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Weekly Security & Risk Report

16th February 2022



MAST Intelligence

UK Domestic

International Incidents

Industry and SIA Updates

LAND



SEA

West Africa

Indian Ocean
Yemen, Somalia

European Waters



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Issue 319

Issue 319 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.

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Gulf of Guinea

Members of the Ilaje community living in Twon Brass Local Government Area are leaving in large numbers after a number of attacks by 'sea pirates', Sun News Online reported on Feb. 10th. At least five people have been killed on the water, and local divers are searching for the bodies of missing fishermen following an attack on Monday 7th Feb.

Incidents:

1. Anchored MV boarded by two robbers at 0040 UTC in position 04:54N - 001:42W, Takoradi anchorage, Ghana. Robbers sighted climbing ship side by rope from a small boat. Alarm raised and robbers escaped. Port authorities informed. Reported (MDAT) 9th Feb.
2. Unnoticed, robbers boarded anchored Marshall Islands-flagged LPG tanker and escaped with ship's properties and stores. The theft was noticed by duty crew on routine rounds at 0315 UTC in position 08:44.29S - 013:17.70E, Luanda anchorage, Angola. On conducting a search it was identified that the perpetrators had gained access via the hawse pipe. Incident reported to port control. Reported (MDAT/IMB) 8 Feb.

Nigerian Navy destroys six kidnappers camp in Cross River

Personnel from NNS Victory destroyed six camps being used by kidnap gangs and sea pirates, The Eagle reported on Feb. 12th. The operations also saw hostages rescued and weapons recovered. The comments were made during a handover ceremony and no dates were supplied. There was no further information available about any arrests made during the operations.

Maritime security of critical importance to Gambia –EU Ambassador

Corrado Pampaloni, European Union Ambassador to The Gambia, has underlined the importance of maritime security for Gulf countries like Gambia, saying: "for a coastal country like The Gambia, maritime security is of critical importance". The remarks were made at a forum by the European Union Delegation to The Gambia on how the EU can further improve maritime security in the region, Voice Gambia reported on Feb. 11th.

NDLEA Seizes N2Bn Containers Worth Of Drugs

Nigeria's National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, working with the Nigerian Navy and Customs Service, intercepted an illegal shipment of codeine, the Independent reported on Feb. 11th. They recovered 40,250kg of codeine, hidden in a two containers at Apapa Seaport, which had been shipped from India. Sniffer dogs were brought in to locate the drugs, which were hidden among other cartons within the containers.

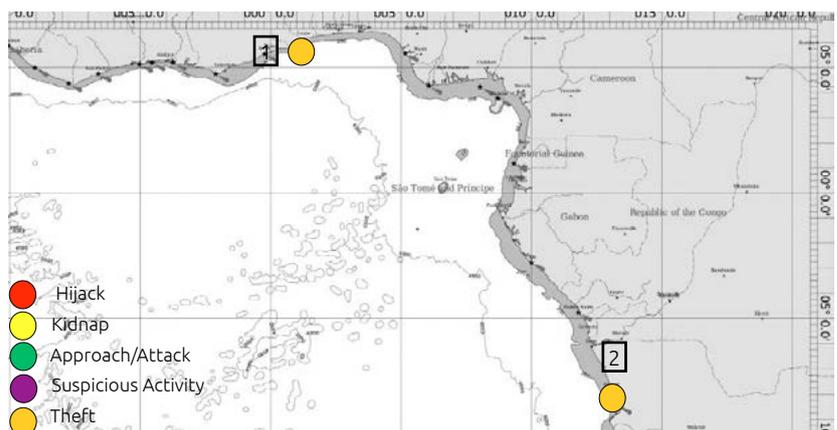
For further information, please [click here](#).

Gulf of Guinea Piracy & Maritime Crime Figures

2022
Incidents reported: 10 (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)
43 Crew Kidnapped: 130 (IMB)
Vessels Hijacked: 3 (IMB)



Indian Ocean Region

As well as being a large manned exercise, IMX 22 has seen the US Navy and International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC) deploy unmanned vessels as part of the exercise. Two Sailer Explorer unmanned surface vessels were deployed to test the capabilities of unmanned systems, MarEx reported on Feb. 11th.

Incidents: Nothing significant to report.

UN investigates Turkish ship that moored of Somalia

Nordic Monitor reported on Feb. 10th that the UN Panel of Experts on Somalia was investigating the MV Anatolian, which moored off Somalia's coast, around 1km off territory held by Al Shabaab militants, for 24 hours in August 2021. The incident took place after a reported pirate attack on the Anatolian, which included RPG impacts. "That area is not patrolled by Somali security forces and Al-Shabaab has a stronghold 30 kilometres inland in a locality named Ali Gaudud (coordinates: 3°10'42"N, 46°26'9"E)," the UN investigators concluded.

