(U) WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report 17 October–20 November 2019

21 November 2019

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1. (U) Scope Note

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

2. (U) Warnings and Advisories:

1. (U) **MDAT-GOG Advisory 003/NOV/2019 UPDATE 01**. Category: BOARDING. Description: A merchant vessel (MV) was boarded by an unknown number of pirates in position 0345.56N - 00814.1E, on 20 November 2019 at 0420 UTC approximately 33 NM west of Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. The pirates have left the MV. A navy ship is in the vicinity of the MV. Investigations are still ongoing. Vessels are advised to exercise extreme caution in this area. Source: Reported to MDAT-GoG by email. Any queries regarding this advisory notice ring 0033 298 22 88 88 for further information. This advisory is not classified as a maritime security event and has not been verified by MDAT-GoG. This information is provided to inform maritime situational awareness for mariners operating in the region. MDAT-GoG is not responsible for the accuracy of this reporting. MDAT-GOG Watchkeeper Email: watchkeepers@mdat-gog.org. Emergency Tel: +33(0) 298 22 88 88.

2. (U) **MARAD Advisory 2019-012-Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea, Red Sea-Threats to Commercial Vessels by Iran.** Description: This revised advisory cancels U.S. Maritime Advisories 2019-004 and 2019-008. References: U.S. Maritime Alerts 2019-004A, 2019-003A, 2019-002A, and 2019-001A. Issue: Heightened military activity and increased political tensions in this region continue to pose

serious threats to commercial vessels. Associated with these threats is a potential for miscalculation or misidentification that could lead to aggressive actions. Vessels operating in the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, and Gulf of Oman may also encounter GPS interference, bridge-to-bridge communications spoofing, and/or other communications jamming with little to no warning. For more information about U.S. Maritime Alerts and Advisories, including subscription details, please visit http://www.marad.dot.gov/MSCI.21NM

