



Ref. T2-MSS/2.11.4.1

MSC.4/Circ.132
9 April 2009

REPORTS ON ACTS OF PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS

Fourth quarterly report (October to, and including, December 2008)

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its sixty-fifth session in May 1995, instructed the Secretariat to issue, as from 31 July 1995, monthly reports of all incidents of piracy¹ and armed robbery against ships² reported to the Organization and, in addition and on a quarterly basis, composite reports accompanied by an analysis, on a regional basis, of the situation and an indication whether the frequency of incidents was increasing or decreasing and advising on any new feature or pattern of significance. Further, and as instructed by the Committee (MSC 75/24, paragraph 18.41), the Secretariat has, since July 2002, started classifying separately any reported incidents of piracy and armed robbery **at sea** (international or territorial waters) *vis-à-vis* acts of armed robbery allegedly committed **in port areas**, as well as **attempted** acts of armed robbery.

2 Annexed hereto is a composite report covering all reported incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships which occurred between 30 September 2008 and the end of December 2008, and a regional analysis thereof, including a distinction between acts of piracy, acts of armed robbery against ships and attempted attacks.

3 The areas affected over the period under review were, the South China Sea (18 incidents, down from 20 reported last quarter), East Africa (51 incidents, up from 49 reported last quarter), the Indian Ocean (3 incidents, down from 6 reported last quarter), West Africa (13 incidents, up from 12 reported last quarter), South America (6 incidents in total, up from 5 reported last quarter, 1 incident in the Caribbean Ocean area, down from 3 reported last quarter, 4 incidents in the Pacific Ocean area, up from 2 reported last quarter and 1 incident in the Atlantic Ocean area,

¹ "Piracy" is defined in the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) (article 101) as follows:

"Piracy consists of any of the following acts:

- (a) any illegal acts of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by the crew or the passengers of a private ship or a private aircraft, and directed:
 - (i) on the high seas, against another ship or aircraft, or against persons or property on board such ship or aircraft;
 - (ii) against a ship, aircraft, persons or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any State;
- (b) any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or of an aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft;
- (c) any act inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in sub-paragraph (a) or (b)."

² "Armed robbery against ships" is defined in the draft Code of Practice for the Investigation of the Crimes of Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships (resolution A.922(22), Annex, paragraph 2.2) as follows:

"Armed robbery against ships means any unlawful act of violence or detention or any act of depredation, or threat thereof, other than an act of "piracy", directed against a ship or against persons or property on board such ship, within a State's jurisdiction over such offences."

up from zero reported last quarter) and no incident in the Mediterranean Sea, down from one reported last quarter. No incidents were reported in the Malacca Strait, the Arabian Sea, the Persian Gulf or North Atlantic Ocean. Most of the attacks were reported in port areas while the ships were at anchor or on berth.

4 During the period under review, about 309 crew members were held hostage, about 16 crew members were injured/assaulted, eight crew members were missing, 18 vessels were hijacked and one vessel was unaccounted for. In several of the incidents reported, the crew were violently assaulted/attacked by individuals or groups of two to ten persons carrying guns or knives.

5 The total number of acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships so far reported to the Organization is 4,821, out of which 91 occurred during the fourth quarter of 2008. Of these 94 reported acts, 39 constituted alleged attempted attacks.

ANNEX 1

**REGIONAL ANALYSIS OF REPORTS ON ACTS OF PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS
WHICH WERE REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN ALLEGEDLY COMMITTED DURING THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 2008**