EMSA strengthens EU Naval co-operation

EMSA is providing EU NAVFOR with access to an integrated maritime monitoring solution which offers the possibility of consulting vessel position data, central reference databases and earth observation products. This is integrated with EU NAVFOR data – such as vessel risk level based on vulnerability assessments – creating a specifically tailored maritime awareness picture. The new cooperation agreement extends the long-standing collaboration with EU NAVFOR for an indefinite period and is a great example of how EMSA is serving maritime security and law enforcement communities worldwide.

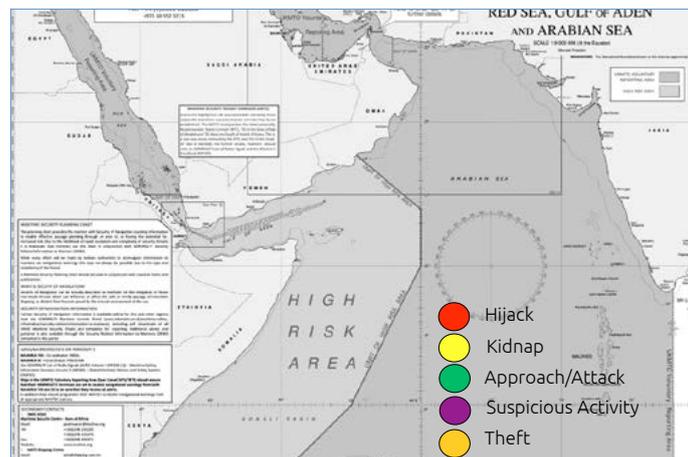
Seychelles mobilises the international community to continue focusing on maritime security in the Western Indian Ocean

The Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) held its 24th Plenary Session in Nairobi recently. The session was chaired by Honourable Eugene Wamalwa, Cabinet-Secretary for Defence of the Republic of Kenya. The Contact Group has been renamed: Contact Group on Illicit Maritime Activities in the Indian Ocean. The mandate of the Contact Group on Illicit Maritime Activities in the Western Indian Ocean would be in line with the UN General Assembly Resolution on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (A/RES/76/72, 9 December 2021).

Liaison officer from Mauritius posted at Indian Navy's Information Fusion Centre

A new International Liaison Officer has joined India's Information Fusion Centre (IFC), The Print reported on Feb. 11th. The new officer, from Mauritius, joins the IFC as maritime security ties grow between India and Mauritius and highlights the importance of the Centre, as well as the ongoing efforts to improve information sharing and maritime domain awareness in the region.

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 European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) has signed a new cooperation agreement with EUNAVFOR MED (Operation Iriini), in the areas of maritime security and surveillance, multiple sources of ship specific information and positional data, EMSA reported on Feb. 11th.

More than 220 migrants rescued in the last two days in the Mediterranean

Rescue NGO, SOS Méditerranée have picked up over 220 migrants, including children, in four operations over the weekend of Feb. 12th-13th, Then24 reported. The operations were conducted off the Libyan coast and also in Malta's SAR zone.

21 migrants cross Channel in yacht which then runs aground

The Daily Mail reported on Feb. 12th that a group of migrants crossed the Channel in a yacht but were forced to abandon the 20ft vessel when it ran aground near Rye Harbour, East Sussex, on Saturday 12th. Video footage showed people jumping overboard and swimming to a dinghy deployed by others onboard the yacht. Border Force personnel arrived and took at least 16 people into custody, while the yacht was re-floated by the RNLI.

Greek coast guard 'throw Yemeni migrant family into Mediterranean Sea'

The Anadolu News Agency has reported that a Yemeni migrant has said that he and two family members were thrown into the sea by Greek Coast Guard personnel. The trio had crossed to the Greek island of Chios when they were caught by the Coast Guard. "They put us on a small boat. There were also Greek soldiers with us. After twenty minutes of sailing, they removed our handcuffs. We had child-sized life jackets on us that we could not fit in. They threw us into the water. We had told the Greek soldiers we could not swim. They threw us into the sea and left," Mahgdi Kalla told Anadolu. Only two of the trio were able to reach land.

France: New surveillance cameras to stop migrant smuggling

InfoMigrants reported on Feb. 10th that France is to deploy a large number of new surveillance cameras around 20 locations on the coast. The new cameras are intended to help prevent smuggling efforts by human traffickers as well as alerting the authorities

to efforts to cross the English Channel. The project is funded by the UK, and 50 cameras are expected to be installed between Montreuil and Calais by the summer. Local government authorities in France as well as French police will have access to the images, but they will not be shared with their British counterparts, dpa reports.

French coastguard rescues 36 migrants in the English Channel

The French Coast Guard rescued some 36 people in the English Channel on Thursday 8th, The National reported on Feb. 11th. The group was returned to France, but there were no further details on whether they would be processed or arrested. The group had been attempting to cross the Channel in an inflatable boat.