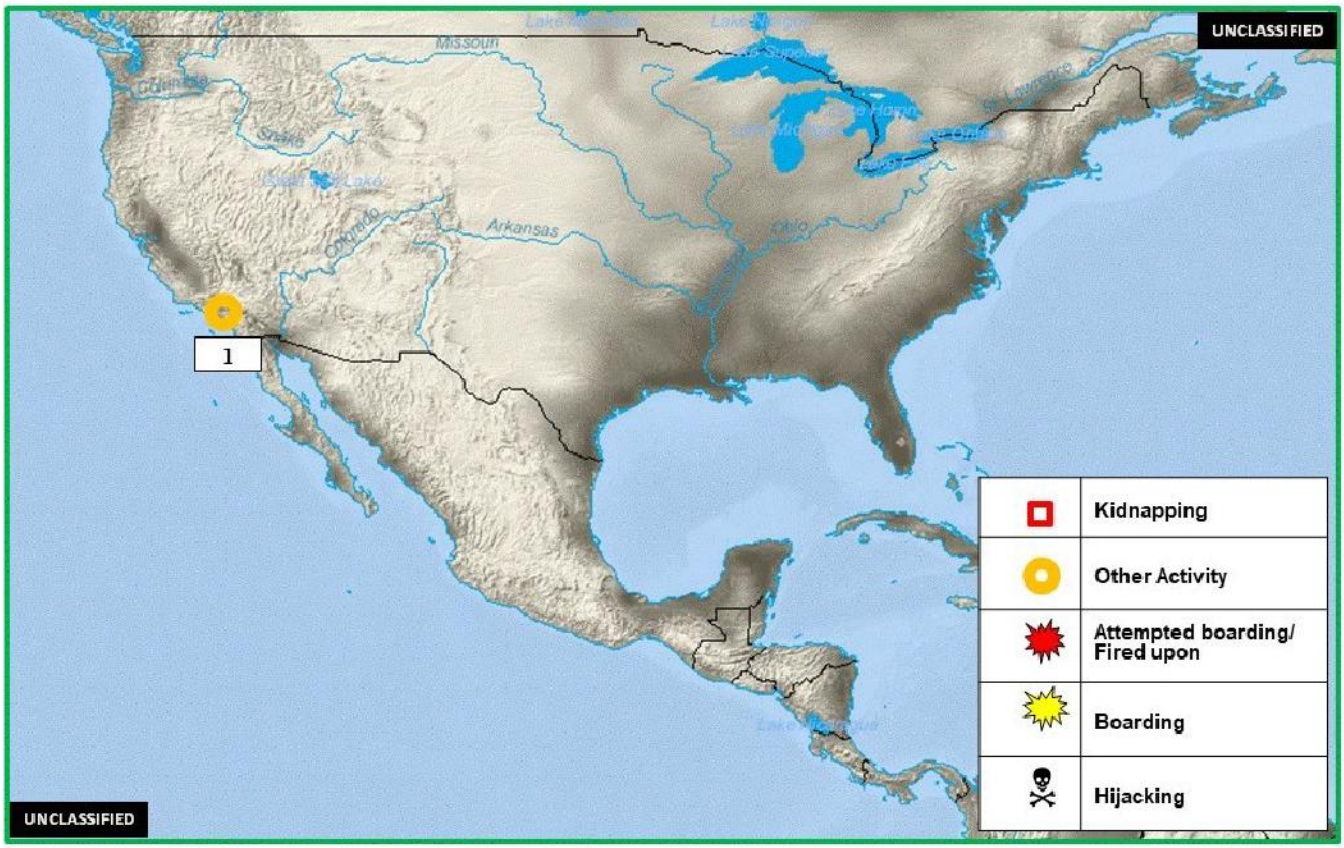
3. (U) Summary

1. (U) EQUATORIAL GUINEA: On 20 November, pirates attacked a tug boat approximately 33 NM west of Malabo.
2. (U) GREECE: On 18 November, three crew of Panama-flagged general cargo ship ARMONIA were detained by Kavala Port Authority officials when they were found to be in possession of fake seaman certificates.
3. (U) RED SEA: On 17 November, Saudi Arabia-flagged tug RABIGH 3 and another tug were seized by Houthi militia 14 NM northwest of Kamaran Island, Yemen.
4. (U) BAHAMAS: On 14 November, 10 Haitian men armed with knives hijacked a Bahamas-flagged fishing boat south of Great Inagua.
5. (U) ITALY: On 14 November, authorities in the Port of Gioia Tauro seized a ton of cocaine hidden in a cargo of bananas going to Germany.
6. (U) AUSTRALIA: On 3 November, Australia's Maritime Border Command ship CAPE JERVIS intercepted an Indonesian fishing ship operating two miles inside Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone northeast of Darwin.
7. (U) UNITED STATES: On 9 October, customs officials seized a cargo container in the Port of Los Angeles/Long Beach in California. The cargo was manifested as 'napkins' but officials found 14,806 pairs of fake luxury shoes. (www.cbsnews.com)

4. (U) Details: Monthly Incidents by Region

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

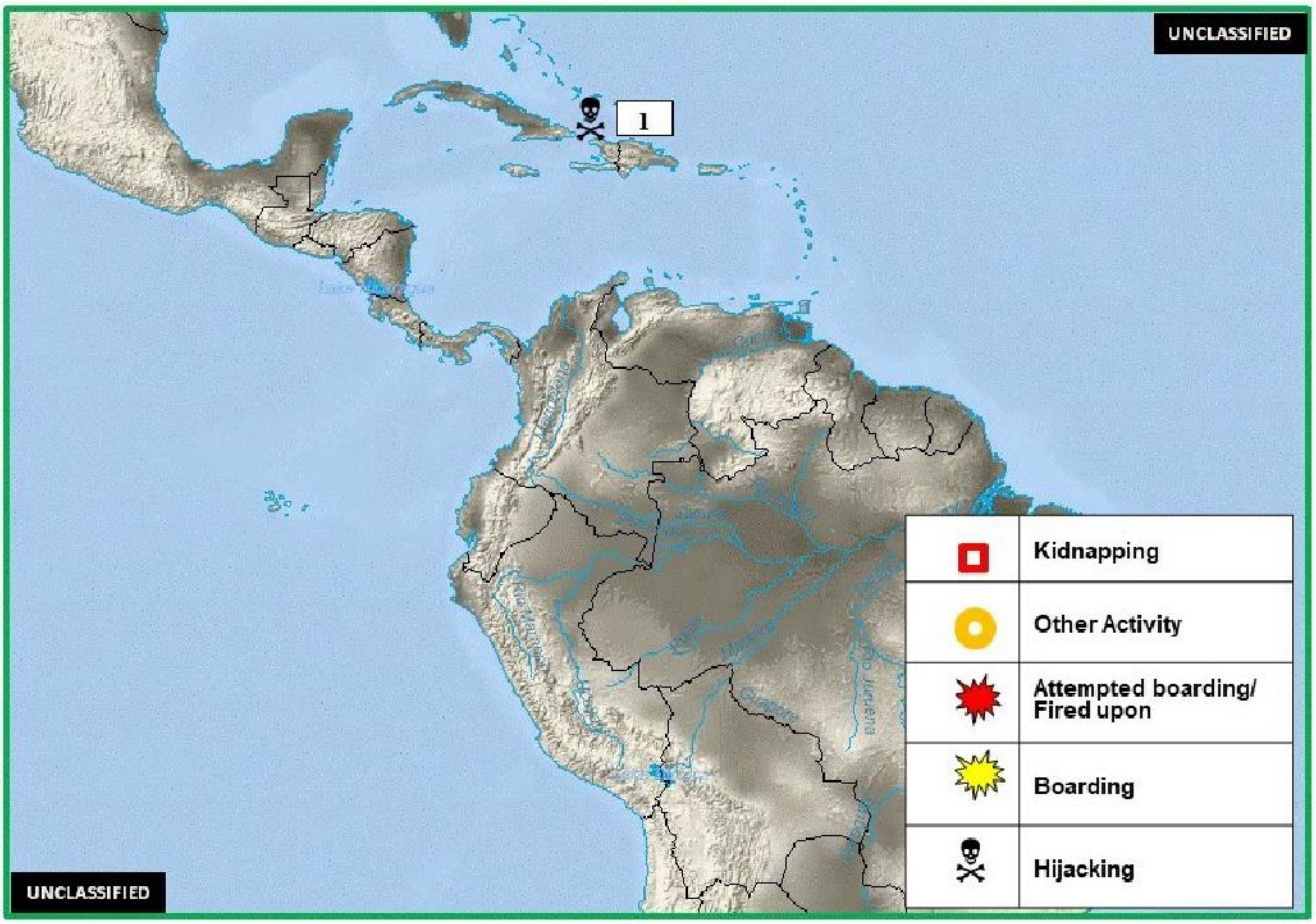
A. **(U) NORTH AMERICA**:



