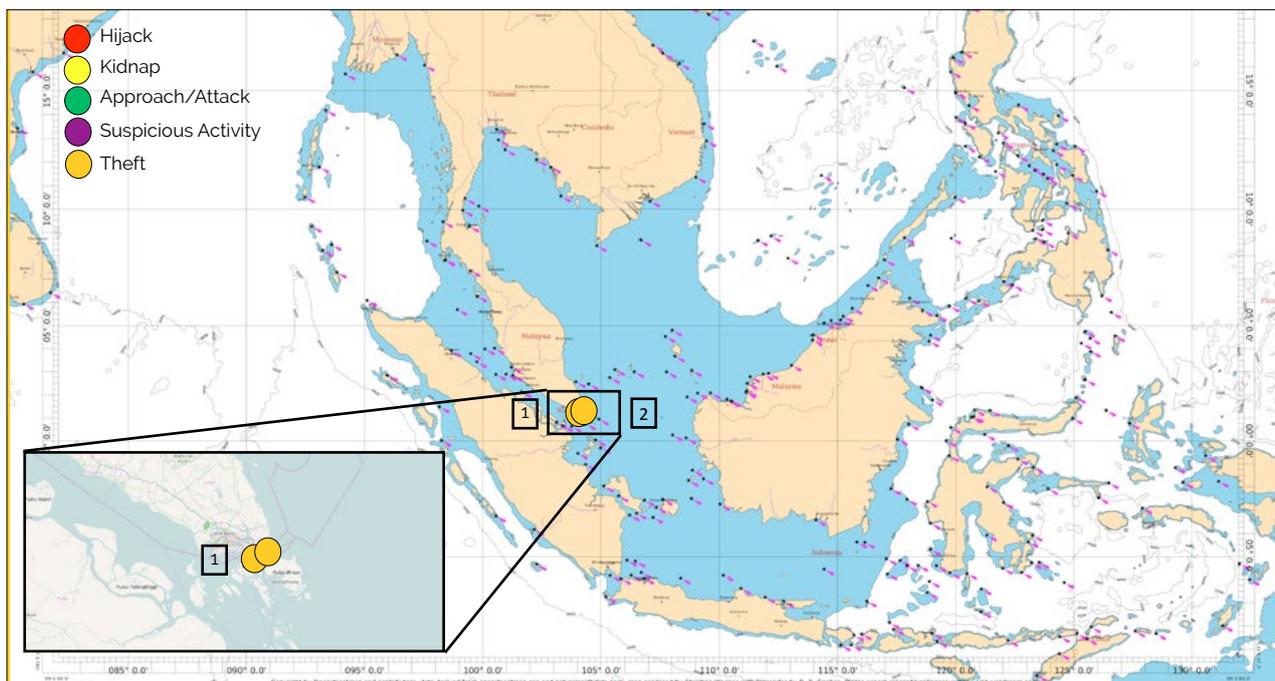
Exercise AUSINDO CORPAT 2021, which saw the Royal Australian and Indonesian navies complete maritime patrols in coordination, has now ended, the Australian government reported on Oct. 24th. The five-day patrol conducted by Armidale Class Patrol Boat HMAS Ararat and TNI-AL vessels KRI Kerapu and KRI Sura was the eleventh iteration of AUSINDO CORPAT and reflected the enduring defence partnership between Australia and Indonesia. AUSINDO CORPAT took place in the waters between Australia and Indonesia, with a specific focus on the deterrence of illegal fishing.

China launches largest civilian patrol boat

The South China Morning Post reported on Oct. 23rd that China had commissioned its largest ever patrol boat into service. The Haixun 09 has a 10,700 tonne displacement and is one of the most advanced vessels in the civilian fleet. The vessel will serve as a mobile law enforcement platform for maritime patrols, Chinese state media reported.

ReCAAP holds capacity building meeting

On Oct. 19th, ReCAAP held a virtual capacity building lecture, attended by 45 officers representing 17 ReCAAP Member States. The aim of the lecture was to provide a better understanding on the root causes of piracy, how to effectively address it and to enhance the capabilities of Focal Points (FPs)/Contact Points (CP) (FPs/CP) in managing maritime crime. FPs/CP are the government agencies designated by ReCAAP Member States to be the primary points-of-contact for the ReCAAP information sharing network.