Suspected Vietnamese people smuggler arrested and charged by the NCA

A man who is suspected of being a high-ranking member of a Vietnamese people smuggling network has been arrested by the National Crime Agency. 32-year-old Mai Van Nguyen, of Holloway Circus, Birmingham, was detained in an operation in the Woolton area of Liverpool on Tuesday morning (8 February). After being questioned by NCA investigators he was charged with the offences of conspiracy to assist unlawful immigration and money laundering and is now due to appear before Birmingham Crown Court. The arrest is the latest phase of an investigation into the smuggling of mainly Vietnamese migrants into the UK in the backs of lorries in August, September and October 2020. Two others have already been arrested and charged as part of the investigation.

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

Somalia & Yemen

Al Jazeera reported on Feb. 10th that Al Shabaab had claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing in Mogadishu on Thursday which left six people dead. The bombing was intended to kill election delegates in a minibus, who were on their way to the President's office. At least 13 people were injured in the explosion.

UN probes Turkish firm that delivered military equipment to Somalia without notification

The UN Panel of Experts on Somalia, authorized by the UN Security Council to oversee compliance with the UN arms embargo on Somalia, is investigating a Turkish shipping company. 'İstanbul İncirlik Lojistik ve Denizcilik Limited Şirketi' offloaded 44 "Kamaz" military-type trucks at the port of Mogadishu on April 30th, 2021, Nordic Monitor reported on Feb. 15th, but the UN was not notified. While Turkey has delivered seven shipments of weapons and equipment to the Somali government and informed the UN, this shipment of military vehicles was not reported, the UN said.

Calls for justice as four children sentenced to death over involvement with armed groups

Save the Children called on Somali authorities to intervene on Feb. 12th, after six teenage boys were sentenced by a military court for involvement with armed groups, with four receiving the death penalty. The teenagers were arrested in October 2020 in Galkayo, in the Mudug region of Puntland state in Somalia, for alleged involvement with armed groups. Four of the boys were 15 at the time of the arrest.

4 killed, 7 injured in Somali explosion

Xinhua reported on Feb. 9th that a bomb attack on a restaurant in Bosaso, Puntland had killed four and wounded seven others. Local security forces had launched a manhunt, but no group had claimed responsibility at the time of this report. ISIS operates within Puntland, and there have been recent incidents in Bosaso.

US to impose targeted sanctions in Somalia as political turmoil lingers

The US State Dept. is to make good on its threat to place those who obstruct Somalia's democratic progress under sanction, The National reported on Feb. 9th. The State Department said the punitive

measures would start with a travel ban on current and former government officials or anyone "wreaking havoc" with the delayed election.

Saudi airstrikes target Houthi rebel communications centre in Sanaa, Yemen

France 24 reported on Feb. 14th that coalition forces had launched airstrikes near the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology in Sanaa. The operation was designed to destroy communications equipment being used by Houthi rebels to control the drones they use to attack Saudi Arabia and other targets in the UAE.

Five UN Staff Abducted in Southern Yemen

Five UN staff have been kidnapped in Abyan, in the south of the country, AFP reported on Feb. 13th. The group was returning to Aden after a field mission when they were abducted. The UN is in close contact with the local authorities to secure their release, AFP said. The identity of the kidnappers is not known, although Houthi rebels regularly abduct locals, it is feared that al Qaeda may be involved in this incident.

Yemen's Houthis renege on new deal to prevent Red Sea oil spill disaster

After reaching agreement with the UN on a deal which would allow officials to remove one million barrels of oil from the poorly maintained FSO Safer, anchored off Hodeidah, Houthis have now apparently reneged on their deal. This was reported by Arab News on Feb. 6th. Houthis claimed that the UN was guilty of "continued disregard of its obligations" towards the tanker.

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

UK Security News

Two men have been arrested on suspicion of planning to steal fuel in a lay-by where police had parked, BBC News reported on Feb. 15th. A Derbyshire Police patrol was parked off the A50 at Aston-On-Trent when a car containing fuel cans pulled in and the occupants started to inspect the fuel tanks of nearby lorries.

Armed police and counter terrorism officers lock down street and arrest 11 people

Examiner Live reported on Feb. 12th that armed police in Halifax, assisted by counter terrorism officers had conducted an intelligence-led operation in the town and had arrested nine residents in one street on suspicion of firearms offences on Feb. 11th. Two further suspects were also arrested and two properties searched.

Anti-Jewish hate incidents hit record high in UK

The Guardian newspaper reported on Feb. 10th that anti-Jewish hate incidents have hit record numbers in the UK. Reports of anti-Semitism have now beaten figures from 2019. The Community Security Trust, which monitors anti-Semitism, reported 2,255 incidents in 2021, The Guardian said. It represents a 34 per cent increase on 2020.