(U) Figure 1. North America Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) UNITED STATES: On 9 October, customs officials seized a cargo container in the Port of Los Angeles/Long Beach, California. The cargo was manifested as "napkins" but officials found 14,806 pairs of fake luxury shoes. (www.cbsnews.com)
2. (U) MEXICO: On 11 November, eight armed men in two fast boats attacked the Italy-flagged offshore supply ship REMAS near Ciudad del Carmen. During the boarding, two crewmen, both Italians, were wounded. Pirates ransacked the ship and fled. Injured seamen were transferred to a local hospital. REMAS moved to Ciudad del Carmen anchorage and anchored. (www.fleetmon.com)

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



(U) Figure 2. Central America - Caribbean - South America Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) BAHAMAS: On 14 November, 10 Haitian men armed with knives hijacked a Bahamas-flagged fishing boat south of Great Inagua. The Haitian men forced the three Bahamian crewmembers from the fishing vessel. The crewmembers had to swim several hours to make it ashore to report the incident. (www.bahamaspress.com)
2. (U) PANAMA: On 8 November, eight armed men boarded a yacht anchored in Bahia Nombre de Dios. They restrained and robbed the five person crew and escaped. Three crew were able to remove their restraints, went to Linton Bay Marina, and made reports there to the police, Coast Guard, and Port Captain. Two women were taken to the hospital for evaluation. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)
3. (U) MARTINIQUE: On 7 November, robbers stole a 24-foot rigid hulled inflatable boat and outboard motor from the La Dunette dock in St. Anne. A search was made in the surrounding area and the boat was not located. The next morning, a police report was made. Later that morning, the boat was seen by others nearby and aground in a place that had been well searched the previous night. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)
4. (U) PANAMA: On 3 November, five Spanish-speaking men boarded a sailing yacht anchored in Bahia Nombre de Dios. The two persons onboard were taken by surprise and were slightly injured in the scuffle, but cooperated as the armed men ransacked the yacht and stole cash, communications devices, electronics, and personal items. The yacht departed immediately for Linton Bay that night, where they made reports to the police, Coast Guard, and Port Captain. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

5. (U) PUERTO RICO: On 31 October, U.S. Customs and Border Protection personnel interdicted a vessel near Guayama. A search of the vessel revealed 1,902 kilograms of cocaine. Two men from the Dominican Republic were arrested. (www.cbp.gov)
6. (U) ST MARTIN: On 29 October, robbers stole an inoperable dinghy and 40-HP Honda outboard motor. The Gendarmes later recovered the dinghy/outboard (with only minor damage) which had been abandoned by the thieves. The Gendarmes returned the dingy to the owners. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)
7. (U) COSTA RICA: On 28 October, authorities seized one ton of cocaine concealed among a cargo of banana and lime concentrate inside a container at Moin Port. Authorities seized the narcotics after identifying a suspicious container during a routine inspection. The narcotics were bound for Antwerp Port in Belgium. (www.pviltd.com)