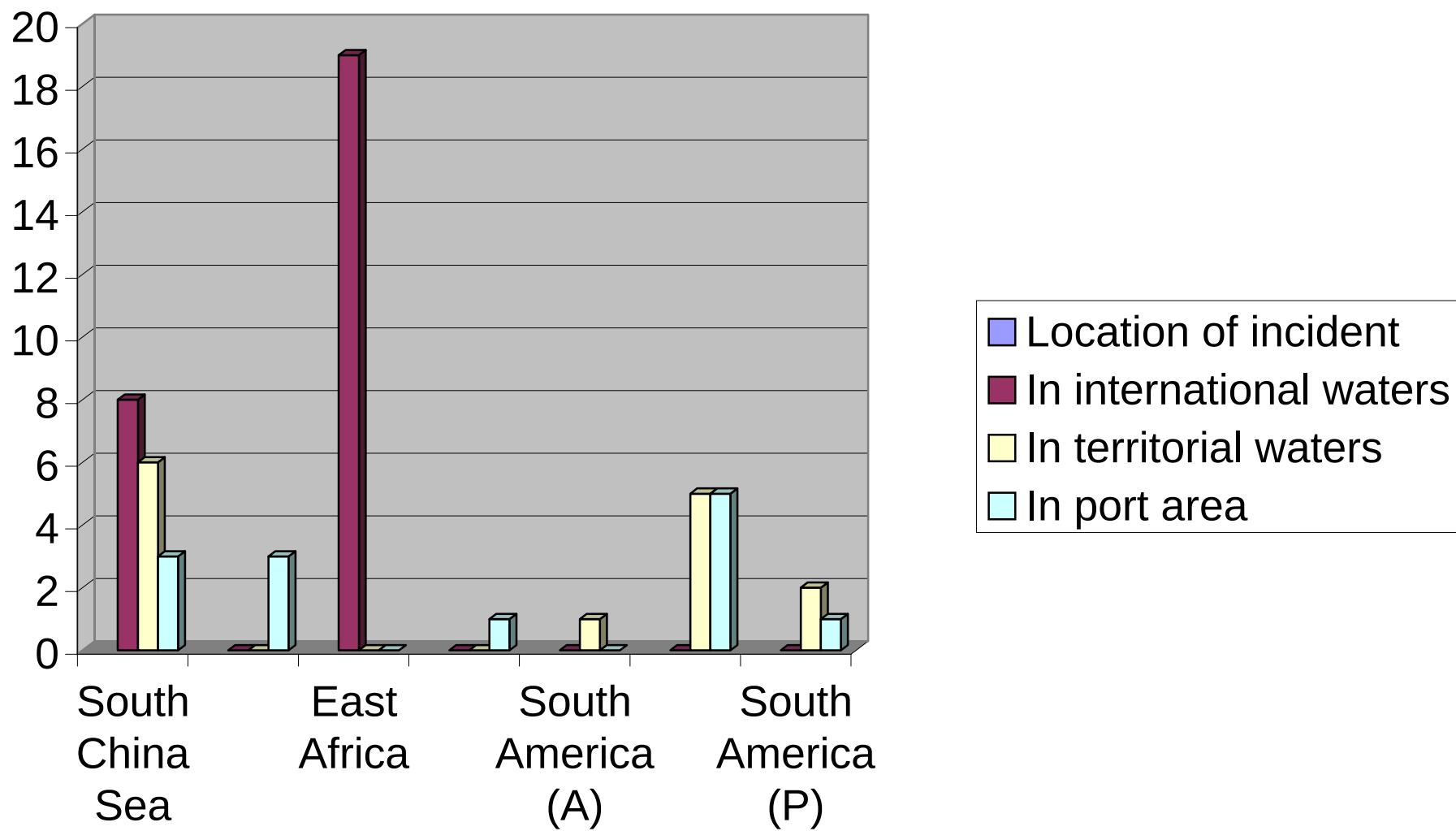
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**REGIONAL ANALYSIS OF REPORTS ON ACTS OF PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS
WHICH WERE REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN ALLEGEDLY ATTEMPTED DURING THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 2008**