European Waters

The French rescue coordination centre, CROSS Gris-Nez, on Saturday organised a rescue operation for 39 migrants who had got in to difficulty in the Strait of Dover, Maritime Executive reported on Oct. 24th. The center had the assistance of three good samaritan vessels, and working together they successfully retrieved all survivors, with no loss of life, Maritime Executive said.

Geo Barents: Hundreds of rescued migrants wait to disembark

The NGO rescue vessel, Geo Barents, is currently host to 'hundreds' of migrants, InfoMigrants wrote on Oct. 25th. Over the weekend, the ship rescued a further 70 migrants whose vessel got into difficulty. They, and several hundred others, are now waiting for any news on a port of disembarkation. Over the weekend, at least 500 migrants were taken to Sicily by rescue vessels.

198 illegal migrants rescued off Libyan coast

On Oct. 24th, the UN said that 198 migrants had been rescued off the coast of Libya and returned to the country, Xinhau reported. The migrants, who were aboard two boats, were "brought back to Libya tonight disembarking in Zawiya and in Tripoli," the UN refugee agency tweeted.

Boy dies after sea rescue near Spain's Canary Islands

InfoMigrants reported on Oct. 25th that, following a rescue operation 185km off Gran Canaria on Sunday, a 5-year-old boy has sadly died. At least 40 migrants were on board a seven metre vessel, with several of them suffering the effects of hypothermia and dehydration. The Spanish rescue services disembarked the survivors at the port of Arguineguin.

Matteo Salvini on trial for blocking migrant boat

Italian ex-interior minister Matteo Salvini has gone on trial in Sicily, accused of preventing a migrant boat from docking in August 2019. The right-wing politician denies kidnap and dereliction of duty charges. Prosecution witnesses include Hollywood actor Richard Gere, who was on board. Mr Salvini closed ports to rescue boats, leaving dozens of migrants saved from the Mediterranean stranded aboard a Spanish rescue vessel for three weeks in deteriorating conditions. He faces a maximum of 15 years in jail if convicted, BBC News reported on Oct. 24th.

Migrant rescue ship Sea-Watch 3 assigned port in Italy

InfoMigrants reported on Oct. 22nd that 406 migrants on-board the Sea-Watch 3 had been given permission to disembark at the port of Pozzallo, Italy. The migrants were rescued in the Mediterranean last Sunday and Monday, InfoMigrants wrote. The private rescue organization Sea-Watch International on Friday announced that its ship would be allowed to dock in the port of Pozzallo, southern Italy. "After days of waiting, the Italian authorities have assigned us Pozzallo as port for disembarkation," they wrote on Twitter.

Evacuation flights for migrants start again in Libya

The UN reported on Friday 22nd, that it had resumed humanitarian repatriation flights from Libya, after the programme had been suspended for several months due to the conflict in the country. Arab News reported that The UN's International Organization for Migration (IOM) said in a statement that it had evacuated 127 people to Gambia from the Libyan city of Misrata on Thursday.

Task Force created to hunt human trafficker

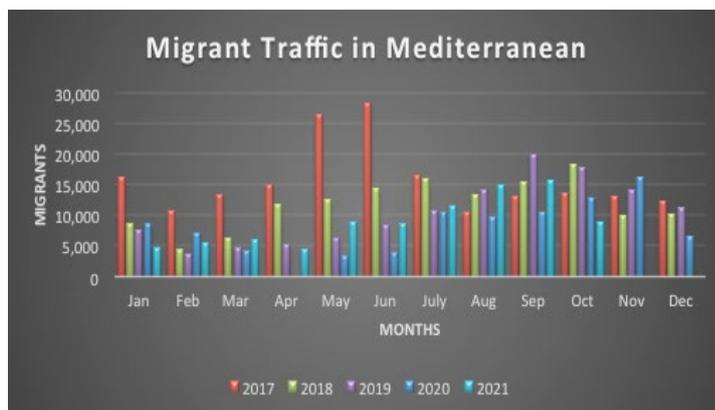
Europol and the Dutch government have launched a task force to locate a notorious people smuggler called Kidane Zekarias Habtemariam. He has been convicted by an Ethiopian court of extortion, kidnapping, and torturing migrants to death in Libya, but escaped custody and fled the country, Middle East Eye reported on Oct. 25th.