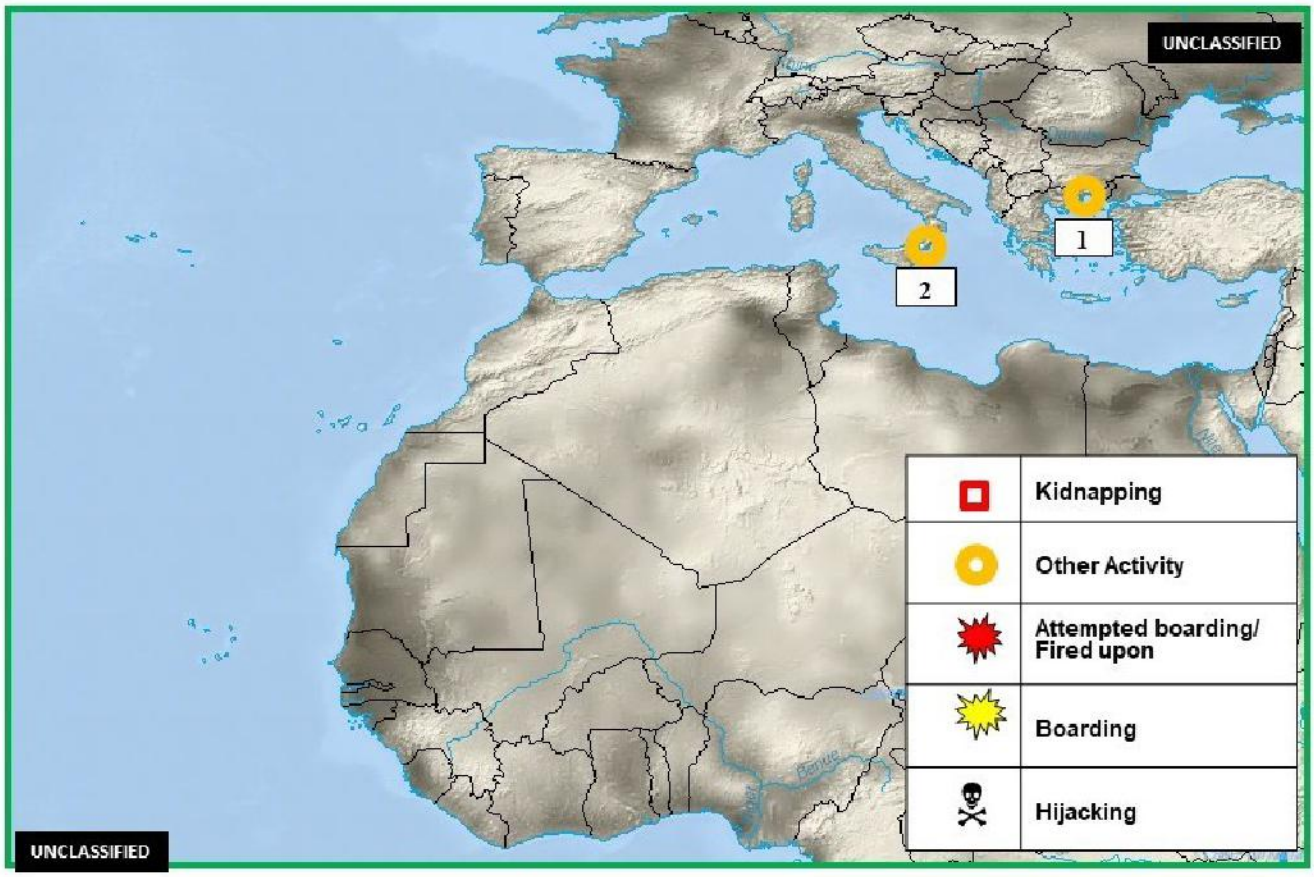
C. **(U) ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA**:

(U) No current incidents to report.

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

(U) No current incidents to report.

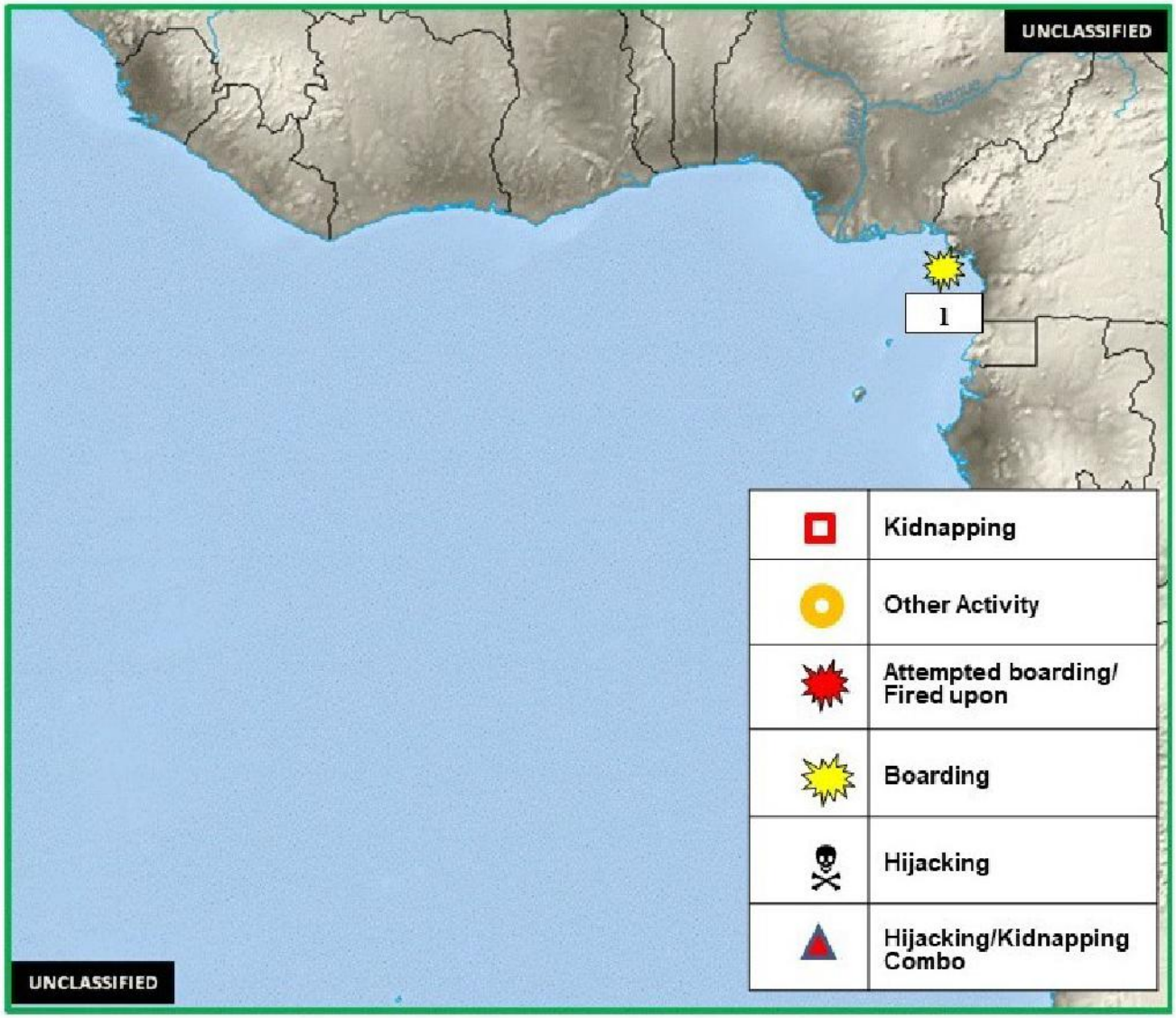
(U) **MEDITERRANEAN - BLACK SEA**:



(U) Figure 3. Mediterranean - Black Sea Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) GREECE: On 18 November, three crew of Panama-flagged general cargo ship ARMONIA were detained by Kavala Port Authority officials when they were found to be in possession of fake seaman certificates. The ship was detained for investigation. (www.fleetmon.com)
2. (U) ITALY: On 14 November, authorities in the Port of Gioia Tauro seized a ton of cocaine hidden in a cargo of bananas going to Germany. (www.ansa.it)
3. (U) LIBYA: On 27 October, two speedboats flying the flag of Libya fired shots at a German NGO rescue ship ALAN KURDI in international waters just outside Libya's territorial waters. The rescue ship received a report of migrants in distress. The NGO ship arrived on scene and found a large overloaded raft. ALAN KURDI's responders distributed lifejackets to the passengers and had begun to transfer them onboard when two white speedboats arrived. A crewman in one of the speedboats then fired a bow-mounted machine gun at the rescue ship. One Libyan boat took several of the migrants onboard, but these rescuees soon jumped off again, likely an indication of their reluctance to return to Libya. Despite the interference, ALAN KURDI's crew was able to rescue more than 90 people, and is heading toward Lampedusa, Italy. (www.maritime-executive.com)
4. (U) LIBYA: On 21 October, Libya's Coast Guard intercepted 126 migrants off the coastal town of Garabulli. The migrants were all nationals of unspecified African countries. Libya remains a key departure point for migrants trying to reach Europe, although attempted crossings have decreased since 2017. (www.pviltd.com)

F. **(U) WEST AFRICA**:



(U) Figure 4. West Africa Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) EQUATORIAL GUINEA: On 20 November, pirates attacked a tug boat near position 03:45N - 008:14E, approximately 33 NM west of Malabo. The pirates have disembarked the ship. An Equatorial Guinea Navy ship is in the vicinity of the vessel. Investigations are ongoing. (IMB)
2. (U) NIGERIA: On 11 November, up to 10 armed men attacked a passenger boat transiting to Port Harcourt, kidnapping four immigration service officers. (www.punchng.com)
3. (U) MOROCCO: On 8 November, a duty officer onboard a bulk carrier berthed near position 30:25N - 009:38W, Silos Terminal, saw four unauthorized persons onboard the vessel. Alarm was raised and crew was mustered. Seeing the alerted crew, the persons escaped. Nothing reported stolen. (IMB)
4. (U) SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE: On 7 November, armed persons in a skiff approached and fired upon a tanker underway near position 01:13N - 006:09E, 57 NM north-northwest of Sao Tome Island. Alarm was raised, vessel increased speed, and commenced evasive maneuvers. Fire pump activated and four parachute rockets discharged. Due