UK national terrorism threat reduced from severe to substantial - meaning attack 'likely'

Sky News reported on Feb. 9th that the UK's national terrorism threat had been reduced from severe to substantial. The change was announced in a written statement by Priti Patel, the Home Secretary: "The Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) has reduced the UK national terrorism threat level from severe to substantial. This means that a terrorist attack in the UK is likely... When the threat level is at severe it means an attack is highly likely.

Foreign Office hit by "serious cyber security incident"

IT Pro reported on Feb. 9th that the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office had been the subject of a "serious cyber security incident" in January. The attack required the Foreign Office to call in BAE Systems Applied Intelligence specialists and was revealed in a public tender announcement. No formal comment on the incident has been made

by the Foreign Office, although the contract ran between Jan. 12th and Feb. 4th 2022.

London News

London Man Charged with Disseminating Terrorist Publications

A 19-year-old man from South East London has been charged with terrorism offences, following an investigation by officers from Counter Terrorism Policing North East. Mohammed Hussini appeared before Westminster Magistrates Court today (Saturday February 12, 2022) charged with four offences of Disseminating terrorist publications, contrary to section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006. Hussini was arrested in London on Tuesday February 8, as part of a pre-planned, intelligence led operation led by Counter Terrorism Policing North East and supported by the Metropolitan Police. Two properties in London were searched in connection with the arrest.

Hitman found guilty of gang murder of The Real Housewives Of Cheshire star's brother

The London Evening Standard reported on Feb 12th that a hitman who murdered the brother of a TV reality show star had been found guilty of his murder. Flamur Beqiri was shot and killed on the doorstep of his home in Battersea on Christmas Eve 2019 by Anis Hemissi, a Swedish national. Beqiri was a kingpin in an international drugs gang, the paper said. A feud between rival gangs led to the murder.

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

Global Security News

Gunmen in Mexico have killed nine people mourning the death of a man who died in jail last week. The nine were killed in two attacks in Ciudad Juárez. Hours later, the premises where the funeral service for the same man was being held, were targeted by attackers who killed six more people, BBC News reported on Feb. 15th.

Nigerian 'super cop' arrested in drug cartel case

A highly decorated police officer in Nigeria has been arrested following accusations he belongs to an international drugs cartel, police say. Abba Kyari, already suspended for allegedly helping self-avowed fraudster Hushpuppi to launder his money in the US, is now accused in a cocaine plot. Officials say Mr Kyari asked a colleague to help him siphon off part of a cocaine haul. They say he was caught on camera handing over \$61,400 (£45,400) in cash, BBC News reported on Feb. 15th.

Conditions no longer allow Mali operation - France

France has said that "conditions are no longer in place" to continue the fight against Islamist militants in Mali. President Emmanuel Macron has asked to reorganise French troops in the Sahel region. French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said the country would continue to fight against terrorism in neighbouring countries. France had already cut the number of troops in Mali, BBC News reported on Feb. 15th.

Saudi Arabia seizes 2.4 million smuggled captagon pills

Saudi Arabia's SPA reported on Friday 11th that the country had intercepted two separate smuggling attempts and had seized 2.4 million captagon pills. Captagon is an amphetamine-like substance which has seen huge use in Syria and Lebanon. Both drug seizures took place at the port of Jeddah, Al Arabiya reported. Port authorities are currently reviewing security procedures.

Russian teen jailed for 5 years over 'terrorism' plot to blow up virtual spy HQ on Minecraft

Euronews reported on Feb. 10th that a 16-year-old Russian boy had been jailed for five years on a charge of "training for terrorist activities" by a court in Siberia. The boy had built a replica of the FSB security

services building within the video game, Minecraft, and planned to blow it up. Investigators claim that the boy, along with two others, had been learning how to make improvised explosives and practised using them in abandoned buildings.

China's envoy to UN urges Taliban to take action amid terrorism threat

The South China Morning Post said on Feb. 10th that China is facing an increased threat of terrorism, following a UN report which said that terror groups had been calling for a jihad in Xinjiang, China. The country's ambassador to the UN, Zhang Jun, urged the Taliban government in Afghanistan to do more to combat terrorism within the country. The call for jihad was made by members of the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), a group the Taliban has ties to, along with the Uygur militant movement. China believes that ETIM has been responsible for ethnic tensions in Xinjiang.

Industry and SIA News

Register Today for Technical Track: Video Security Systems

In this technical learning series, SIA cover essential aspects of video surveillance systems as an integrated security solution. Learn about basic camera systems design, functionality and deployment and take a deep dive into device hardening, video authentication and data protection for hardwired and networked video equipment. By taking this course, you will learn about the tools and methods used to safeguard critical information (data) and be able to advise customers on video system solutions based upon intended use, system requirements and operational controls. For further details, please click here to visit the SIA website.

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