56 migrants intercepted off Libyan coast

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on Sunday 24th said that 56 irregular migrants, including women and children, had been intercepted at sea and returned to Libya, Xinhau reported. "UNHCR partner IRC treated minor injuries and assisted survivors with symptoms of hypothermia," UNHCR said.

EU leaders discuss migrant issues

Reuters reported on Oct. 22nd that European Union leaders had met to discuss ways to overcome differences on how countries must handle the ongoing migrant crisis. Unfortunately, no clear agreement was reached, but huge differences remain in the way nations want the issue to be tackled. While Austria has called for harder borders, in line with Lithuanian wishes, European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen signalled opposition to this demand, Reuters wrote. However, little if anything of note was proposed to prevent widescale migration across the Mediterranean Sea.



Migrant crossings 2017-2021. Source: [UNHRC](https://www.unhcr.org/)

The current migrant smuggling situation

UNHCR figures show that 9,026 people have crossed the Mediterranean so far in October. Although there have been no mass casualty reports in the past week, the number of migrants crossing remains high, despite less favourable weather conditions. Several groups have received treatment for hypothermia after extended spells on the water, and we anticipate this will only worsen in the coming weeks. Hoped for political movement within the EU was once again unsuccessful last week, as discussions failed to produce any concrete agreements with members states.

Libya

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, has urged the Libyan government to immediately address the dire situation of asylum-seekers and refugees in a humane and rights-based manner. Raids and arbitrary arrests by the authorities this month targeted areas largely populated by refugees and asylum-seekers that resulted in several deaths, thousands detained, and many homeless and destitute. On Oct. 24th, Reuters reported that Pope Francis on Sunday urged countries not to send migrants back to insecure countries such as Libya.

French Foreign Minister invites PM to Paris Conference on Libya

Jean-Yves Le Drian, French Foreign Minister, has invited Libyan Prime Minister Abdul-Hamid Dbeibah to the planned Paris Conference, due to be held on Nov. 12th. The Paris Conference is intended to be "for and with" Libya, according to The Libya Observer. The Paris Conference is planning to tackle the ongoing situation in Libya in the presence of stakeholders and the US Vice President, Kamala Harris, according to her spokesperson.

One year after ceasefire in Libya, Kubis praises work of JMC and confirms continued support

Jan Kubis, the Head of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), has praised the 5+5 Joint Military Commission (JMC) for what it had achieved since the signing of the ceasefire agreement in Geneva last year, the Libya Observer reported on Oct. 25th. The ceasefire agreement has paved the road for the Libyan-led and -owned comprehensive political process towards sustainable stability, unity, prosperity, and full sovereignty of Libya," Kubis said.

Another mass grave found in Tarhuna

The Libyan agency in charge of locating missing persons has reported a new grave site in Tarhuna. The area had been held by the pro-Haftar Kani militia until it was liberated in June 2020. The new grave, found on Saturday 23rd, is thought to be the tenth one found in the area. So far, at least 50 bodies have been recovered in the area.

Libya holds first forum on securing elections

Libya's Interior Ministry held the first forum on securing the elections intended for December on Saturday 23rd. Libyan Prime Minister Abdul-Hamid Dbeibah said at the forum that the gathering of the security departments was "an important step towards uniting the state's institutions," Xinhau reported on Oct. 24th. The forum was held to integrate security plans and procedures before the elections planned for December 24th.

Turkey sends mixed signals over Syrian mercenaries in Libya

Al-Monitor reported on Oct. 23rd that Turkey had begun a low-key withdrawal of Syrian mercenaries from Libya. Libyan Foreign Minister Najla al-Mangoush confirmed the withdrawal in early October, describing the development as "a very modest start," before "a larger and comprehensive organization for the exit of mercenaries." However, Al-Monitor noted that there have been reports of new mercenaries arriving from Syria into Libya. The presence of foreign militias has turned into a stalemate between Russia and Turkey, which support rival Libyan factions in the decade-long civil war, Al-Monitor said.