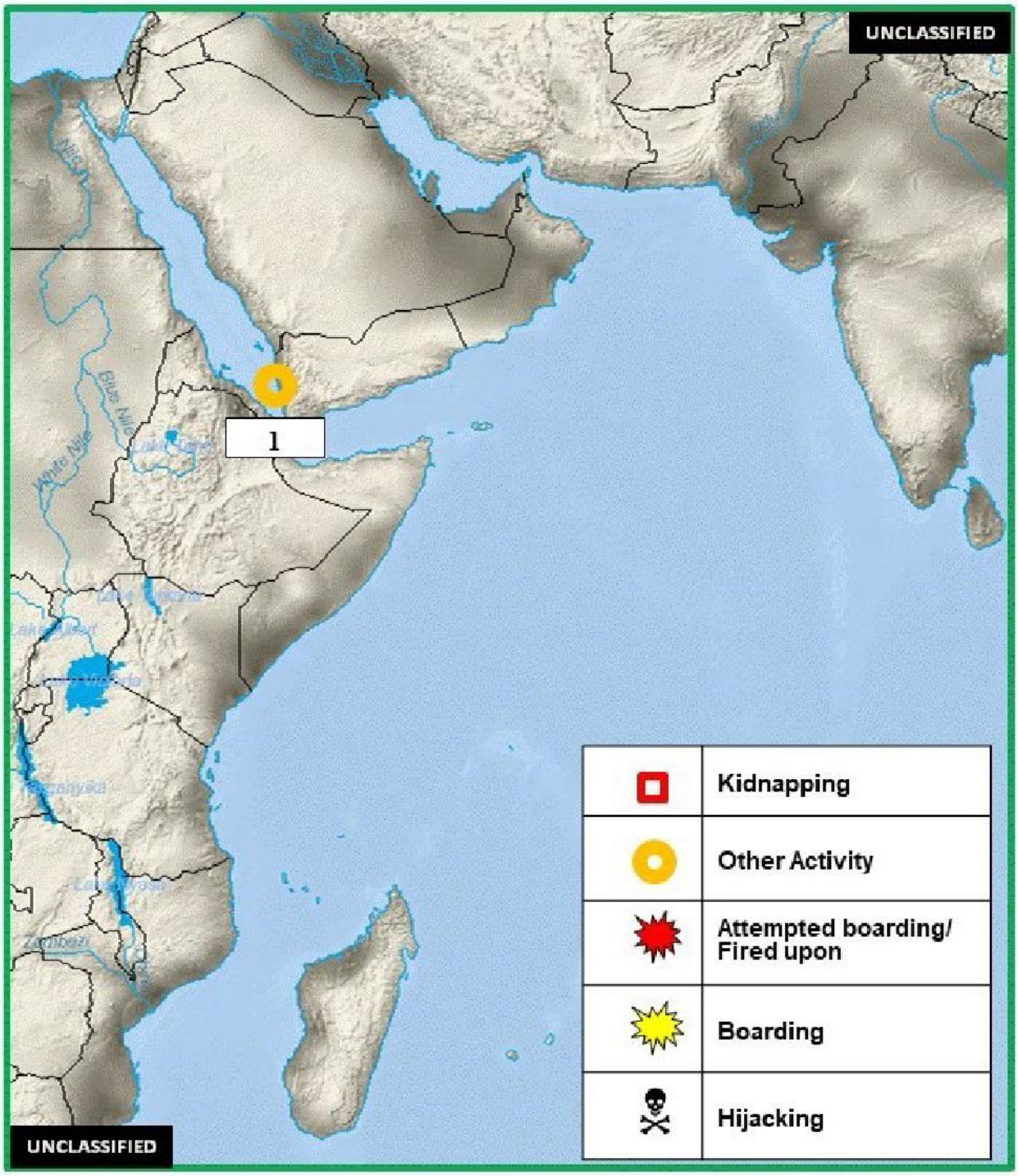
to the actions of the master and crew, the skiff aborted and moved away. Vessel and crew safe. (IMB; www.fleetmon.com)

5. (U) TOGO: On 4 November, pirates boarded the Greece-flagged tanker ELKA ARISTOTLE near position 05:58N - 001:15E, 9 NM south of Lome. Pirates kidnapped two Filipinos, one Greek, and one Georgian. One security guard was also shot and wounded in the attack. (IMB; www.marinelink.com; www.gcaptain.com; www.fleetmon.com)
6. (U) BENIN: On 2 November, pirates boarded the Norway-flagged bulk carrier BONITA near position 06:14N - 003:32E, 9 NM southeast of Cotonou. Nine crewmembers were kidnapped. (IMB; BBC; www.marinelink.com; www.gcaptain.com; www.fleetmon.com)
7. (U) NIGERIA: On 2 November, robbers attacked three passenger boats taking a group of people to a wedding in Degama Local Government Area of Rivers State. The robbers stole personal valuables and their boats, forcing the people to swim ashore. When a rescue boat was sent to retrieve the passengers, the robbers attacked it, killing two people. When a second rescue boat subsequently arrived on the scene, the robbers fired upon it and sank it. (www.punchng.com)

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

(U) No current incidents to report.

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



(U) Figure 5. Indian Ocean - East Africa - Red Sea Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) RED SEA: On 17 November, Saudi Arabia-flagged tug RABIGH 3 and another tug were seized by Houthi militia near position 15:25N - 042:18E, 14 NM northwest of Kamaran Island, Yemen. The tug was taken to Al Qaryah, Yemeni waters, off Kamaran Island. A number of sources said the tugs were towing a South Korean dredge, which was also seized.