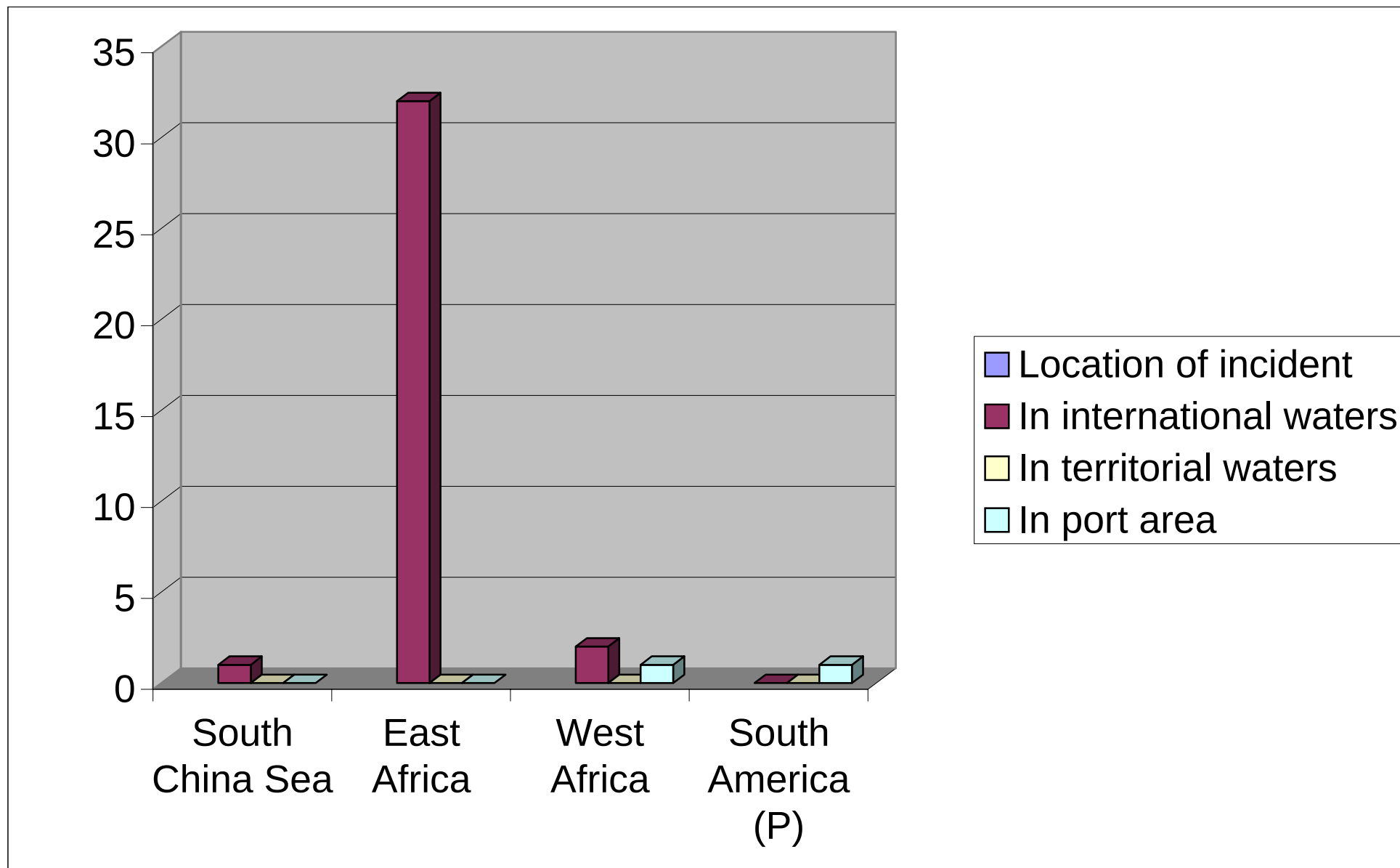
	South China Sea	East Africa	West Africa	South America (P)
Location of incident				
In international waters	1	32	2	
In territorial waters				
In port area			1	1
Status of ship when attacked				
Steaming	1	31	2	
At anchor			1	1
Not stated		1		
Number of persons involved in the attack				
1-4 persons		3		
5-10 persons		9	1	1
More than 10 persons		3	1	
Not stated	1	17	1	
Consequences to the crew				
Actual violence against the crew		2		
Threat of violence against the crew		21	1	
Ship missing				
Ship hijacked				
None/not stated	1	9	2	1
Weapons used by attackers				
Guns		25	3	
Knives				
Other				
None/not stated	1	7		1
Parts of ship raided				
Master and crew accommodation				
Cargo area				
Store rooms				
Engine room				
Not boarded	1	32	3	1
Not stated				
Other				
Lives lost (unit: people)				
Wounded crew (unit: people)		1		
Missing crew (unit: people)				
Crew hostage (unit: people)				
Assaulted (unit: people)				
Ransom				
Total number of incidents reported per area	1	32	3	1
Total number of incidents reported	37			

ANNEX 2

ACTS OF PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS WHICH WERE REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN
ALLEGEDLY COMMITTED DURING THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 2008

