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# Weekly Security & Risk Report

19th January 2022



# MAST Intelligence

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UK Domestic

International Incidents

Industry and SIA Updates

LAND



SEA

West Africa

Indian Ocean  
Yemen, Somalia

European Waters



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# Issue 315

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Issue 315 of the series reviews, analyses and threat assesses the conflict-affected coastal states of Somalia and Yemen and associated waters, as well as ongoing issues facing the maritime industry in West Africa. The Mediterranean migrant crisis, security issues facing the UK and incidents affecting maritime security are also reported and analysed.

## 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 conflicts 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.

Follow MAST on LinkedIn and Twitter to keep abreast with these insightful weekly reports and more — including real time security updates.

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# Gulf of Guinea

The governor of Rivers State, Nyesom Wike, has ordered local government chairmen to supply him with details of illegal refinery locations in their areas, so that they can be shut down. In a meeting with local leaders and military officers on Jan. 14th, he “challenged the council chairmen to prove that they are not complicit in the noxious business”, Sun News Online reported on Jan. 15th.

## Incidents

**1.** Unnoticed, robbers boarded berthed Marshall Islands-flagged product tanker. Robbers stole ship’s properties and escaped. Theft discovered by the duty officer during routine rounds at 0500 UTC in position 06:21.10N - 010:47.79W, BMC Pier, Monrovia. Liberia. Incident reported to the Port Authorities and local agent. Reported (IMB) 9th Jan.

## Tullow Ghana signs deal with Navy

Media in Ghana report that Tullow Ghana has signed a \$23.5 million deal with the country’s Navy. The Ghana Navy will use its newly acquired vessels to enforce security at the TEN and Jubilee oil fields in Ghana’s waters for five years, reports state. Four new vessels recently entered service with the Navy, in order to improve its capabilities.

## Benin signs contract to digitize and safeguard its coastline

Hellenic Shipping News reported on Jan. 18th that Benin’s government has signed a deal with Vissim to deliver a coastal monitoring system for the country. The new system will provide greater information and security for the country, as well as boosting trade, it is hoped.

## Nigeria loses N6trn to poor infrastructure at sea ports –OPS, others

A lack of infrastructure investment, combined

with a mentality among agencies which sees them compete with one another for revenue, is damaging Nigeria’s income from maritime sources, it has been claimed. Maritime expert and President of Council of Managing Directors of Licensed Customs Agents (CMDLCA), Mr. Lucky Amiwero, said: “All are in the mad struggle to outdo one another in revenue generation.”

## Caution urged despite low number of reported maritime piracy incidents

The increased presence of international naval vessels and cooperation with regional authorities has had a positive impact – including, commended, robust actions of the Royal Danish Navy in neutralising a suspected pirate action group in late November. The overall reduction in reported incidents in 2021 is attributed to a decline of activity reported within the Gulf of Guinea region which has seen a decrease from 81 reported incidents in 2020 to 34 in 2021. However, while kidnappings at sea dropped 55% in 2021, the Gulf of Guinea continues to account for all kidnapping incidents globally, with 57 crew taken in seven separate incidents, the IMB said on Jan. 13th.

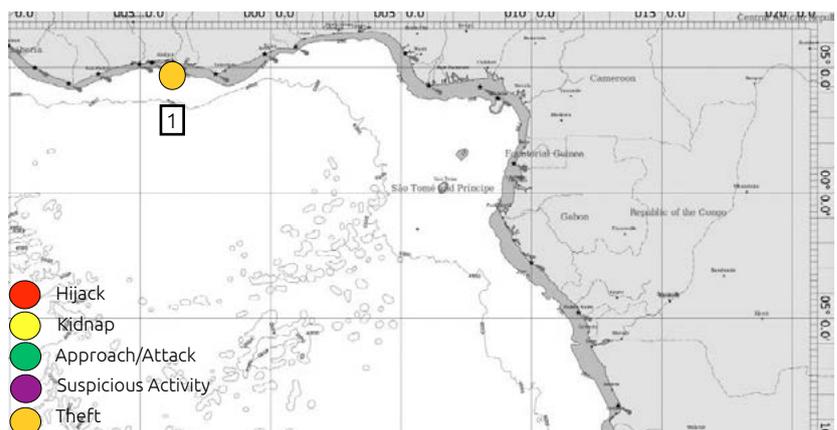
*For further information, please [click here](#).*