Sixteen people, including two South Koreans, were on the three vessels. Press reporting indicates that the ships and crews were released on 20 November. (IMB; www.fleetmon.dom; www.sguardina.com; Reuters; www.koreatimes.co.kr)

2. (U) SRI LANKA: On 3 November, navy forces boarded and seized a fishing boat found to be carrying 224 kilograms of heroin near Galle. Seven persons were arrested. (www.adaderana.lk)

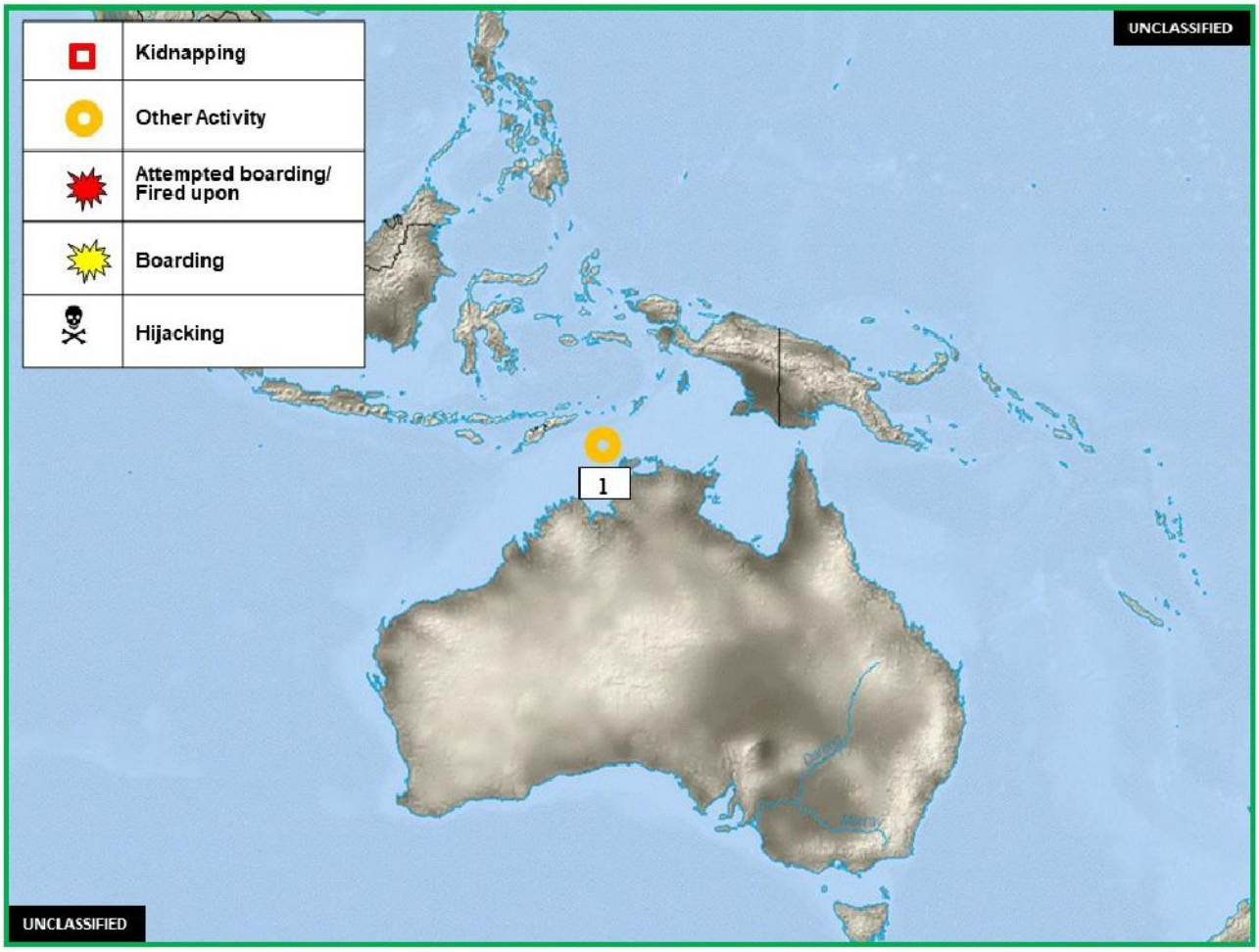
I. **(U) EAST ASIA - SOUTHEAST ASIA - INDIAN SUBCONTINENT**:

1. (U) SINGAPORE STRAIT: On 5 November, six persons in two speed boats approached a tanker underway near position 01:12.6N - 103:34.3E, 3.6 NM southwest of Singapore. Duty crewman noticed persons attempting to board the tanker and raised the alarm. Master increased the speed and took evasive maneuvers resulting in the persons aborting the boarding attempt. (IMB)
2. (U) INDONESIA: On 8 October, four robbers boarded a Saudi Arabia-flagged tanker anchored near position 01:43N - 101:26E, Dumai Inner Anchorage. Alarm was raised, crew was mustered and PA announcement made. The robbers escaped without stealing anything and a search was carried out. Incident reported to local agent. (IMB; www.pviltd.com)
3. (U) VIETNAM: On 29 October, coast guard authorities announced the seizure of Mongolia-flagged tanker OKI MARU for suspected fuel smuggling. When apprehended, the ship was carrying a cargo of 350,000 liters of diesel fuel without the proper permits and transferring the fuel to an unidentified Vietnam-flagged vessel.
4. (U) INDONESIA: On 21 October, robbers boarded the Singapore-flagged cargo ship CSK ENTERPRISE near position 06:01N - 105:53E, Cigading Anchorage. The robbers were sighted near the engine room entrance. The alarm was raised and crew was mustered. The robbers escaped without stealing anything. (www.arxmaritime.com)
5. (U) INDONESIA: On 20 October, a duty oiler on routine rounds onboard an underway bulk carrier was taken hostage by five robbers armed with a gun and knives near position 01:03N - 103:38E. The robbers threatened the oiler and tied his hands. They then stole ship's spares and escaped. The oiler reported the incident to the OOW who raised the alarm and notified Singapore authorities. (IMB)
6. (U) INDONESIA: On 18 October, five robbers boarded the Greece-flagged tanker HIRADO near position 01:04N - 103:41E, 4.1 NM northeast of Pulau Cula. They were spotted in the engine room. Alarm was raised and the robbers escaped. The ship was searched and nothing was stolen. (www.arxmaritime.com)

J. **(U) NORTHEAST ASIA**:

1. (U) SOUTH KOREA: On 19 October, the Korea Coast Guard (KCG) announced that it had seized two 40-ton Chinese fishing boats in the West Sea with 400 kilograms of illegally caught cod, squid, and Korean cero. The crew members violently resisted the KCG's attempt to seize the vessels, throwing hand axes and shackles at the Korean officers. They face charges of obstruction of justice as well as violation of the Economic Zone Fishery Sovereignty of South Korea Act. (www.koreaherald.com)

K. **(U) AUSTRALIA - NEW ZEALAND - PACIFIC OCEAN AREA**:



(U) Figure 6. Australia - New Zealand - Pacific Ocean Area Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) AUSTRALIA: On 3 November, Australia's Maritime Border Command ship CAPE JERVIS intercepted an Indonesian fishing ship operating two miles inside Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone northeast of Darwin, on Australia's northwest coast. Authorities searched the vessel and found a suspected illegal catch of 16 shark skins, 63 fresh shark fins and 60 kg of shark flesh. (www.fis.com)

5. (U) Appendix A: Further Contact Information and Resources

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

(U) Contact

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

(U) Other Resources

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

6. (U) Appendix B: Terminology and References

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

(U) **Terminology**

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

(U) The following terms have been adopted to describe the range of criminal anti-shipping activity and impediments to safe navigation in our worldwide reporting and analysis:

- (U) **Attempted Boarding** - Close approach or hull-to-hull contact with report that boarding paraphernalia were employed or visible in the approaching boat.
- (U) **Blocking** - Hampering safe navigation, docking, or undocking of a vessel as a means of protest.
- (U) **Boarding** - Unauthorized embarkation of a vessel by persons not part of its complement without successfully taking control of the vessel.
- (U) **Fired Upon** - Weapons discharged at or toward a vessel.
- (U) **Hijacking** - Unauthorized seizure and retention of a vessel by persons not part of its complement.
- (U) **Kidnapping** - Unauthorized forcible removal of persons belonging to the vessel from it.
- (U) **Robbery** - Theft from a vessel or from persons aboard the vessel.
- (U) **Suspicious Approach** - All other unexplained activity in close proximity by an unknown vessel.

(U) **Sourcing**

- Agence France Presse (AFP)
- Associated Press (AP)
- BBC News
- DNK Intelligence & Operations Centre (DNK IOC)
- EU Naval Forces (EU)
- International Maritime Bureau (IMB), London and Kuala Lumpur
- International Maritime Organization (IMO), London
- Lloyd's
- Maritime Administration (MARAD), U.S.

- Maritime Security Centre - Horn of Africa (MSCHOA)
- Marine Domain Awareness for Trade - Gulf of Guinea (MDAT- GoG)
- Maritime Asset Security and Training (MAST) Ltd
- National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), Navigation Safety System
- Noonsite.com (Noonsite), website
- Norwegian Shipowners' Mutual War Risks Insurance Association
- Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia, Information Sharing Center (ReCAAP ISC)
- Reuters
- Royal Australian Navy (RAN)
- Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN)
- The Maritime Executive (website)
- United Kingdom Maritime Trade Organization (UKMTO)
- United Press International (UPI)
- U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)

(U) The Weekly Piracy Update (WPU) and WTS reports are posted each week on the ONI Intel Portal and can be found at: http://www.oni.navy.mil/News/Weekly-Piracy-Reports/

(U) ICOD: 20 November 2019