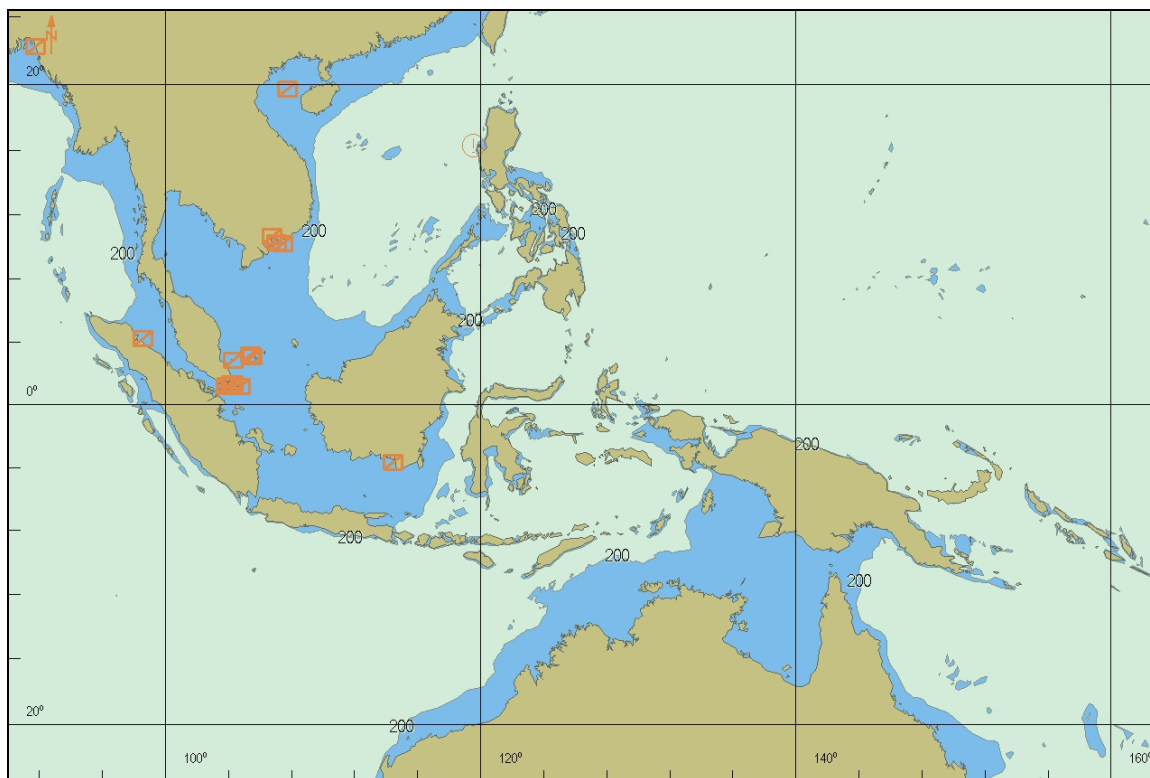


**ACTS OF PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS WHICH WERE REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN
ALLEGEDLY ATTEMPTED DURING THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 2008**