### Gulf of Guinea Piracy & Maritime Crime Figures

**2022**  
Incidents reported: 1 (MDAT-GoG/Others)

**2021**  
Incidents reported: 56 (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)



# Indian Ocean Region

The PLA Navy's 40th fleet has left Guangdong Province and is heading for deployment in the Gulf of Aden, Xinhau reported on Jan. 16th. They will provide convoy escort duties to merchant vessels in the region. The three ships also operate with special forces soldiers and two helicopters.

## Incidents

**1.** Underway MV reported suspicious approach by white-hulled craft at 0648 UTC in position 23:51N - 059:47E, approx 70nm East of Muscat port, Oman. Craft showed interest then departed. Vessel and crew safe, continued passage. Investigation ongoing. Reported (UKMTO) 11th Jan.

## Sri Lanka And Bangladesh's Role In Combating Maritime Threat In The Bay Of Bengal

The Nigerian Voice reported on Jan. 16th that Bangladesh special forces apprehended six pirates in the Bay of Bengal last Friday. Six armed men were arrested following an intelligence-led operation late on Friday night at sea. Rapid Action Battalion commander, Khairul Islam Sarkar, told the media: "We have started operations against pirates in the coast as well as in the sea," he added. We will continue this campaign. The RAB commander also mentioned that the detainees were involved in piracy on the basis of interrogation and action would be taken against their godfathers."

## Establishing maritime security Iran's goal in southern waters

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Ground Force has staged a combined joint military exercise, codenamed Mohammad Rasulullah (Muhammad the Messenger of God) (PBUH), in Iran's south-eastern province of Sistan and Balouchestan. The Mehr

News Agency quoted Iran's Rear Admiral Shahram Irani, who said that establishing maritime safety and security is one of the most important goals of such a presence.

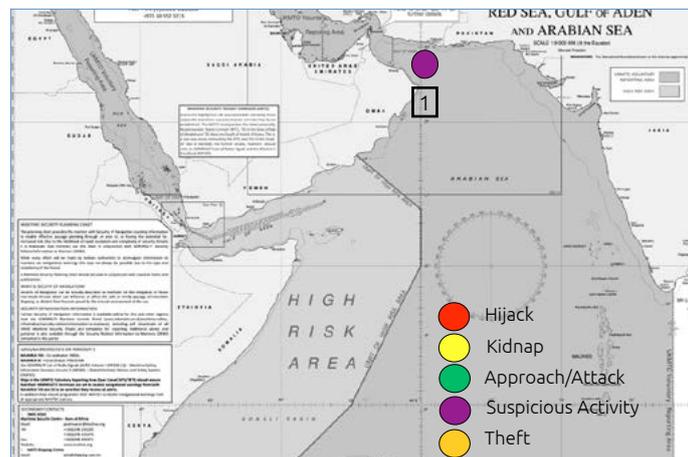
## INS and JMSDF hold joint drills in Bay of Bengal

The Indian and Japanese navies held a joint exercise in the Bay of Bengal last week, local media reported on Jan. 14th. The operations were designed to improve interoperability and included tactical drills and aerial operations. The Japanese MSDF is in the region on maritime security deployment.

## INTERPOL-coordinated Operation Flycatcher arrests suspected terrorists and foreign fighters

An anti-terror operation towards the end of 2021 in Sri Lanka netted six terror suspects, Colombo Page reported on Jan. 12th. Operation Flycatcher II ran for five days, led by INTERPOL across the country. It saw local law enforcement receiving specialised training on a number of identification techniques and information sharing measures and recorded more than 800 'hits' and new uploads to INTERPOL's databases.

*For further information, please click here.*



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

# European Waters

The Royal Navy are set to take charge of operations looking to limit migrant crossings in the English Channel within weeks, the BBC has been told. This move could free up the Home Office to focus on reforms to the asylum system, a government source said, according to a report by BBC News on Jan. 17th.

