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**FOR THE UGS MEMO 381/2016**

**IMB: Maritime piracy hotspots persist despite reductions in key areas**

*Intertanko Weekly News, No.6 dated 5/2/2016*

Piracy and armed robbery on the world's seas is persisting at levels close to those in 2014, despite reductions in the number of ships hijacked and crew captured, the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) International Maritime Bureau's (IMB) annual piracy report reveals.

IMB's Piracy Reporting Centre (IMB PRC) recorded 246 incidents in 2015, one more than in 2014. The number of vessels boarded rose 11% to 203, one ship was fired at, and a further 27 attacks were thwarted. Pirates killed one seafarer and injured at least 14. Kidnappings doubled from nine in 2014 to 19 in 2015, all the result of five attacks off Nigeria.

A total of 15 vessels were hijacked in 2015, down from 21 in 2014, while 271 hostages were held on their ships, compared with 442 in 2014. No hijackings were reported in the last quarter of 2015. IMB says one key factor in this recent global reduction was the drop in attacks against small fuel tankers around South East Asia's coasts, the last of which occurred in August 2015.

South East Asia still accounts for most of the world's incidents. Almost 55% of the region's attacks were against vessels underway compared to 37% in 2014. Most were aimed at low-level theft. IMB cites this rise on moving vessels as a cause for concern as it increases potential risks to the vessels and their crew.

In Nigeria, though many attacks are believed to go unrecorded, IMB received reports of 14 incidents, with nine vessels boarded. In the first of these, ten pirates armed with AK47 rifles boarded and hijacked a tanker and took all nine crew members hostage. They then transferred the fuel oil cargo into another vessel, which was taken away by two of the attackers. The Ghanaian navy dispatched a naval vessel to investigate as the tanker moved into its waters, then arrested the pirates on board.

No Somali-based attacks were reported in 2015. Following a new 55% reduction in the industry-defined High Risk Area, IMB warns vessels transiting the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean to stay particularly vigilant.



IMB offers the latest piracy reports free of charge. To request a PDF version of the report by email, please click here: <https://www.icc-ccs.org/piracy-reporting-centre/request-piracy-report>

### **Bulk trades to harvest an agricultural windfall from TPP**

*Lloyd's List, 2/2/2016*

One of the most dramatic elements of the historic Transpacific Partnership trade deal is the sweeping liberalization of agricultural trade among the member nations. A caveat: Understanding the implications of the TPP's impact for dry bulk trades is vital, but it's a long-term game — the impact of the trade deal on agricultural markets will only unfold over time. The pact is not yet in force. Trade talks on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, finally concluded on October 5 last year after a six-year run. The agreement is all set to change the trading landscape for the 12 participating Pacific Rim countries including the US, by eliminating many duties and non-tariff barriers which hinder fair competition of imported items with domestically produced commodities. Once provisions under the TPP are enforced, trade as well as economic growth in participating economies, which together constitute 40% of the global economy, could increase significantly. The TPP agreement will grant new and enhanced market access in countries such as Japan, Vietnam, Malaysia, New Zealand and Brunei, with which the US does not currently have a free trade agreement. As such, the US Agriculture Department's economic research service projects that TPP will increase agricultural trade by 6% in the next nine years. The TPP will reduce current tariffs that inhibit American products from being exported to the other TPP countries. On the flip side, the US has agreed to reduce current tariffs on sugar that is imported into the US from TPP countries.

### **App launched to help seafarers report abuse at sea**

*IHS Maritime Fairplay, 7/12/2015*

An app to help seafarers report abuse and atrocities at sea was launched by the International Bar Association (IBA) in collaboration with Human Rights at Sea (HRAS). The app is part of the EyeWitness project developed by the IBA through which photos and videos can be submitted, to help gather evidence against perpetrators of crime and bring them to justice. All that is needed is a smartphone onto which the app can be downloaded. The app collects important metadata, including GPS co-ordinates, date, and time, and the location of surrounding cell towers and Wi-Fi networks to confirm the date, time, and location the footage was recorded, said a press statement. All photos, video, and audio captured with the app are sent directly to EyeWitness. EyeWitness stores the information it receives in a secure, off-line facility, until it can be used in an investigation or trial. The app automatically opens in camera mode to quickly take photos or record videos or audio. It has two modes: secure and unsecured. To record, use the secure mode, indicated by a blue border around the camera viewer, said the statement. Information stored in 'secure mode' is password protected. The file can be submitted to EyeWitness by tapping and holding the file thumbnail to select and then clicking the submit icon located in the menu bar. The EyeWitness software has been available for a while and



did not need to be adapted to the maritime environment. But this is the first time that it has been targeted for application in the sector.

**EC funding gives green light to ambitious IMO energy-efficiency project**

*Web site: [www.imo.org](http://www.imo.org) (01 12/01/2016)*

*Network of regional maritime technology cooperation centres to be established through €10 million funding contribution.*

An ambitious IMO project to establish a global network of Maritime Technology Cooperation Centres (MTCCs) in developing countries is to go ahead thanks to a €10 million funding contribution from the European Commission.

The funds mobilised by the EC illustrate the EU's commitment to support the concrete implementation of a range of measures aimed at addressing energy efficiency and shipping emissions and, through this, contributing to the fight against climate change. This IMO energy-efficiency project is part of the Commission's broader climate financing portfolio aimed at helping less developed countries take climate actions in specific fields or sectors such as the shipping sector. The aim of the project will be to help beneficiary countries limit and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from their shipping sectors through technical assistance and capacity building. It will encourage the uptake of innovative energy-efficiency technologies among a large number of users through the widespread dissemination of technical information and know-how. The four-year project will target five regions - Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Pacific. These have been targeted for their significant number of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDSs).

**Lines and US shippers at odds over weighing rules**

*TradeWinds, 16/2/2016*

The impending deadline for the weighing of containers has put a leading liner lobby at loggerheads with US shippers. The Washington-based World Shipping Council (WSC) has slammed a report by US shippers claiming that new rules for weighing containers requires a US congressional inquiry because agricultural shippers in the country will be placed at a competitive disadvantage. The argument, outlined in a position paper drawn up by the Agriculture Transportation Coalition (AgTC), which claims to comprise the majority of US ocean exporters, says the Safety of Life at Sea (Solas) container-weight verification rules have been agreed without any outreach or "reality checks" with US exporters. The IMO Solas Convention requires that shippers submit the verified gross mass (VGM) of containers on or after 1 July, a move the US shippers believe burdens them with certifying the weight of equipment owned or leased by the lines. The AgTC says the situation "warrants a confessional inquiry into the IMO process, the means by which the US can be bound, and how this rule was adopted without US exporter or importer notice or input, or consideration of impact on the US economy". The shipowners' body also rejected claims by the AgTC that the rule had been taken without any input from the shipping community, and says several shippers' groups were involved in debates at the IMO that led to its multi-year investigation into the impact of misdeclared container weights, which ended in 2014.



**Australia and New Zealand warn China on maritime tensions**

*Financial Times, 19/2/2016*

Australia and New Zealand have warned China that rising tensions in the South China Sea risk damaging peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region and have urged it to resolve its territorial disputes through international legal channels. The intervention comes as both countries seek to boost economic ties with China, their largest trading partner, while simultaneously working with the US and others to temper Beijing's growing assertiveness. A communiqué agreed at a summit in Sydney between Australian prime minister Malcolm Turnbull and his New Zealand counterpart John Key urged restraint from all countries following publication of satellite images showing the deployment of anti-aircraft missiles to one of the islands China controls. Mr Turnbull made a direct plea to Xi Jinping, China's president, to avoid falling into a "Thucydides Trap" whereby a rising power creates such anxiety among its neighbours that conflict becomes almost inevitable. "We urge restraint on all claimants, not just on China," said Mr Turnbull. "And if China wants to avoid falling into the Thucydides Trap, as President Xi describes it, then resolving disputes from the South China Sea should be done through international law, through all of those mechanisms that are available to us."

**Towards a 2016 action plan for post-COP 21 climate diplomacy**

*Agence Europe Bulletin Quotidien (Brussels, 11/2/2016)*

Although COP 21 was a success, the EU's climate diplomacy didn't end on 12 December with the signing of the Paris Agreement, but will resume in earnest now over applying the agreement (even though it will not be officially open for signature in New York until 22 April). European foreign ministers meeting on 15 February are expected to give the go-ahead to an action plan for climate diplomacy in 2016, the Year of Action. The action plan submitted to the ministers for approval presupposes that the EU will keep the fight against climate change as a strategic priority in all its diplomacy, dialogue, forums (UN Security Council, G7, G20, ICAO, IMO) and all the EU's foreign policy instruments as well, in order to support low-carbon climate-resilient development. The EU's ambitions stretch far and wide, from getting global aviation and shipping to join the global fight against climate change to the search for innovative additional financing to meet financing commitment to developing countries, via taking account of the direct and indirect impact of climate change on international security, immigration, food insecurity and secure supplies of resources such as water and fuel. The draft action plan notes that work is needed to ensure the adoption at the ICAO in September 2016 of agreement on a market mechanism applicable to greenhouse gas emissions from international aviation and to encourage agreement in April 2016 at the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) on a global data collection system on the use of fuel and an agreement on HFC under the Montreal Protocol. Prepared by the EU's European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Commission, the draft action plan was endorsed on 10 February by the member states' permanent representatives on COREPER. It is annexed to the draft conclusions document that foreign ministers are expected to publish. The conclusions document will welcome the Paris Agreement as a major step forward in



multilateralism and the fight against climate change and aims to encourage initiatives like those of the G7 on insuring against climate risks and the measures to introduce renewable energy in Africa, work under way at the G20 on green financing and climate financing and the New York forestry statement.

**Talks focus on merger of equals - Britannia and the UK clubs to merge in deal to rival Gard**

*Tradewinds, 25/2/2016*

Two of the top protection-and-indemnity mutuals plan to join forces to create a superclub that would be bigger than current market leader Gard. The Britannia and UK clubs are in merger talks and if the deal wins shipowner support their managers, Thomas Miller and Tindall Riley, will also amalgamate. The clubs confirm they are in discussions with the aim of creating a world-beating mutual that would remain shipowner-controlled. There has been a long standing view that there are too many P&I clubs and the 13 International Group clubs could be slimmed down to maybe eight without depriving shipowners of choice. A successful deal may well be a catalyst for further consolidation in the P&I market and maybe even the wider marine mutual sector. It is clear that the managers see advantages in two pure-play P&I clubs, which have so far resisted the temptations of diversification, coming together. The logic of the merger is that it will create new opportunities, bring significant economies of scale, an ability to deploy capital more efficiently and a greater ability to invest in people and expertise. The intention is that both the Britannia and UK names will be preserved in some way in the new club. The UK Club covers an owned fleet of 135 million gt, with Britannia insuring 106 million gt. But there is also chartered tonnage on top of 100 million gt and 35 million gt, respectively. The combined owned fleet will be more than 240 million gt.