Italian Eni to launch massive oil project in Libya

Italian oil company, Eni, has extended a deadline to secure a deal to build two new fixed offshore platforms opposite the existing Mellitah complex, the Libya Observer reported on Oct. 23rd. It is hoped that the 85,000-ton platform for dealing with structures will produce along with the slightly lighter Ras Al-Bir platform around 760 million cubic feet of gas, 42,000 barrels of condensate, and 5,000 barrels of oil per day.

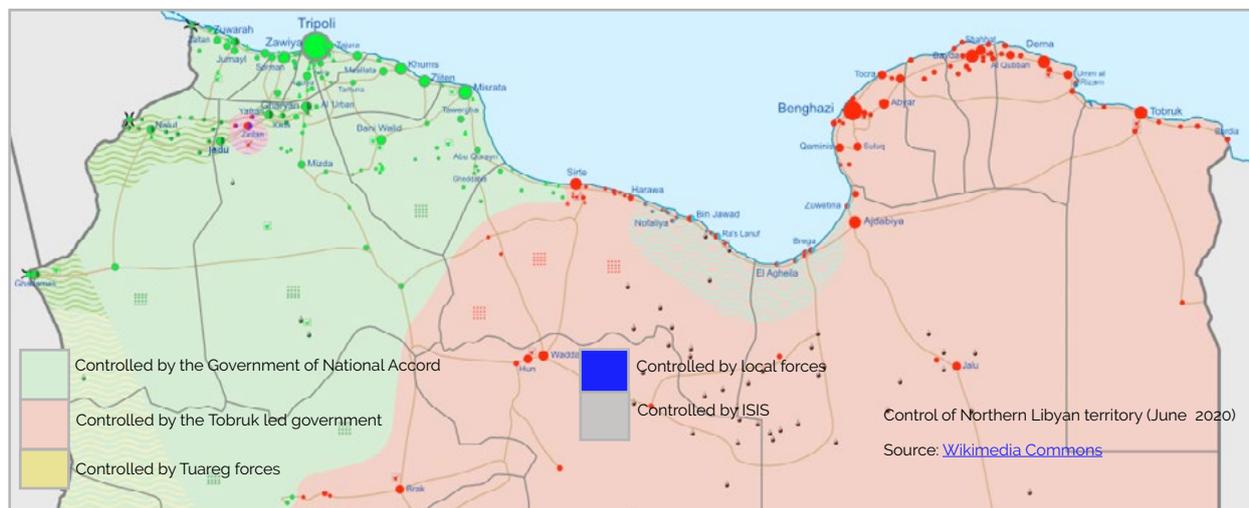
UN observers arrive in Libya to support ceasefire process

On Thursday 21st, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peace building Affairs, Rosemary Di Carlo, announced that the first group of UN observers had arrived in Libya. The group was deployed at the request of the Libyan authorities and will support ceasefire monitoring in conjunction with Libyan observers, the media reported.

Libya Enjoys Windfall From Oil Price Rally

Oilprice.com reported on Oct 21st that Libya's NOC has reported monthly revenues of \$1.796 billion for September, thanks to oil and oil product sales. The figure represents a record for the company and is down to the current rallies in oil prices.

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





Central and South America

A three-masted sailing ship belonging to the Ecuadorian Navy last week was called in to action when it apprehended a 'narco sub' off Colombia, according to the Navy's Twitter account. CNN reported that the barque Guayas, used to train naval cadets in seamanship, interdicted the narco sub, in international waters between the exclusive economic zones of Colombia and the Ecuadorian islands in the Pacific. Four men were taken into custody, the statement said, though it did not give any details on what narcotics might have been aboard.

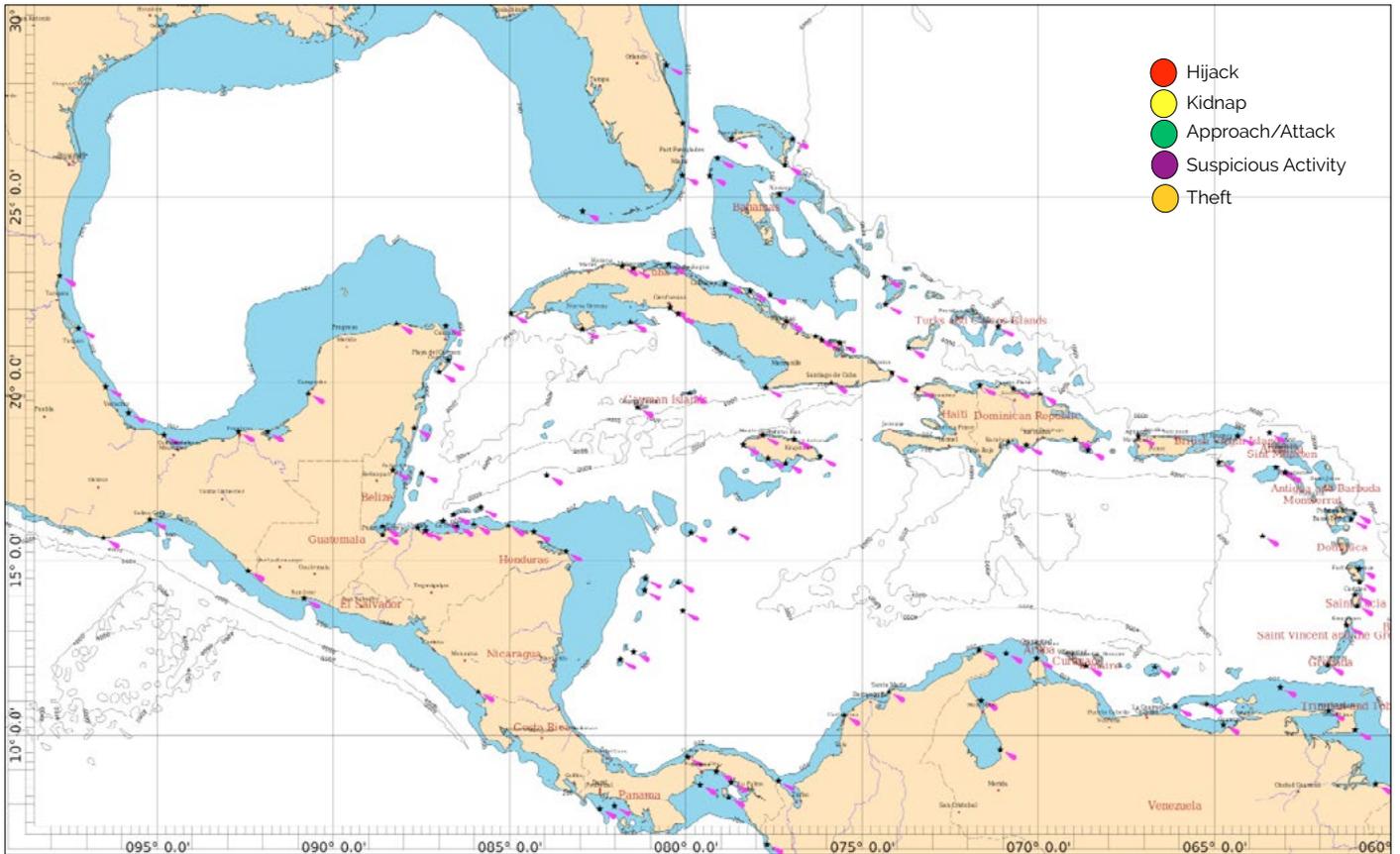
Incidents:

1. Six persons in a speed boat approached, fired upon and attempted to board a container ship underway at 1110 UTC in position 03:11.37S – 080:02.80W, around 1.64nm NW of Punta Jambeli, Ecuador. Master increased speed and commenced evasive manoeuvres, resulting in the speed boat aborting and moving away. Crew and ship safe. Reported (IMB) 18th Oct. (Not shown on chart)

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.