## 43 migrants feared dead in wreck off Morocco

The Quint reported on Jan. 18th that as many as 43 migrants are believed to have died when their boat capsized off Morocco. Rescue services have so far recovered two bodies, but it is feared that many more, including young children, died during the failed crossing attempt. Caminando Fronteras, a NGO, reported the incident off the coast of Tarfaya, Morocco.

## UK could send migrants to Rwanda and Ghana - report

The UK Times newspaper quotes unnamed government sources as saying plans are being drawn up to send hundreds of migrants to countries such as Ghana and Rwanda for processing and resettlement. "Ministers are willing to pay hundreds of millions of pounds a year to any nation willing to take up its offer, although none has done so," the Times reports, BBC News wrote on Jan 17th.

## Libya calls for international cooperation against illegal migration

Libya's Foreign Minister, Najla Mangoush, has called for greater cooperation on illegal migration, Xinhua said on Sunday 16th. The remarks were made during a visit to a migrant reception centre in Tripoli. There was no further information on what Libya itself may do to combat people smugglers and criminal militias operating in the country's coastal regions.

## Italian Authorities Detain NGO's Vessel After Port State Inspection

The OSV Ocean Viking has been detained by Italy after reportedly failing a safety inspection, Maritime Executive reported on Jan. 14th. This is the second detention in 18 months for the NGO rescue mission vessel. SOS Mediterranee alleges that they are being subjected to "extreme scrutiny".

## Migrant dies and 30 rescued by French authorities in English Channel

AFP report that one person died in the English

Channel, when their boat got into difficulty during an attempt to cross to the UK from France. Rescuers saved a further 30 people, including five who were stuck on a sandbank, AFP said on Friday 14th. French prosecutors in Boulogne have opened a manslaughter investigation in relation to the man who lost his life. French officials say that 30 migrants died in the Channel in 2021, with four others counted as missing.

## Morocco's Royal Navy rescues 72 people at sea

Morocco World News reported on Jan. 14th that the country's Royal Navy had intercepted a number of people on "makeshift" boats in the southern area of Morocco's Atlantic coast. The migrants on board were reportedly in 'bad condition' and received first aid from naval personnel before being handed over to the Royal Gendarmerie in Dakhla and Boujdour ports.

## More than 270 people cross the Channel on Thursday

More than 270 people crossed the English Channel in 10 small boats on Thursday 13th, the Home Office confirmed. Several young children were among the 271 migrants who were brought ashore in Dover by UK Border Force officers. French authorities also intercepted 75 people in three small boats, despite near-freezing temperatures on the Channel on Thursday. Thursday's figure is more than the entire total for January last year. More than 450 people have made the trip across the Channel in January so far, BBC News reported.

## Three boats with 96 people make the crossing

Almost 100 migrants crossed the English Channel in small boats on Monday, the Home Office has confirmed, the BBC said on Jan. 12th. Some 96 people crossed in three boats, with the French authorities preventing one boat with 56 people on board from making the journey.

*For further information, please [click here](#).*

# Somalia & Yemen

A suicide bomber in the Somali capital has injured government spokesman and former journalist Mohamed Ibrahim Moalimuu. Witnesses told VOA Somali that a suicide bomber ran toward Moalimuu's vehicle in central Mogadishu and detonated an explosive vest, VOA reported on Jan. 16th.

## UK parliament to debate Somaliland independence

The British parliament is expected to debate a motion entitled "recognition of Somaliland" which has been tabled by an MP, Gavin Williamson. Somaliland is Somalia's breakaway region. The British parliament has in the past discussed the matter and was expected to once again mention the issue on Tuesday 18th.

## EU Concerned by the Looming Expiry of Anti-Piracy Mandate off Somalia

Maritime Executive has reported on EU concerns over the possible removal of permission to continue anti-piracy work in Somalia's waters. Ongoing political uncertainty in the country and the short-term, three month extension to existing agreements means that the EU still does not know if it will be able to continue to pursue pirates in Somali waters after the election. The short extension has meant that it is very difficult to build long-term structures to maintain stability, MarEx wrote on Jan. 16th. When the resolution expires in March, it will also impact the EU's ability to protect WFP shipments in the region.

## Kenya drills for oil in contested area of Indian Ocean

Argus Media reported on Jan. 14th that Kenya has continued its oil and gas exploration in a disputed part of the Indian Ocean, despite last year's ICJ ruling on ownership of the area. Eni began drilling operations last month, they reported. There has been no comment from the Somali government, but it is widely expected to create a new source of friction between the two countries.

## US threatens action if Somalia misses new election deadline

The US has warned that Somalia could face sanctions should it miss its latest set of election deadlines. AFP reported that on Wednesday 12th, the US State Dept. said: "Somalia's elections are more

than a year behind schedule. The US is prepared to take measures against spoilers if the new National Consultative Council timeline is not met."

## Naval mines destroyed in Red Sea

Critical Threats reported that on Jan. 13th, personnel from the Yemeni 5th Military Region in Hajjah governate destroyed eight Houthi naval mines. In November and December 2021, they destroyed 27 other mines in the region.

## Yemen's Houthi Rebels Warn of More Attacks on UAE

Yemen's Houthi rebels warned that they might target more facilities in the United Arab Emirates after carrying out drone and missile attacks Monday 17th that killed three people. Police in the capital, Abu Dhabi, said the attacks targeted three oil tanker trucks at an oil facility and an extension of the Abu Dhabi International Airport. They identified the dead as two Indian nationals and one Pakistani and said six people were wounded, VOA reported on Jan. 17th.

## Houthis reject UN call to free UAE-flagged ship

Al Jazeera reported on Jan. 16th that Yemen's Houthi rebels had rejected calls from the international community to release the ship they seized in the Red Sea. Houthis claim the MV Rawabi was transporting military equipment, a charge that has been rejected by both the UAE and Saudi coalition.

## Concerns as attack cuts 120,000 people off from water supply in Sa'ada, Yemen

Aid agencies operating in Yemen are extremely concerned over escalation of fighting across the country, as a single attack last week hit water reservoirs in Sa'ada city, effectively cutting off 120,000 people from accessing safe water, ReliefWeb reported on Jan. 17th.

*For further information, please [click here](#).*

# UK Security News

Prince Harry is seeking a judicial review against a refusal of the Home Office to allow him to personally pay for police protection when in the UK. The US-based Duke of Sussex says his private security team does not have adequate jurisdiction abroad, BBC News reported on Jan. 16th.

## N. Ireland pipe bomb found in security alert was 'reckless' act

A small but viable pipe bomb has been found during a security alert in Loughguile, County Antrim. Police received a report that a device had been left in Tullyview, off Corkey Road, at about 08:50 BST on Sunday. It was made safe by ammunition technical officers and removed for examination, BBC News reported on Jan. 17th.

## Texas synagogue siege: Teens held in UK

Two teenagers have been arrested in England as part of the investigation into a hostage-taking incident at a synagogue in Texas on Saturday. British citizen Malik Faisal Akram, 44, from Blackburn, was shot dead after a standoff with police in Colleyville. Details of the ages and genders of the pair arrested in south Manchester on Sunday evening were not released. Greater Manchester Police said it was liaising with local communities and continuing to assist in the US inquiry, BBC News reported on Jan. 17th.

## Concern for UK security as anti-vaxxer groups evolve towards US-style militias

Counter-terror officials in the UK have expressed growing concern over the rise of US-militia style anti-vaccine groups in the country, The Guardian reported on Jan. 15th. Groups are organising themselves using encrypted messaging apps and are targeting schools and Covid testing sites for protests. Health experts have warned that their efforts are having an impact on the vaccination programme, The Guardian said. The Home Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT) is one of the new groups tasked with monitoring the problem.

## China denies interfering in UK politics after MI5 alert

China has denied interfering in UK politics after MI5 warned an agent of the country had infiltrated Parliament. The security service said Christine Ching Kui Lee "established links" for the Chinese

Communist Party with current and aspiring MPs. She then gave donations to politicians, including Labour MP Barry Gardiner, who received more than £420,000 from her. The Chinese Embassy in London accused MI5 of "smearing and intimidation" against the UK's Chinese community, BBC News said on Jan. 14th.

## London News

### AFTV's Mr DT jailed for stalking and kidnapping ex partner

London's Evening Standard reported on Jan. 17th that a popular YouTube creator and contributor to Arsenal Fan TV has been jailed for stalking, assaulting and kidnapping his ex-girlfriend. Liam Goodenough, also known as Mr DT, had his sentence increased to three years by the Court of Appeal.

### 4 people stabbed in horrific weekend of violence in the capital

The weekend saw further knife crimes in the capital, with four stabbing incidents reported, MyLondon wrote on Jan. 17th. Two 17-year-old youths and a couple at a residence in Harlesden were all injured in incidents over the weekend, the news site reported.

### Two sexual assaults on teenage schoolgirls in Greenwich being linked by police

Police in London have now linked two sexual assaults on two teenage girls in the Greenwich area. In the latest incident, a 17-year-old girl was assaulted after getting off a bus. The Safer Schools programme has been in touch with local schools and parents to warn them, the Evening Standard reported on Jan. 17th.

*For further information, [please click here.](#)*

# Global Security News

Britain is supplying Ukraine with short-range anti-tank missiles for self-defence after Russia amassed about 100,000 troops on its border, the defence secretary said. Ben Wallace told MPs a small team of British troops would also be sent to Ukraine to provide training, BBC News reported on Jan. 17th.

## ASG sympathizer killed in Basilan gunfight

Philippines security forces engaged in a gunfight overnight on Tuesday 18th with a supporter of terrorist organisation, the Abu Sayyaf Group. The terror sympathiser, Ajie Gomez, was reportedly in possession of explosives and government forces were attempting to arrest him when he opened fire. Gomez was killed during the exchange of fire and the security team recovered an anti-personnel mine and explosive components as well as a M16 rifle and other guns and ammunition, according to a report by Manila Bulletin on Jan. 18th.

## Sudan death toll rises to seven - medics

The number of people killed by security officers during Monday 17th's pro-democracy protests in Sudan has risen to at least seven, medics say. Civilians were shot with live bullets, the Central Committee of Sudanese Doctors said, calling it "a massacre by the coup authorities who were seeking to disperse the protests", both Reuters and BBC News said.

## Egypt confirms readiness to help African countries face terrorism and extremism

Egypt's Prime Minister, Mostafa Madbouly, has told an African Union summit that his country is ready to help African nations fight terrorism and extremism, Daily News Egypt reported on Jan. 15th. Madbouly expressed Egypt's readiness to aid its neighbours and dry up the sources of terrorist funding.

## Turkish security forces kill 44 terrorists in retaliatory strikes

Turkish armed forces have reportedly killed at least 44 terrorists in cross-border operations over the last week, the Daily Sabah reported on Jan. 15th. The counter-terror operations were a response to an IED attack on Turkish forces operating near the border with Syria, which left three soldiers dead. While no terror groups were specifically named, it is believed that the PKK organisation's Syrian wing, the YPG, operates.

## UN Report Says Terrorist Activities To Surge After Pandemic-related Restrictions Eases

The pandemic and its associated lockdowns have allowed terror organisations to exploit virtual platforms to recruit and radicalise more people, according to a UN report. The UNSC Counter-Terrorism Committee's report, released in December, has been picked up on by media outlets, particularly in Asia, where it is seen as even more relevant, given ongoing terror threats. Terror groups, the report says, "are already attempting to weaponize social alienation and grievances arising from pandemic-related actions and perceived State excesses." RepublicWorld in India reported on the findings on Jan. 14th.

# Industry and SIA News

## SIA offers grants for good causes using cash confiscated from criminals

The Security Industry Authority (SIA) is calling on UK charities and community groups to register their interest for funds to support good causes. Organisations will be eligible to apply if they are a registered charity or not for profit organisation and are able to clearly demonstrate the positive impact of the grant to public protection. The grants will come from a special fund that uses ill-gotten cash confiscated from individuals convicted of criminal offences within the private security industry. The SIA funds the grants from proceeds of crime confiscations orders following successful prosecutions. The window for expressions of interest is now open and will close on 21 January 2022. For further details, please click here.

*For further information, please [click here](#).*



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