

Piracy: 'An ABC of Terrorist Financing'



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Excerpts from Sen. Nathalie Goulet’s book



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We could not be further from the likable rogue played by Johnny Depp in “Pirates of the Caribbean.” Here, we are talking about human casualties and trauma, in addition to losses exceeding \$25 billion for the global economy.¹

Article 101 of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which was signed on Dec. 10, 1982, in Montego Bay, Jamaica, and came into force in 1994,² states that “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 of inciting or intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b).”³

Areas particularly at risk include the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Guinea and Southeast Asia.⁴

Experts consider that at least one ship is pirated every day on the world’s seas.⁵ The security risks are so high that they have urged international institutions to cooperate

Ten Nigerian pirates were convicted of hijacking the Chinese merchant ship FV Hailufeng II in the Gulf of Guinea in 2020. Getty Images



better. However, it would appear that the EU and NATO are not achieving the expected results. The number of acts of piracy and robbery remains stable around the world.⁶

GULF OF ADEN

In the first three quarters of 2008, there were 94 acts of maritime piracy in the Gulf of Aden.⁷ During the year 2020, there were eight incidents⁸, including the attack on the Stolt Apal tanker off the coast of Yemen, where no damage was recorded.⁹

On Dec. 3, 2021, the Security Council condemned the acts of piracy off the coast of Somalia.¹⁰

The challenges of terrorism and piracy in Central Africa were reported in a document published in 2015 by the Center for Political and Strategic Research of the University of Yaoundé.¹¹ Unfortunately, the security situation has since deteriorated due to a lack of international and regional coordination against this threat.¹²

GULF OF GUINEA

A 2022 UN Security Council report noted that maritime piracy brought about losses of at least \$1.925 billion per year to coastal

Iraq and Somalia emerged in 2005 as piracy hotspots, with the waters off Indonesia remaining the most dangerous in the world, according to an international watchdog. AFP via Getty Images

states in the Gulf of Guinea.¹³

The combined global revenue from attacks on ships in the Gulf of Guinea is estimated to be around \$4 million per year, with an economic impact of \$800 million.¹⁴

The Gulf of Guinea, stretching from Liberia to Gabon, has become the most dangerous maritime area in the world, even more treacherous than the Gulf of Aden between the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa.¹⁵ Dryad Global, a maritime intelligence research organization, recorded 130 kidnappings in 22 separate incidents in the Gulf of Guinea during 2020.¹⁶

SOUTHEAST ASIA

According to Siam Actu, South and South-East Asia have seen a spike in maritime piracy incidents since 2020.

In total, 51 incidents were reported in the region between January and June 2020, compared to 28 in the same period a year earlier.¹⁷ It is the highest total since 2015, when 114 cases were recorded in the first six months of the year.¹⁸

These catastrophic figures are a reason to expect greater international coordination to put an end to these crimes.

NOTES

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