ANNEX 3

SOUTH CHINA SEA AND MALACCA STRAIT

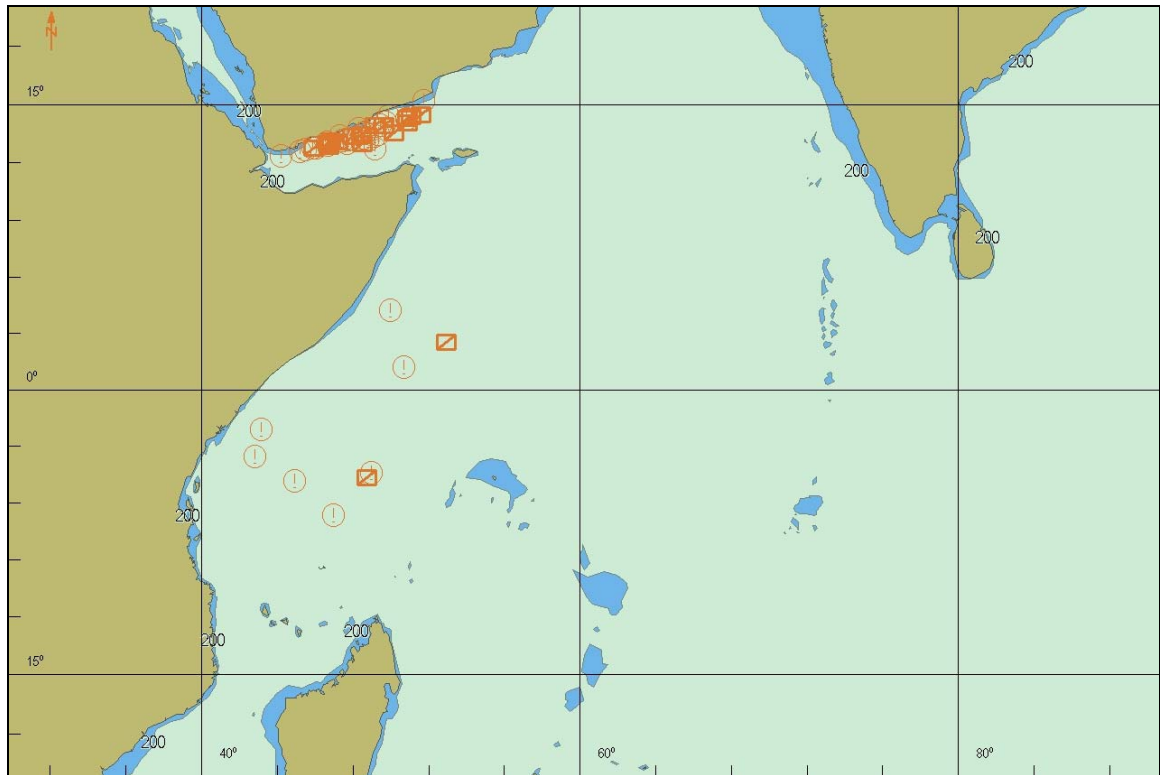


Allegedly attempted acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships



Allegedly committed acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships

INDIAN OCEAN AND EAST AFRICA

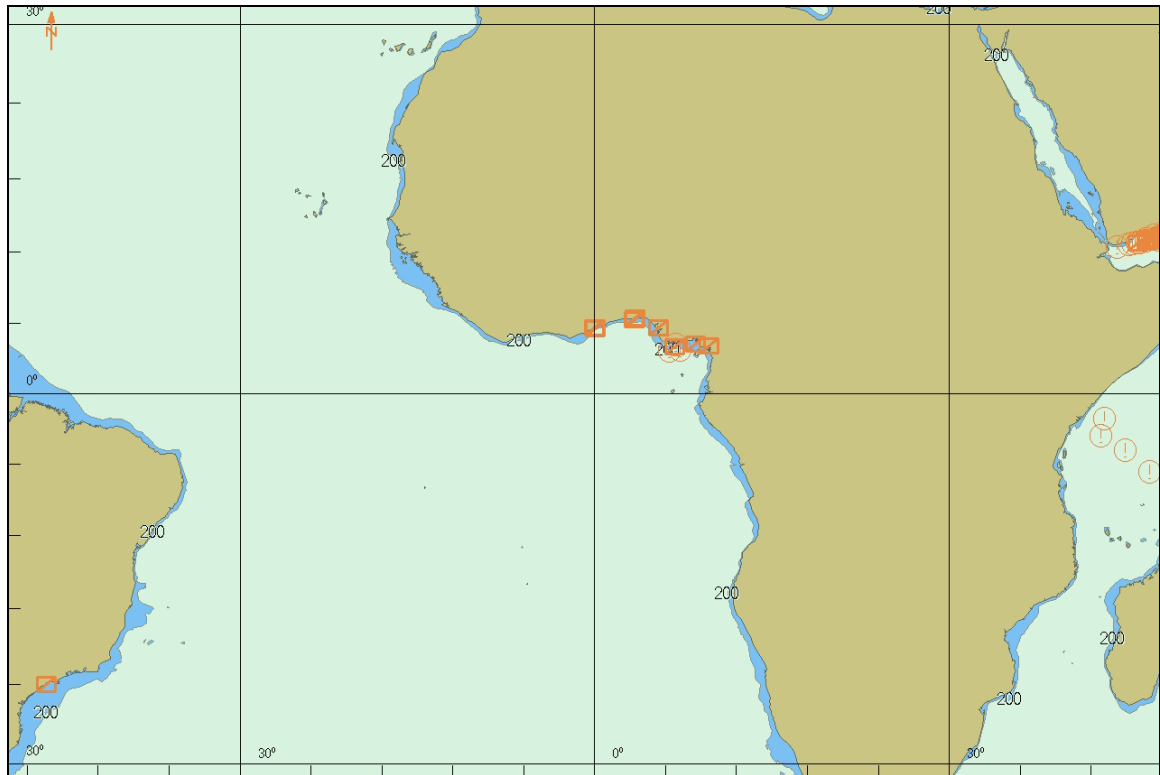


Allegedly attempted acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships



Allegedly committed acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships

WEST AFRICA



Allegedly attempted acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships



Allegedly committed acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships

SOUTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN



Allegedly attempted acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships



Allegedly committed acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships