

SCISP

AGENDA ITEM:
ADDRESSING PIRACY IN THE HORN OF
AFRICA, SOUTH CHINA SEA AND
DISPUTES, AND FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION

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"It's all begins in the sky"

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1. Welcoming Letters

1.1. Letter From The Secretary General

Honourable participants of ÇAĞDAŞMUN'25,

As the secretary generals of ÇAĞDAŞMUN'25, taking place from November 14th to November 16th, we would like to extend our warm welcome to all participants of this prestigious conference.

Model United Nations conferences are more than just a simple event, it is a torch that shines its light upon a variety of great opportunities, guiding the youth to the future through the brightness it eradiates. It grants the opportunity to be in the minds of diplomats and decision makers allowing the participants to learn the ways of decision making and debating, at the same time giving the chance to apply the learnings in real time debates. When organised with utmost care and responsibility, one conference can shape hundreds of individuals into leaders of the future.

In the first official edition of ÇAĞDAŞMUN, our mission is to achieve what most struggle to do: committees with a wide grasp of the past, present and the future, a marvelous organisation team to be in our most perfect form and most importantly, a mission to create space for bright minds to shine the most powerful, hidden gems to come to light for the greatest jewelries and disregarded souls to prove themselves as unignorable leaders.

It all Begins in the sky.

With our warmest regards,

Secretary Generals of ÇAĞDAŞMUN'25,

Mustafa Aslan and Kuzey Karlık.

1.2. Letters From The Under-Secretaries General

Dear Participants,

It gives me the utmost pleasure to serve as the Under-Secretary-General of the Special Committee on Maritime Security and Piracy (SCMSP) at this prestigious conference.

One of the largest problems in the current world is the illegal sea trade actions and piracy activities. So as the SCMSP committee we must take action and find useful solutions for a more peaceful world.

Every single delegate is encouraged to read this study guide carefully, conduct further and extra research specifically on their country, and come prepared for the committee. I sincerely hope that this committee will be an unforgettable experience for all of you.

For my closing remarks, I would like to express my thanks to the hardworking Executive Team . I also want to welcome each and every one of my delegates.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my handsome Co-Under Secretary General Mustafa Akca and my representative in the young generation Ömer Talha Demirel for helping to create such an enjoyable committee.

Kind Regards

Under-Secretary General of the SCMSP Hüseyin Demirel

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Dear Delegates,

I would like to begin my letter by welcoming all of you to the SCMSP committee, where I have the honor and privilege of serving as Under Secretary-General. Bringing such a committee to life at this prestigious conference is truly valuable for me.

In this committee, where we will address international maritime security in a highly layered and multidimensional manner, not only is our agenda item multilayered, but also our committee procedure. Along with this, we aim to equip you, the esteemed delegates, with multiple competencies. We hope that our goal will find its place with your efforts as well and that by the end of these three days, you will leave this conference having mastered more than one procedure, debate, and directive-writing skills.

I do not want to make my letter too long; I will leave you with the study guide that we prepared through a wonderful joint effort with the two most distinguished members of the Demirel family, with whom I have had incredible pleasure working throughout the process.

This guide is filled with everything you need and even more, and I wish to convey my endless gratitude.

I would like to thank our esteemed Executive Board members for giving us the opportunity to take place in this conference, and I wish you an enjoyable reading experience.

Sincerely,

Under-Secretary General of the SCMSP

Mustafa Akca

mustafa akca galata@hotmail.com

1.3. Letter From The Academic Assistant

Dear participants,

As the academic assistant of the committee, I want to declare that it's a magnificent honor to take a role in this prestigious conference.

The Special Committee on Maritime Security and Piracy (SCMSP) has great potential to ensure it is one of the best experiences of yours. With the agenda of piracy and smuggling, it mentions the biggest problems of sea trades. I would like to propose that you read all of this guide carefully and research your country's politics in detail.

Lastly, I want to express my gratitude to my undersecretaries general for sharing their most significant experiences with me and teaching me a lot. At the end of my words, I would like to express my gratitude to the Executive Team for providing me with this opportunity.

Kind Regards

Academic Assistant of the SCMSP Ömer Talha Demirel

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2. Introduction to the Committee

2.1. Nature and Purpose of Special Committees

Special Committees are committees worldwide that do not adhere to a fixed procedure; they generally simulate historical or futuristic topics such as a senate, a treaty, or a negotiation. Due to their structure, they differ from General Assembly and Crisis Committees. The reason these types of committees are needed stems from the fact that certain historical and futuristic discussions and meetings were not held under the United Nations General Assembly and that the negotiation process cannot be handled sufficiently and efficiently by the Crisis or GA procedures. Special Committees, with their committee-specific procedures, types, and objectives, aim to create the most efficient and accurate environment for the committee's potential or necessary setting.

2.2. Hybrid Procedure of GA Format to Crisis Format

Special Committees are formed by a blend of the procedural elements of General Assembly (GA) and Crisis Committees (CC), but all procedural arrangements of the committees are dependent on the Committee Secretariat. Nevertheless, there are some fundamental types of special committees. These are:

- Treaty Committees: In this type of special committee, when past or potential treaties are simulated, delegates usually role-play as officials authorized in the relevant field for their country, rather than as country representatives, and discuss with the aim of signing an agreement on the issue.
- Senate Committees: In Senate Committees, delegates take on the roles of members of a parliament or a senate and typically engage in discussion and problem-solving using the procedures of the senate to which the committee belongs.

Although Special Committees generally follow different procedures, they have some fundamental differences from GA and CC committees. The primary difference is that the delegates in a special committee are often more authorized and part of the decision-making mechanism compared to delegates in GA committees. Furthermore, while most special committees utilize the use of directives, verbal discussion and problem-solving are also central to the committee's work.

2.3. Mandate and Jurisdiction of SCMSP

The Special Committee on Maritime Security and Piracy (SCMSP) is being detached from the United Nations General Assembly as a special committee. The purpose of the committee is to ensure the security of civilian and commercial marine

vessels; to monitor or evaluate the actions of military navies and organizations; to prevent piracy against commercial or civilian vessels; and to stop maritime smuggling in national territorial waters, international seas, sea trade routes, and oceans. The SCMSP works to resolve issues and conflicts by convening upon the request of a specific party during extraordinary circumstances or international conflicts for the stated purposes. Member states of the committee are obliged to send a relevant minister or an authorized official delegate from their country for each meeting. Therefore, the adoption of decisions by a majority vote in SCMSP meetings signifies that the mentioned decisions are approved and will be implemented by all member countries.

2.4. Expected Delegate Mindset and Required Researches

The perspective of the delegates is of great importance due to the committee's powers and its status as a special committee. Since the committee is located in a region with intensive international trade, the decisions made and the proposed solutions have the potential to create a global impact, especially for the states active in the region. Consequently, as a delegate, your country's policy, your country's economic interests, current or potential allies, or global and regional rivals are important factors to consider during the resolution phase. Therefore, while working to solve the region's problems during the resolution phase, meticulous attention must be paid to national policies.

When working on the committee, it is necessary to understand the regional problems and the relationships surrounding this region. So the characteristics of the region and the causes of the mentioned problems must be t investigated. Also inter-country relations and diplomacy, the competence or power of countries in the region, and the demands of countries regarding the region are important subjects that need to be researched.

2.5. Key Terminology in Maritime Security

İmportant terms and key words can be listed as follows:

- Piracy: Act of violence perpetrated for private purposes in open sea areas and beyond territorial waters.
 - Smuggling: Goods prohibited in trade
- Armed Robbery at Sea: Any illegal act of violence, detention and depredation against ships
- Freedom of Navigation: A principle stemming from international customary law that a ship of any flag shall navigate uninterrupted by other states, except where some limitations of the freedom of navigation are permitted under international law.
- Territorial Waters: Area of the sea immediately adjacent to the shores of a state and subject to the territorial jurisdiction of that state.
- Counter-Piracy Operations: Economical, social or military operations that aims to decrease bad consequences of piracy or prevent totally at the seas

- Non-State Actor: an individual or organization that has significant political influence but is not allied to any particular country or state.
- P&I Club: associations of shipowners and charterers, owned and controlled by the insured shipowner or charterer members.

3. Crisis Section

3.1. Nature and Purpose of Crisis

Crisis committees, unlike the classical MUN format, take as a basis a more dynamic, fast, and scenario-based negotiation structure. The main purpose of these committees is to include delegates in decision-making processes in international crisis environments that develop instantly and to simulate how real-world diplomacy functions under pressure. With this aspect, crisis committees highlight not only policy production but also the abilities of strategic thinking, giving fast reactions, and making multidimensional analysis.

Because of the nature of crisis committees, events do not progress in a linear way. Periodic "updates" provided by the Crisis Directorate remind delegates that the international environment they are in is constantly changing. These changes can sometimes be a military development, sometimes an economic shock, and sometimes a rupture occurring in domestic politics. While responding to these developments, delegates must consider national interests, regional balances, and international law at the same time.

Another important aspect of crisis committees is that individual and collective action constantly affect each other. Delegates both work in coordination with their own crisis cabinets and participate in the diplomatic processes carried out in the committee in general. This two-way structure closely reflects real-world decision-making mechanisms. In addition, every decision made, every directive written, and every strategy created directly shapes the course of the committee; that is, the actions of the delegates produce results.

The purpose of crisis committees is not only to bring a situation under control. It is also to understand why crises emerge, evaluate their possible consequences, and develop sustainable solutions. For this reason, committees encourage delegates to think about both short-term urgent intervention and long-term stability. As a result, crisis committees provide the opportunity for delegates to develop a comprehensive perspective in interconnected fields such as international politics, military strategy, economy, society, and security.

3.2. How Crisis Will Function in SCMSP

The SCMSP (Security Council on Maritime Security and Piracy) committee, unlike classical crisis committees, brings together both the diplomatic structure of the Security Council and maritime-focused crisis scenarios that require rapid response within the same framework. For this reason, the impact of the decisions taken in the committee, the directives issued, and the negotiations carried out is felt on both a regional and global scale.

The committee will operate through three main lines of functioning: the diplomatic process, operational crisis response, and technical-maritime-focused developments. The simultaneous progression of these three lines requires delegates not only to make political decisions but also to follow developments on the ground.

I. Diplomatic Process

Since SCMSP operates in the format of the United Nations Security Council, delegates will negotiate in formal sessions, prepare drafts, and present solution documents. However, due to the crisis format, this process will not be based on static and long discussions. Every diplomatic step will be directly dependent on the flow of events presented by the crisis directorate; in other words, every step taken by the delegates can shape developments on the ground, and every report coming from the field can change diplomatic balances. This reciprocal relationship will direct delegates to think both quickly and strategically.

II. Operational Crisis Response

One of the most distinctive aspects of SCMSP is that delegates take on roles not only as diplomatic representatives but also as national decision-making actors. Delegates will convey their individual or country-specific action plans through "directives"; these directives may include military operations, intelligence-gathering processes, economic moves, the coordination of technical teams on the ground, or the deployment of national fleets.

With this aspect, the committee will simulate the real nature of the maritime security field. The crisis directorate will present new developments, unexpected counter-moves, or regional consequences depending on these directives. Every risk taken by the delegates can swiftly change the course of the committee; this turns SCMSP into a dynamic crisis laboratory.

III. Technical and Maritime-Focused Developments

Since SCMSP covers highly technical areas such as maritime security and the fight against piracy, the updates presented in the committee will not consist solely of political or military developments. Delegates will, at times, receive multifaceted technical information such as regional currents, port capacities, the status of

commercial routes, the activity of private security companies, the applicability of international maritime law, and changes in risk levels within insurance markets.

Correctly analyzing this information will be critical for delegates to understand the situation on the ground and to develop effective solutions. It should not be forgotten that political steps that ignore technical details may remain ineffective or create the opposite effect.

Interaction and Game Mechanics Within the Committee

In SCMSP, the agenda will not progress through a single linear scenario; from time to time multiple focal points will emerge, and delegates will have to deal with more than one crisis region simultaneously. For example, while a rising wave of piracy continues in the Gulf of Aden, at the same time a tanker accident in the South China Sea or a tension involving private security companies may occur. This forces delegates to prioritize, divide their resources, and think multidimensionally.

The main factor that will determine the pace of the committee is the activity level of the delegates and the quality of the directives they produce. The more individual action plans are created, the faster, more turbulent, and more realistic the crisis becomes.

Conclusion

In SCMSP, crisis is not merely a structure in which events are reacted to, but a process directed by the decisions of the delegates. The committee brings together international maritime law, modern security dynamics, and operational developments on the ground within the same scenario, offering delegates an experience of real diplomacy and crisis management. This structure transforms SCMSP from being just a MUN committee into a comprehensive maritime security simulation.

3.3. Transition to Crisis Procedure

At the SCMSP committee, proceedings initially run in the classical Security Council order; delegates deliver their opening speeches, outline the general framework of the agenda, and create a diplomatic atmosphere regarding through which priorities the committee will proceed. However, the most fundamental feature of the committee is that this order does not continue in the same way for long. The transition to crisis procedure creates a breaking moment unique to SCMSP that suddenly changes the structure and functioning of the committee.

The start of the crisis procedure generally occurs in an unexpected manner. A crisis update informing the delegates of an urgent development happening on the

ground is delivered, and this notification causes a sudden shift from diplomatic discussions to operational thinking. From this moment on, the committee turns into a structure that moves faster, takes risks, and directly responds to every development on the ground. Delegates cease to be merely spokespersons representing their states; they transform into actors who manage the national decision-making mechanism. A process begins in which military, diplomatic, economic or humanitarian steps are planned and implemented.

With the transition to crisis procedure, the working style of the delegates also shows a clear change. Instead of long negotiations, quickly thought-out moves, direct intervention decisions, intelligence requests, operational preparation, urgent diplomatic contacts and sudden policy changes become important. The crisis updates being delivered to the committee at regular intervals allow delegates to see the results of their previous moves and take new positions according to the new developments. This dynamic structure significantly increases the tempo of the committee and keeps delegates constantly on alert.

The transition to crisis procedure changes not only the delegates but also the overall order of the committee. The Chair begins to manage the speaking flow more flexibly, times shorten, discussions accelerate and the decision-making mechanism intensifies enough to reflect the crisis environment of the real world. The session takes on a structure that requires less formality and more strategic thought. The preparation of draft resolutions, the writing of individual and group directives, and the close monitoring of the situation on the ground constitute the main agenda of the committee.

This transition also reshapes the internal dynamics of the committee. The crisis environment creates a field in which the diplomatic reflexes and strategic skills of the delegates become visible. While some delegates follow more aggressive and interventionist policies, others may take more cautious and calculated steps. This creates an environment rich in both cooperation and competition and encourages the creativity of the delegates.

3.4. Directive Types

Particularly in crisis or special committees, directives are a crucial component of delegate interaction and strategy. These directives, categorized mainly into personal, joint, and intelligence directives, allow delegates to shape the committee's decisions and outcomes actively. Each type of directive serves a specific function and context.

3.4.1. Personal Directives

Personal directives are unilateral actions taken by a single delegate, representing their assigned country or character. These directives are crafted

solely by the delegate without the need for collaboration or approval from other participants, although their effectiveness might depend on the reactions of others in the committee. A typical personal directive includes specific actions, policy implementations, or responses to crises that align with the delegate's national policy and objectives. These directives can range from military maneuvers and diplomatic negotiations to economic measures and public statements. The main purpose of a personal directive is to assert a delegate's position, make immediate decisions, and respond to unfolding events in the simulation. They allow for quick, decisive action that can significantly influence the committee's direction.

3.4.2. Joint Directives

Joint directives are collaborative efforts where two or more delegates come together to form a consensus on a particular action or policy. These directives require negotiation, cooperation, and sometimes compromise among the involved parties. These directives typically cover actions or policies that benefit from or require multilateral support, such as international agreements, coordinated military actions, or joint humanitarian aid efforts. The effectiveness of joint directives often hinges on their ability to gather widespread support or create coalitions. They demonstrate the power of diplomacy and collective action in addressing complex international issues.

3.4.3. Intelligence Directives

Intelligence directives are unique to crisis committees and involve the management and use of information to gain strategic advantages. These directives can be issued by individual delegates or groups and are directed at the crisis staff who simulate intelligence agencies and other informational resources. Intelligence directives request or direct the gathering, analysis, and dissemination of crucial information relevant to the ongoing crisis or committee scenario. They may involve espionage, reconnaissance, or the securing of confidential communications. The primary goal of intelligence directives is to enhance a delegate's situational awareness and strategic positioning by obtaining valuable, often secret, information that can influence the committee's decisions and outcomes.

3.4.4. Committee Directives

It is the type of directive written by the committee together. It is a type of directive written for solutions to very important crises. For example, since the

atomic bombing of Japan by the USA in the Second World War was a major development, it requires the signature of the entire committee and is considered a committee directive.

3.5. How to Write an Effective Directive

I. Provide Clear and Explicit Information

Know precisely what you want to achieve, and write it down. Be brief, but not so vague that misunderstandings arise. Instructions must be clear from the point of view of the person executing them.

II. Keep it Short and Direct

Avoid long instructions. Just write down all the necessary steps, giving enough information for the recipient to take effective action.

III. Develop Your Strategy Step by Step

Actions that are complex should be decomposed into smaller, manageable steps or activities. Specify the sequence and timing of each action, including who is responsible and what resources are required.

IV.One Directive, One Issue

Each directive should be for one purpose only to avoid confusion. One should never combine several objectives in one command. 5. Refer back to previous instructions Refer to any approved prior steps, if applicable, to maintain continuity and avoid gaps. Define what or whom specifically is being referred to, such as a unit, location, or symbol. 6. Use Exact Numbers Whenever possible, use concrete numbers instead of vague percentages. This applies to personnel, resources, or operational targets. Specific numbers create clarity and speed-up implementation.

Summary: Be specific and concise in directions and when building step-by-step action plans; focus instructions; refer to previously given instructions when appropriate; and use specific numbers. These tips ensure that directions are doable, clear, and easy to follow by the backroom staff during a crisis.

3.6. Possible Crisis Themes

•"Red Sea Flashpoint"

An LPG tanker passing through the Bab-el Mandeb Strait is targeted by unidentified armed groups using fast boats. The incident triggers the internal conflict dynamics in Yemen and puts regional states such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Eritrea, and Ethiopia on alert. The near-halt of 12% of Red Sea traffic raises debates about the critical role of the Suez Canal in global logistics. Delegates must determine whether the attack was carried out by a Yemen-based group or a new actor supported externally.

• "Strait of Malacca Shutdown"

More than 20 ships passing through the Malaysia–Indonesia–Singapore corridor in the Strait of Malacca simultaneously experience AIS loss, and some run aground due to navigational errors. The Singapore Maritime Authority detects synchronized cyber manipulation in the systems. The incident threatens the daily flow of 16 million barrels of oil through the strait, causing an energy shock in Asian economies. Delegates guide crisis management to determine whether the cyberattack was conducted by a state actor or an organized criminal network.

• "Black Sea Encounter"

A patrol vessel belonging to a NATO member state and a corvette belonging to the Russian Federation make a dangerously close passage in disputed waters off the coast of Crimea. Footage spreads quickly on social platforms, and both sides blame each other for the incident. Commercial vessels suspend their transits through the region, and the future of the grain corridor becomes a topic of debate.

• "Hormuz Silence"

A large crude oil tanker departing from the Persian Gulf suddenly loses its AIS signal in the Strait of Hormuz, and all communication is cut. As Iranian and UAE patrols scan the area, an unauthorized underwater vehicle is detected near the ship's last known position. Oil prices rise sharply within hours. Delegates are under pressure to determine whether the incident is a hijacking, an accident, or sabotage by a third actor.

• "Mozambique Channel Collapse"

More than 40 industrial fishing ships, believed to be of Chinese origin, are detected operating without licenses in the Mozambique Channel. Protests erupt in Madagascar, Mozambique, and Tanzania as local fishermen lose their sources of livelihood. The EU and Indian Ocean coastal states begin debating whether the illegal fleet is financed by a state or a private corporate network.

• "Caribbean Exodus"

After a security collapse in Haiti, thousands of people head toward the coasts of the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Florida using scrap boats, rafts, and fishing vessels. The U.S. Coast Guard reorganizes all regional patrol routes due to the overwhelming influx. Delegates must develop a joint humanitarian action plan in the face of human traffickers entering the region and rising death cases.

• "Eastern Mediterranean Grid Threat"

The subsea cables connecting the energy and internet infrastructure of Cyprus–Israel–Greece suffer disruptions south of Crete. Initial examinations highlight the likelihood of deliberate sabotage rather than an accident. Companies operating in hydrocarbon fields in the region suspend operations for security reasons.

4. Agenda Overview

4.1. Official Agenda Explanation

The purpose and existence of the SPMSP (Special Committee on Maritime Security and Piracy) committee, in which the multilayered threats that contemporary international maritime security is facing and that are predicted to violate international law, economy and security issues in the near future if not resolved are addressed as the official agenda, is to evaluate and resolve the increasingly fragile structure of modern maritime systems, which has become more vulnerable due to the intensity of global trade, the increasing dependence on strategic waterways and the diversification of the activities of non state actors, within a holistic perspective that includes the framework of international law and operational security dynamics.

The agenda, shaped through the risks created by insufficient monitoring capacities in the high seas, the development of organized criminal activities such as piracy and smuggling, and jurisdictional conflicts between various states, carries a complex nature that cannot be resolved solely with military measures; it includes threats that require coordinated international policies in economic, legal and diplomatic fields

In this context, while the main purpose of the official agenda is to determine the current security gaps in the international system, analyze their historical and structural causes and develop applicable policy recommendations, delegates are expected to compare regional examples of maritime security, interpret the security and economic interests of states and produce comprehensive solution models that will prepare them for potential crisis scenarios.

4.2. Defining Maritime Security

The concept of maritime security, which refers to the entirety of legal, military, economic, and diplomatic activities carried out by states, international organizations, private actors, commercial operations, and all units operating on the seas in order to prevent, manage, and mitigate risks in maritime areas, represents a multidimensional security domain that covers not only the risks of war and conflict but also piracy, smuggling, illegal fishing, terrorist activities, environmental threats, and the disruption of maritime trade.

The modern understanding of maritime security, which has become more complex due to the fact that a large portion of international trade takes place by sea and the capabilities of non state actors are increasingly diversified, results in the term "Maritime Security" no longer being monopolized by a single actor or element; at the same time, it corresponds to a multi-layered structure that includes different areas such as the territorial waters of coastal states, international waters, exclusive economic zones, trade routes, and strategic straits.

The fundamental components of modern maritime security can be defined through the following elements:

- Legal Security, where the authority areas, rights, and obligations are determined within the framework of UNCLOS and other international norms.
- Economic Security, where the continuity of global trade, the protection of energy transport lines, and high-value cargos are ensured.
- Military and Operational Security, which includes deterrent and intervention activities carried out by navies, coast guards, and multinational task forces against threats.
- Humanitarian and Environmental Security, which encompasses the management of irregular migrant flows, maritime accidents, environmental pollution, and climate-related risks.
- Activities of Non State Actors, which indicate the insecurity areas created in the seas by terrorist organizations, armed groups, organized crime networks, and piracy operations.

Within this framework, maritime security is not only a military domain but a comprehensive security whole located at the intersection of international law, economic interests, environmental responsibilities, and diplomatic relations. For this reason, the SCMSP agenda addresses maritime security not as a "single-dimensional military issue" but as a multi-faceted international matter that requires solutions.

4.3. Categories of Maritime Threats

When the risks that arise in the field of modern maritime affairs are classified according to their types,"Maritime Security Threats" present a multidimensional structure as we have stated; these threats, which can create serious security, economic

and legal consequences for both states and the international community, are included on the SCMSP committee agenda mainly as follows:

- 1. Piracy and Maritime Robberies:Organized criminal activities that, especially in high risk regions such as the Horn of Africa, West Africa and Southeast Asia, threaten crew and cargo safety by targeting merchant ships, while disrupting international trade routes and causing economic losses
- 2. Smuggling and Illegal Trade: Maritime activities that, by transporting weapons, drugs and other illegal substances by sea beyond the control areas of states, create both legal and economic threats
- 3. Maritime Terrorism:Terror operations targeting ports, merchant ships or energy infrastructure, carried out by terrorist groups in the maritime domain, undermining regional stability
- 4. Illegal Fishing and Resource Conflicts:Environmental security being threatened due to the excessive use of natural resources and economic security being put at risk because of disputes between local and foreign fishing fleets, especially in exclusive economic zones
- 5. Cyber and Technological Threats: Attacks on the digital infrastructure of modern ship and port operations where logistic chains are disrupted and which can result in economic losses
- 6. Environmental Threats and Climate Driven Risks:Threats affecting both maritime transportation and coastal communities, extreme weather events and marine pollution, oil spills, sea level rise caused by climate change
- 7. Interstate Tensions and Regional Conflicts:Disputes over strategic waterways and maritime jurisdiction areas that carry the potential to turn into armed conflict and diplomatic crisis while resulting in the negative impact of global trade

These categories, which reveal the main risk areas that SCMSP delegates must analyze and discuss; each type of threat should be addressed separately in both crisis scenarios and general debates and solution proposals should be developed within this framework.

4.4. Why the Issue Demands a Special Committee

The nature of the threats that today's international maritime security faces makes addressing it through the classical General Assembly mechanisms or one-dimensional diplomatic structures insufficient, due to both the scope and content of those threats. The intersection of piracy, illegal trade, maritime terrorism, environmental risks, cyber

attacks, and jurisdictional disputes between states in the same security field creates a multi-layered and multi-actor structure. Analysis of this structure calls for a committee that is more flexible, more technical, and quicker at adapting to crises.

Modern maritime systems play an important role in the global economy; thus, any security gap will involve economic losses and political tensions not only on a regional scale but also at the international level. In such a situation, a more prudent consideration of legal ambiguities and military risks will be required, especially in areas of high importance, such as strategic straits, energy transport routes, international trade corridors, and exclusive economic zones. Simultaneously, the increasingly sophisticated techniques employed by non-state actors make maritime security threats more unpredictable, which in turn enhances the likelihood of situations where crises can escalate rapidly.

For this reason, SCMSP provides a working environment that is not only a platform for diplomatic discussions but also enables the development of comprehensive analyses by the delegates using their practical and theoretical capacities. The flexible crisis procedures of the committee allow the issue at hand to be debated in depth, which requires a technical background, while the assessment of different disciplines such as international law, economic interests, military strategies, and the activities of non-state actors simultaneously can also be possible. This multidimensional structure constitutes the main factors that explain why the issue of maritime security requires a special committee format rather than classical structures

5. Background of Maritime Security Challenges

The threats that arise in the field of maritime security in today's international system are born from historical developments and the transformation of modern maritime structures. In this respect, the legal frameworks developed by states to determine their maritime jurisdictions, the commercial routes that have changed with the speed of technological advancements, the increasing dependence on energy transportation, and the diversification of the activities of non-state actors form the main background of the current maritime security issues. This section aims to provide delegates with an overall context by examining the historical, legal, and structural causes of the major risks faced in the field of maritime security today.

5.1. Historical Evolution of Maritime Law and Security

The historical development of modern maritime security depended on the long process whereby states tried to balance authority over maritime spaces with the need for safe and open international trade. From the Middle Ages onwards, tension between the principle of freedom of the seas and the control demands of coastal states shaped the core structure of maritime law. In the seventeenth century, Hugo Grotius's Mare

Liberum became the most influential articulation of the open-sea doctrine, providing a philosophical basis for modern international maritime law and setting an early universalist approach to ocean use.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the extension of world trade, the diffusion of steam navigation, the rise of colonial competition, and rapid expansion of sea transport gave a new immediacy to security threats. Piracy, smuggling, and contests over command of vital sea communications became significant sources of conflict among states. Then the two World Wars showed the military and economic significance of sea power; blockade, submarine warfare, and attacks on commerce demonstrated how maritime security had become integral to global war.

These Cold War era attributes protected strategic sea lanes and a globally deployed naval force, thereby driving maritime security toward a more militarized understanding. The same period also saw the advancement of technology, expansion of communication networks, and globalization of trade, adding to new risks. It was these developments that eventually culminated in the adoption in 1982 of UNCLOS, which clarified maritime jurisdiction, cemented the foundations of modern maritime law, and provided an international framework for cooperation on security matters.

Today, the shape of maritime security is changing again, mostly because the kinds of risks at sea don't look the same anymore. Piracy groups operate in different ways than before, some of them mixing normal trade routes with criminal stuff, and non-state actors sometimes act almost like small navies on their own. Cyber issues also got bigger; even a simple system failure in a port can slow down whole regions now. On top of that, countries are getting more dependent on the energy that moves over the sea, so any small disruption feels much larger than it used to. Environmental problems, storms and climate related changes also add another layer that wasn't really considered too serious in earlier decades. Because all these things pile up together, modern maritime security isn't something that fits into a single definition anymore and it basically forces states to look at both the older legal principles and the newer, more practical risks at the same exact time.

5.2. UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea)



The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea lays down a comprehensive regime of law and order in the world's oceans and seas establishing rules governing all uses of the oceans and their resources. It enshrines the notion that all problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be addressed as a whole.

The Convention was opened for signature on 10 December 1982 in Montego Bay, Jamaica. This marked the culmination of more than 14 years of work involving participation by more than 150 countries representing all regions of the world, all legal and political systems and the spectrum of socio/economic development. At the time of its adoption, the Convention embodied in one instrument traditional rules for the uses of the oceans and at the same time introduced new legal concepts and regimes and addressed new concerns. The Convention also provided the framework for further development of specific areas of the law of the sea.

The Convention entered into force in accordance with its article 308 on 16 November 1994, 12 months after the date of deposit of the sixtieth instrument of ratification or accession. Today, it is the globally recognized regime dealing with all matters relating to the law of the sea.



5.3. IMO (International Maritime Organization) and Security Regulations

In 1948, at a conference organized by the United Nations, a convention was adopted regarding the establishment of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). IMO also became the first international organization to deal exclusively with maritime matters. During the 10 years between the signing

of the convention and its entry into force in 1958, issues related to security that required different perspectives began to attract international attention. One of the most important of these was the threat posed by oil pollution from ships. On this issue, in 1954, four years before the establishment of IMO, an international convention was adopted. The responsibility for administering this convention and ensuring its widespread implementation was undertaken by IMO as of January 1959. From the very beginning, increasing maritime safety and preventing marine pollution have been among IMO's most important objectives.

IMO, the United Nations' only institution located in the United Kingdom, is headquartered in London. Its governing body is the Assembly, which meets every two years. IMO currently has 162 members, two of which are observer members. Between Assembly sessions, the Council, consisting of 40 members elected by the Assembly, acts as the governing body of IMO.

The Areas of Activity of the International Maritime Organization can be summarized as follows; to take necessary technical measures in terms of navigation safety on international waters and to promote the regulation of related international norms; to encourage the adoption of the most effective rules in order to ensure the efficiency of maritime operations; to ensure cooperation among countries for the prevention of pollution of the seas by ships. The Main Organs of the International Maritime Organization are; the Assembly, the Council, the Secretariat, and Committees; 1. Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), 2. Legal Committee (LEG), 3. Technical Cooperation Committee (TC), 4. Facilitation Committee (FAL), 5. Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC).

5.4. Private Maritime Security Companies (PMSC)

PMSCs have become increasingly prominent since the late 2000s due to the increasing privatisation of military forces, rise in modern piracy and the expansion of the neoliberal container shipping industry.

PMSCs offer a diverse range of services varying from signal intelligence for civilian ships to armed port security for logistics companies. The most prominent, and controversial, service that these companies offer is armed anti-piracy support.

The main services offered by PMSCs can be broken down into 4 areas:

- 1. Security intelligence, risk assessment and consulting
- 2. On-site security services (armed and unarmed)
- 3. Crisis response
- 4. Intervention

PMSCs are most frequently used by private companies for their security or intelligence services in the aim of streamlining supply-chains to increase profits. PMSCs are also used by national governments as a neoliberal solution to modern security issues such as piracy and its negative impacts on their import based economies.

The regulation of PMSCs characterises the clash between national and international sovereignty due to the nature of Flags of Convenience. This clash is also where PMSCs derive their operational and economic success from. PMSCs are able to use Flags of Convenience to navigate the current nation-state based world order to 'opt-out' of national regulation and avoid the applicability of international regulation. This increases their profits and operational success which in-turn increases their market value, popularity and legitimacy as a solution to maritime security issues.

The PMSCs are especially active in areas with strategically important waterways where piracy is a serious security threat. Today, hotspots include: the Indian Ocean, the Strait of Malacca, the Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf of Guinea, the Gulf of Aden, and the Gulf of Mexico.

The presence of the PMSCs points to a global system where non-state actors and global supply chains play significant roles in international affairs.

5.5. Definitions and Historical Cases of Maritime Terorism

As one of the political and ideological forms of violence, terrorism previously referred to the violence used by ruling authorities against the public; however, today it has transformed into a term that describes the violence used mostly by non-state actors against civilian targets in order to create fear, pressure governments, and so on, instead of confronting those they see as enemies directly. Although controversial, within the framework of its newly acquired meaning, maritime terrorism/terrorism at sea, which is a specific type of terrorism, refers to violence with particular political and ideological objectives carried out against targets in the maritime environment. A large part of terrorist activities involves creating fear and unrest on civilian targets at the local level. However, with the effect of globalization, terrorism has largely transcended locality and gained an international dimension (Öktem, 2007, p. 5). Maritime terrorism also affects regional developments and has recently begun to become effective in ways that may harm global powers. Therefore, in addition to major regional naval powers, global powers can use the emerging violence in critical areas for their own interests in order to legitimize their presence.

Maritime terrorism is frequently confused with piracy due to similarities in the nature of violence and the methods used. Piracy is defined in Article 101 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as: "any illegal acts of violence, detention or depredation, committed for private ends by the crew or the passengers of a private ship or a private aircraft, and directed: on the high seas, against another ship or aircraft, or against persons or property on board such ship or aircraft; or against a ship, aircraft, persons or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any State; any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft; or any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described above" (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, n.d.). As can be understood from this definition, although there may be overlapping aspects between piracy and maritime terrorism, there are differences in terms of the motivations and specific targets of those who resort to violence (Hong and Ng, 2010, pp. 51-52; Klein, 2011, pp. 147-148). The main difference is that piracy is understood as unlawful acts of violence developed mostly through private objectives such as gaining material profit; whereas maritime terrorism refers to violence committed by using the sea with strategic and political objectives such as undermining authorities, achieving ideological goals, causing harm, and spreading fear (Bowley, 2023, p. 89). In this context, the main differences can be seen in the table below.

Surface attacks, damaging a ship or ships and taking them hostage, injuring, killing or abducting persons traveling at sea, aerial bombings aimed at seas and ports, the use of improvised explosive devices, ramming and shooting at ships and acts of violence or threats of violence can be considered within the scope of terrorist acts at

sea. Cyberattacks focused on seizing critical online systems, sabotage targeting energy and transportation resources, smuggling activities used to finance actions, or collaborations between organized crime groups and terrorist actors constitute different manifestations of maritime terrorism. In this sense, all maritime activities, including ports, are open to different terrorist acts, while insecure areas where authority vacuums exist and regions of regional dispute can provide the ground for terrorism.

While there are attractive aspects to carrying out terrorist activity at sea, there are also difficulties in conducting such acts. Farrell (2007), who believes that fears about terrorism are exaggerated, states that the chance of success for terrorist attacks carried out by sea is very low and that a limited number of terrorist groups have the technical knowledge and capacity regarding maritime conditions. The conservative nature of terrorists in terms of the attack methods they choose creates constraints imposed by limited opportunities and lack of technical skills (Greenberg et al., 2006, p. 10). Terrorists need a kind of "maritime area awareness" as well as specific knowledge and skills even to include maritime attacks in their repertoire of actions (Lehr, 2010, p. 55). For these reasons, those who resort to terror at sea must conduct a cost-benefit analysis and first cope with the physical conditions of the sea.

Asal and Hasting (2015), who state that maritime terrorism is a rarely seen terrorist activity, also point out three reasons why maritime terrorism is not among frequently seen terrorist acts. According to them, first, terrorist groups that operationally prefer conservative paths tend to opt for more guaranteed methods and avoid untested actions. Second, many terrorist organizations lack the equipment, logistical infrastructure and training competence to carry out attacks at sea, and they consider it not worth the effort compared to what they can achieve on land. Third, the maritime environment's distance from areas that are part of civilians' daily lives and its lack of nature suitable for terrorist propaganda may also deter them from terrorism (Asal and Hasting, 2015, pp. 723–724).

Nevertheless, Asal and Hasting list the attractive reasons that Peter Chalk presents for why terrorists capable of conducting maritime terrorism might target the seas. First, technical training in the maritime field has become easier to obtain, and commercial firms providing maritime training and equipment have increased opportunities for terrorist groups to acquire the capabilities needed for maritime terrorism. Second, the economic crises that damage to the maritime network in the context of global trade could create may entice terrorists. Finally, like in aircraft, some maritime targets such as passenger ships may contain areas where civilian casualties can be maximized depending on the explosives used (Asal and Hasting, 2015, p. 724). On the other hand, Murphy lists six main factors for a terrorist group to be able to carry out successful actions at sea: legal and judicial weaknesses, geographic requirements, insufficient security, safe base areas, maritime tradition, charismatic and effective leadership, and state support (Murphy, 2007, pp. 46–50). In addition, actions based on seizing high-value vessels such as tankers and container ships, kidnapping or taking

crews hostage can become attractive since they may provide a good source of financing for maritime terrorists.

Ultimately, although targets at sea and in ports sometimes provide a favorable ground for terrorist acts, carrying out these acts is also challenging because they are costly and require technical knowledge and skill infrastructure. However, despite the difficulties, constraints and technical skill requirements, as can be seen in the examples below, maritime terrorist acts have not been prevented in various parts of the world to date. Attacks on maritime targets are influenced by the historical, ideological and socio-economic conditions that feed perpetrators' motives for terrorism, and reasons such as financing operations through illegal activities make seas strategically attractive. In addition, the development of technology has expanded the limits for terrorist groups to carry out their propaganda, making the inclusion of seas in this scope inevitable. For these reasons, potential terrorist acts at sea go beyond regional securities and can directly affect global security.

Significant Terrorism Incidents Occurring at Sea and Their Impacts

Many terrorist acts at sea that date back to half a century ago have been carried out in ways that led to striking results of different kinds. Since these acts of violence, which can cause loss of life and property as well as directly or indirectly harm the environment, cannot all be addressed here, it is possible to mention more of those that were influential periodically. The hijacking of the passenger ship Santa Maria in the Caribbean in January 1961 by opponents of Portuguese leader Antonio de Oliveira Salazar constitutes the first hijacking at sea in modern times (Greenberg et al., 2006, p. 20). The 1970s were years when terrorism incidents of this hijacking type were popular. For example, in March 1970, the U.S.-flagged merchant ship SS Columbia Eagle was hijacked and forced to sail to Cambodia in protest of the Vietnam War. In this period, underwater attacks also came to the agenda. Indeed, in 1973, the Israeli Haifa-bound Greek passenger ship Sanya carrying two hundred and fifty tourists was sunk with the use of mines by Palestinian actors at the Port of Beirut (Murphy, 2008, p. 186; Møller, 2009, p. 27).

More impactful terrorist acts at sea were carried out in the mid-1980s. The incident in October 1985, in which members of the Palestine Liberation Front hijacked the Italian-flagged passenger ship Achille Lauro in the Mediterranean in order to secure the release of fifty Palestinians detained in Israel, resulting in the death of a wheelchair-bound passenger (Halberstam, 1988, pp. 269–270; Greenberg et al., 2006, p. 20), is an important maritime terrorist attack that drew the attention of the world public. As can be seen below, many measures to be taken by the international community in this field began to be addressed more seriously after this incident.

The 1990s also show that maritime terrorism increased after the Cold War and that attack types diversified. During this period, the armed attacks and hijackings

targeting ferries between islands in the Philippines by the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka gained attention. The Sea Tigers branch of the Tamil Tigers, equipped with speedboats, ghost ships, divers capable of armed operations, and suicide squads, carried out these actions (Møller, 2009, p. 27). The hijacking of the Avrasya Ferry by armed Chechens in 1996 and the attack on the USS Sullivans in 1999 also remained on the agenda as examples of terrorism at sea.

The 2000s were years when the activities of radical organizations, especially Al Qaeda, began to be observed at sea as much as their terrorist attacks carried out from land and air. The ferry Our Lady of Mediatrix was bombed in 2000 by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, resulting in the deaths of forty people (Bowley, 2023, p. 25). On 12 October 2000, the incident in which an explosive-laden boat commanded by Al Qaeda suicide bombers attacked and rammed the U.S. Navy destroyer USS Cole in the Gulf of Aden, causing the death of seventeen people and injuring thirty-nine, was also a serious terrorist act (Greenberg et al., 2006, p. 21). In such an environment, another attack was carried out in October 2002 by Al Qaeda–linked groups using an explosive-laden boat against the French crude oil tanker M/T Limburg in Yemen. The crude oil spill after the attack brought with it a serious environmental disaster. The attack carried out by the Abu Sayyaf Group on the passenger ship Superferry-14 near Manila, Philippines, on 18 February 2004, causing the deaths of one hundred and sixteen people and injuring more than two hundred, is also among the examples of terrorism at sea (Greenberg et al., 2006, p. 22; Bateman, 2006, p. 81; Lehr, 2010, p. 55).

From the following periods to the present, acts of violence at sea in various parts of the world have continued to be observed. In November 2008, the ten-person terrorist group that infiltrated Mumbai by arriving from the sea with speedboats caused the deaths of one hundred and sixty people. The 2010s led to attacks on offshore facilities around the Niger Delta and the ships serving them, as well as attacks targeting commercial and navy ships around the Eastern Mediterranean (Bowley, 2023, p. 25). In 2014, the chemical tanker MV Orna was hijacked in the Gulf of Aden. In 2015, in the attack carried out by Houthi fighters on a ferry carrying civilians in Aden, eighty-six people died and sixty-seven were injured (Bowley, 2023, p. 25). In June 2018, Eastern Libya forces seized control of the Es Sider and Ras Lanuf oil ports. In 2020, two oil tankers were attacked in the Gulf of Oman near the Strait of Hormuz. Along with these, if piracy and armed robbery against ships are also included, in the distribution of violence at sea in recent years, incidents or attempted attacks have intensified in Southeast Asia, the Far East, the Indian Subcontinent, South America, and areas in Africa (IMB ICC Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships Report January-December 2022:5).

Ultimately, terrorism at sea is directed in very different forms at passenger sea vessels, military targets, commercial ships carrying containers, tankers carrying oil or natural gas, underwater energy or communication transmission lines, or ports (Hansen 2009, p. 74). In addition to these, bulk carriers are also among the seagoing vessels

exposed to intense terrorist attacks. The incidents addressed above also show how terrorist groups differ in terms of their motivations for using violence and the means they employ. Although not as frequent as those on land, terrorism at sea has become more common due to the increase in maritime trade traffic and port security vulnerabilities up to the present. As attempts of different terrorist acts occur with new techniques, the destruction caused by these attacks has brought about many secondary problems. From the damage to maritime transport in line with what terrorists aim for, to the disruption of the global supply chain, from marine pollution to the deterioration of navigational safety, from the emergence of an atmosphere of uncertainty and fear to the restriction of the active use of the sea, many economic and political problems arise. In this context, vulnerability to terrorism at sea leads not only to triggering major financial losses but also to significant harm to human life and the environment.

5.6. Smuggling Networks

5.6.1. Illegal Drug Smuggling

Illegal drug producers continued in 2021 to target commercial vessels and to develop complex smuggling models. Because of the globalized nature of drug trafficking, ships operating in regions not directly connected to drug production in Africa, Europe, North America and Asia have been targeted. In 2021, 673 drug smuggling incidents were reported worldwide

In parallel with drug trafficking from South America to Europe, a near explosion in cocaine production was reported in the Caribbean region. The route via West Africa and the Mediterranean to Europe is now seen as the main cocaine trafficking axis. Between South America and the southwest African coasts, in recent years increased cocaine trafficking has been observed between the Guyana Plateau and Cape Verde or the Gulf of Guinea. Considering the price drop and the increasing cocaine consumption in Africa, a 40 percent increase in consumption is expected in the next 10 years. In recent operations, increases have also been observed in seizures of methamphetamine, heroin and fentanyl.

In the Arabian Peninsula and the Indian Ocean region, drug smuggling has traditionally been recorded on routes from the Makran coast in the Gulf of Oman where heroin and hashish are found, with increasing numbers of seizures. It is reported that small boats or fishing vessels are generally used to transport drugs, and that the use of container ships for drug transport has begun to be used is recorded as a worrying development.

Since the beginning of 2021 in this region record seizures have emphasized a large flow of drugs from the Iran–Pakistan area to Mozambique. It has also been reported that between La Réunion and Mauritius a network of cannabis, illicit goods exchange and related human trafficking has been established.

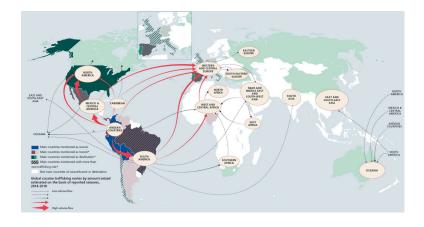
In Southeast Asia, increased border security as part of COVID-19 measures has resulted in more seizures of smuggled goods via sea. Also, COVID-19 has severely affected local livelihoods, making turning to illegal activities to make a living attractive. Increased domestic demand for some locally produced goods and tobacco has raised prices and made smuggling more profitable.

In the Pacific region, a decline in drug trafficking was recorded due to the pandemic. In 2021 there was a significant decrease in movements of sailing vessels, the traditional route for transporting cocaine between Latin America and Oceania (Australia and New Zealand). It is reported that the last maritime drug operation took place in April 2020 and there have been no further seizures since. It is also noted that French Polynesia has been identified as a logistical support center used by traffickers for transshipment.

In the Mediterranean region, the drug trafficking problem is concentrated around Gibraltar and the Alboran Sea. It was reported that transfers in this region used not only high speed boats but also pleasure craft, fishing vessels and commercial ships.

As in most North European ports, an increase in maritime drug trafficking traffic has been observed in the Dover Strait ports. Parallel to the increase in relations between Latin America and European countries, European ports have become targets of drug trafficking. In terms of sea crossings, many passages toward Antwerp were detected in the Dover Strait in 2021.

Drug smuggling, together with other maritime organized crimes, has long plagued the commercial maritime industry. Gangs and organizations targeting commercial ships to facilitate the global trade in illegal drugs continue to expand the drug market despite prevention efforts by governments and international organizations.



5.6.2. Illegal Arms Smuggling

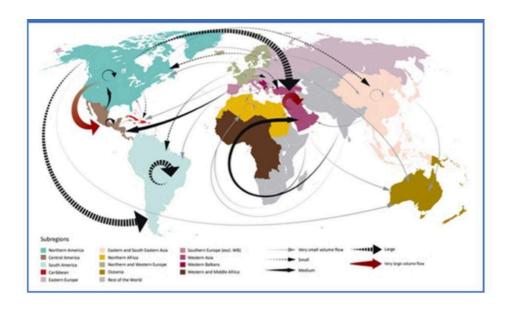
When evaluating maritime arms smuggling data, the 2021 Global Organized Crime Index results show that the countries with the highest levels of criminality are those experiencing armed conflict, economic collapse or fragility. It is observed that conflicts and wars weaken states' attention, capacities, and social, economic and security institutions, thereby reducing their resilience against organized crime. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is identified as the country most affected by organized crime, followed by Colombia, Myanmar, Mexico and Nigeria. Other high-scoring countries include Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, where conflicts have destroyed formal economies and led to mass migration and the flow of weapons.

According to the report, it is known that one billion small arms from earlier civil wars and independence conflicts in Central America, the Balkans and parts of Africa are still in circulation. Such small and light weapons smuggling has been found to be very common in Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea.

In the Americas, Mexico and Panama have the highest statistics. Venezuela is also recording an increase in arms smuggling parallel to the rise of other crimes. The Caribbean Islands, which have the lowest crime average in North America, serve as a corridor for illegal drug and arms flows from other subregions of the continent, making them a potential maritime hub for illegal arms smuggling traffic. In addition, Haiti and Jamaica in the southern part of the region are emerging markets for arms smuggling, as they are for drug trafficking.

In light of this information, it is seen that the maritime jurisdictions and sea trade routes of the mentioned countries are heavily used for arms smuggling and pose risks for maritime security.

Illegal arms and drug smuggling pose significant risks both for the safety of ships along maritime trade routes and for port operations, as port-side security measures restrict crew activities. It is essential that necessary precautions are taken in ports and on ships to combat drug and arms smuggling. It is assessed that diligent implementation of these measures by ships and ports will significantly reduce the likelihood and risk of being targeted by smuggling networks.



5.6.3. Uncontrolled Migration and Human Smuggling

Various wars, conflicts, terrorist and intimidation activities, epidemics, economic and political crises around the world affect especially politically and economically fragile countries more deeply. As a result, instabilities and conflicts emerging in many countries deprive innocent people of their homes and basic living conditions, forcing them to migrate to geographies where they have the possibility of accessing more safety, stability and prosperity. Many of the people who are forced to migrate with their families fall into the hands of criminal organizations engaged in human smuggling, becoming elements of a vital adventure and even a tragedy in which they risk not only their money but also their lives.

Evaluating this intertwined demand and supply, in other words the illegal human smuggling created by the spiral of need, interest and crime, separately from irregular migration is almost impossible. Human trafficking, which provides high profits to traffickers by exploiting people through improper means such as force, fraud or deception, is one of the most serious human rights violations of our modern world. Migrant smuggling involves facilitating the illegal entry of a person into a state of which he or she is not a citizen or resident for financial gain. The crimes of human smuggling or migrant smuggling, as both directly affect human life, constitute an obstacle to development, the rule of law and a serious threat to human security.

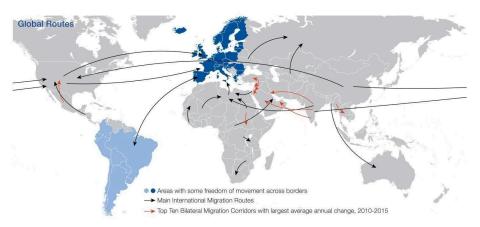
There are several different sub-regional models of smuggling. As human traffickers and smugglers exploit factors that make countries and individuals vulnerable to crime, the crimes under this heading are constantly changing. Current forms of human trafficking include inhumane crimes such as sexual exploitation, forced labor in mines, agriculture and domestic work, forced begging and organ trafficking.

The main migrant movement in the Americas comes from Haiti and Cuba, two countries in the midst of major political and humanitarian unrest. It is observed that this migration flow is directed toward richer countries in the basin, particularly the United States.

The direction of illegal human trafficking in the region mostly uses south-north routes. Reports indicate that, in addition to many fast boats, slower vessels (fishing boats, tugboats, bulk carriers, etc.) also make direct passages from Venezuela or Colombia to the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico or Central American countries further west.

Figure 12: Some of the World's Many Migration Routes

Sources: Adams, 2015; Conant, Chwastyk & Williams, 2015



It has been recorded that in West and Central Africa, one third of the migrants who entered Spain in 2021 came from the regions neighboring the Gulf of Guinea and Mali. Human smugglers who previously used the Mediterranean began to use the West Africa and Canary Islands route more intensively in the face of effective measures taken. On this route, a tenfold increase in the volume of human smuggling was observed between 2019 and 2020.

In East Africa, controlling illegal migration by sea from the Comoros Islands to the French territory of Mayotte continues to be the most sensitive issue in the region.

In the Western Mediterranean, the volume of illegal migration remained almost stable in 2021 compared to the previous year. It has been observed that a large part of migration to Spain was from the Atlantic coasts. It has been recorded that the migrant flow concentrated in the Central Mediterranean and showed a strong increase of about 70% in 2021 compared to 2020. Large-capacity migrant movements, which had not been observed for years, were monitored from Libya last year. It has also been reported that the Turkey-Italy route was quite active in 2021. However, it has been determined that there was a relatively calm situation in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea, and that the migrant flow

decreased by 60%. It is also known that there was a migrant movement from Eastern Mediterranean ports towards Cyprus, although it decreased towards the end of 2021.

Despite the maritime security patrols carried out by the navies and coast guard vessels of various countries, alliances or coalitions in the world's critical maritime transport routes, migration and human smuggling by sea continued to be an important problem in 2021. While thousands of people risking their lives to reach a country where they would be safer and economically better off were rescued by both military and commercial vessels, hundreds also lost their lives at sea. Another dimension of the issue is the problems experienced in the repatriation of refugees whom every ship sailing at sea is obliged to rescue due to both humanitarian reasons and the requirements of international law, or in their delivery to refugee-accepting countries. There are reports that rescued refugees, who are thus forced to be hosted on commercial vessels, pose a risk in terms of order, minimum living standards and health on the ships they are on, as the repatriation processes are prolonged. It is understood that the increasing trend recorded in migration movements by sea will continue to pose a threat to maritime transport security in the coming period.

5.7. Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing

Fishing is a critical source of food and income for many countries, but fishing carried out illegally not only creates an environment for the exploitation of poor coastal populations in developing countries but also erodes maritime governance.

Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing is a global problem. This type of fishing can destroy ecosystems, disrupt food stocks and undermine fragile fishing economies.

It is reported that as much as 25 million tons of fish are lost each year worldwide due to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities (IUU fishing), leading to the depletion of local fish stocks and major economic losses. Research shows that one out of every five fish worldwide is caught and sold illegally and that this is worth an estimated 23.5 billion dollars annually. Some sources state that IUU fishing has now replaced piracy as the world's biggest maritime security threat [48].

IUU fishing is a problem mostly seen in the South China Sea, on the west coasts of Africa, on both coasts of South America, in the eastern Indian Ocean, around Oceania and Antarctica. According to the IUU Fishing Index of the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, which monitors countries' vulnerability to IUU fishing, the prevalence of the crime and the measures taken, China is at the top of the list

In the Indo-Pacific region, the vast majority of IUU fishing activities, more than 95 percent by estimates, are carried out by licensed vessels. In the neighboring South China Sea, which provides 12 percent of global catch, fish stocks have seen a sharp decline compared to previous years, partly due to overfishing.

In addition, fishing vessels in the high seas provide a suitable platform for criminal activities such as arms smuggling, drug trafficking and human trafficking. Low levels of enforcement against IUU fishing make fishing an entry point for other maritime crime offenders.

Flag states must ensure that regulations are in place and enforced to deter IUU fishing and the occurrence of related crimes aboard their vessels. Port states can also play an important role in controlling this crime by preventing vessels engaged in IUU fishing from using their ports and landing their catches.





5.8. Strategic Chokepoints

Bosphorus (Istanbul Strait)

Connecting the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, the Bosphorus is one of the most important straits in the world. Its straight-line length is 35 kilometers and approximately 90,000 vessels pass through it annually. Under the Montreux Convention, no transit fees can be charged.

The construction of a second route, the Kanal Istanbul project, is estimated to generate around 8 billion dollars in revenue. The strait also contributes significantly to tourism, with hundreds of thousands of cruise passengers arriving in Istanbul every year.

Dardanelles (Çanakkale Strait)

Connecting the Sea of Marmara and the Aegean Sea, the strait's widest point is 5.8 kilometers and its narrowest is 1.25 kilometers. A reverse undercurrent flows at its bottom. Included under the Montreux Convention, the strait has high strategic importance as a gateway to the Mediterranean.



Strait of Gibraltar

Named after the Umayyad commander Tariq ibn Ziyad, it connects the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. Sovereignty is shared among Morocco, the United Kingdom and Spain. The region includes the autonomous administration of Gibraltar under British rule, which has been the subject of long-standing political tension between the UK and Spain. Morocco has no significant claim.



Bering Strait

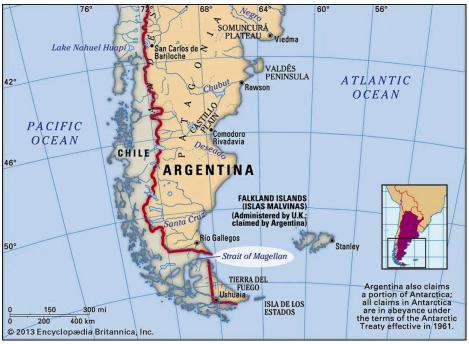
Separating Asia and North America, the strait lies between Russia and the United States. For the past several years, China, Russia and the US have discussed an undersea transport project that would connect their territories.



Magellan Strait

Located at the southern tip of South America, it connects the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. It separates the mainland from the Tierra del Fuego archipelago, which is shared by Argentina and Chile. The strait is 686 kilometers long and between 4 and 37 kilometers wide. Discovered by Magellan in 1520, it is difficult to navigate due to fog and strong winds. Punta Arenas is the largest port.

Before the Panama Canal, the strait was vital for commercial shipping and although less significant today, it remains strategically important. The nearby Falkland Islands are under British control, though Argentina claims sovereignty, and past conflict plus the presence of oil reserves keep tensions high.



Strait of Hormuz

Connecting the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and the Indian Ocean, the region has a length of roughly 805 kilometers and depths generally between 40 and 50 meters, reaching 100 meters in the strait. It was a central theater of the Iran Iraq War (1980-1988) and played a major role during the 1991 Gulf War.

Although Iran controls the strait due to the placement of nearby islands, sovereignty disputes with the UAE continue. As one of the world's most critical oil transit points, the strait faces major security risks stemming from regional tensions on the Arabian Peninsula.



Strait of Messina

Separating Sicily from the Italian mainland, its narrowest point is 3.3 kilometers. Key port cities include Messina on Sicily and Reggio di Calabria on the mainland.



Bab el Mandeb

Connecting the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean (Gulf of Aden), the 32 kilometer long strait lies between Yemen and Somalia. The Yemeni side was under Ottoman control until World War I. The strait, monitored from Yemen's Perim Island, has high strategic value.

Security is currently at risk due to the conflict between the Yemeni government and Houthi forces. In 2013-2014, an estimated two million barrels of oil passed through the strait daily.



Strait of Malacca

Running 805 kilometers between Peninsular Malaysia and Indonesia's Sumatra, it is one of the world's most important maritime passages alongside the Suez and Panama Canals. It connects the Indian and Pacific Oceans while linking major economies including India, Indonesia and China, as well as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan.

Nearly 80,000 vessels passed through in 2014. According to the US Energy Information Administration, around 16 million barrels of oil transit the strait daily.



Suez Canal

A 163 kilometer man made a waterway connecting the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. With a minimum width of 300 meters, it allows maritime trade between Europe and Asia without circumnavigating Africa.

The canal sees roughly 76,000 annual transits. In 2014 it generated 5.5 billion dollars in revenue for Egypt. The new, expanded Suez Canal was inaugurated on July 8, 2015.



Kiel Canal

Important for Baltic Sea access, it stretches 98 kilometers from Brunsbüttel on the North Sea to Holtenau near Kiel on the Baltic Sea. It is considered the safest, shortest and cheapest route between the two seas. The canal is 103 meters wide and 11 meters deep, with seven bridges rising 42 meters above it.

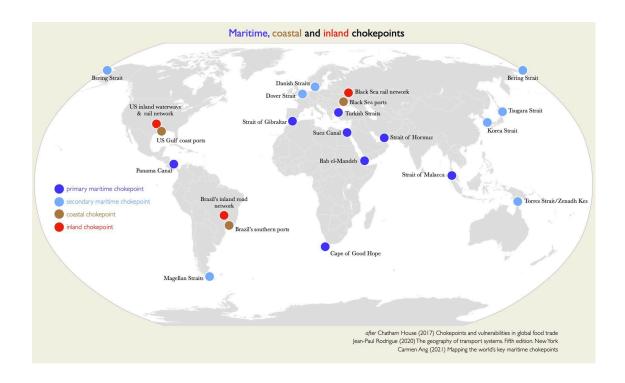


Panama Canal

A major engineering achievement connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans through Panama. It eliminated the need to navigate around Cape Horn, revolutionizing global shipping.

Last year about 13,000 ships passed through the canal, generating 1.5 billion dollars in revenue. Historically controlled by the United States, the canal remains a key strategic asset for Latin America. China's planned Nicaragua Canal project is viewed as a potential competitor.





6. Regional Case Elaboration

6.1. The Gulf of Aden & Somali Piracy

Piracy in Somalia is not a new phenomenon, but until the middle of the present decade the incidence of piracy was quite limited. In 2005, however, the incidence—according to the statistics of the International Chamber of Commerce's Piracy Reporting Center (ICC-PRC)—grew from less than five to 35. In 2006, it declined considerably to a mere ten incidents, only to grow in 2007 to 31 pirate attacks. In 2008, the problem virtually exploded with an unprecedented rise in piratical attacks. In the first three quarters of 2008, a total of 63 incidents were thus reported, of which 51 occurred in the Gulf of Aden and 12 off the eastern coast. In the third quarter alone no less than 26 vessels were hijacked and 537 crew members taken hostage. The quarterly report for the remaining three months of 2008 was not available by the time of writing, but judging by newspaper reports, the problem had exacerbated further. Whereas until recently most of these attacks occurred off the eastern coast of Somalia, in 2008 this was overtaken by the north coast of the same country, i.e. the Gulf of Aden, at the entrance to the Red Sea and with the Suez Canal at the other end. The difference between the two is of some significance, as attacks on shipping along the east coast mainly affect the Somali population, inter alia by hampering humanitarian aid, whereas those on the north coast mainly affect international shipping linking the Middle East and East Asia with Europe. Not only has the frequency of piratical attacks increased steeply, but the attacks have also become more daring, all attacks being launched against steaming ships, whereas the majority of attacks in other parts of the world occur against ships that are either berthed or anchored. All recorded incidents also involved the use of firearms, whereas this was much less frequent elsewhere. On

the other hand, the actual use of violence remained quite modest, only one crew member having been killed in both the Gulf of Aden and the eastern coast of Somalia—which may be taken as evidence of a high degree of professionalism. Several ships have been boarded and hijacked by pirates armed with firearms and grenade launchers (in some cases also man-portable air defence systems), operating in small fast crafts, making full use of modern technologies such as mobile phones and GPS (Global Positioning System) devices, and in some cases apparently using mother ships allowing them a much longer range.

With the longest coastline in mainland Africa and a position adjacent to some of the world's busiest shipping routes, Somalia's maritime space is set to be a strong drive in the country's social and economic development. The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) is, however, concerned over the lack of capacity to manage Somali maritime space effectively, whose vulnerability has been highlighted by piracy. Today piracy is still seen by many as a dormant threat rather than a fully suppressed one and this is in part attributed to problems with unregulated fishing by foreign vessels in Somali waters. While the presence of international navies off the Horn of Africa has greatly contributed to repressing it, it has had little impact on other aspects of maritime security. Somalia continues to have a reputation as the launching point for terrorism, piracy, people trafficking and smuggling operations which obstructs efforts to commercialize Somali marine resources and hinder effective stabilization.

On the other hand, Somalia's geographical proximity to Yemen in conjunction with the lack of maritime domain awareness and properly equipped maritime security forces have led to an increase in the illicit activities taking place in the area. Illicit trafficking activities in Yemen pose a significant problem, involving not only firearms and explosive materials but also weapons of mass destruction (WMD) components and precursors. Proceeds from smuggling of Somali charcoal and sugar by sea are seen to fuel terrorism. Meanwhile, the inability of both states to successfully patrol the area and suppress the crimes committed is consistently seen as one of the underlying causes of instability.

6.2. The South China Sea Tensions

Territorial disputes in the South China Sea are a series of conflicts arising from the overlapping territorial claims of several countries that border the South China Sea. In recent decades China has been widely seen as the conflicts' primary driver. While countries have long disagreed on the sea's precise international demarcations, China has moved ever closer to demanding exclusive economic and military rights over the vast majority of the South China Sea. While their claims and approaches differ, Chinese and Taiwanese officials both have argued that the South China Sea constitutes "historical waters." They have represented their claims, encompassing roughly 90 percent of the sea, on maps by using a U-shaped boundary line made up of 9 to 11

dashes (commonly known as the "9-dash line"). This line's geographic coordinates and legal basis are vague and conflict with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The primary countries affected by the Chinese territorial claims are Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei, but many stakeholders from outside the region, most notably the United States, have become involved in the disputes and have aimed to check Chinese ambition.

Other territorial claimants have responded to Chinese expansion through various means. Most notably, Vietnam has also undertaken land reclamation and military buildups on island features. Indonesia and the Philippines have attempted to rally international support to prevent Chinese encroachment on their EEZs. For its part, the United States, which has no territorial claims in the region and officially maintains neutrality in the disputes, has nevertheless sought to check Chinese encroachment against its allies in the South China Sea. In a 2022 press statement U.S. Pres. Joe Biden's administration called on China to adhere to the 2016 arbitral ruling and pledged that the United States would support its ally the Philippines in maintaining order in the region.

6.3. The Strait of Hormuz & Iranian Maritime Incidents

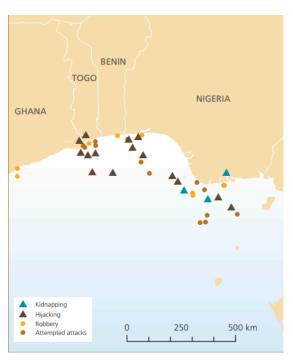
Conflict in June 2025 involving Iran, Israel, and the United States raised the spectre of interrupted shipping through the Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf. The Strait, which borders Iran and Oman, is a key waterway, particularly for the transit of oil and natural gas to world markets. Roughly 27% of the world's crude oil and petroleum products maritime trade goes through the Strait. Additionally, 22% of global liquefied natural gas (LNG) trade passes through the Strait. The Strait's role as a critical conduit for oil and natural gas resources to reach global markets establishes its importance to the global economy.

Iran's extensive Persian Gulf coast and its military capabilities have long given Iran the potential ability to project power throughout the region, including over energy trade. Iran's threatened and actual attempts to disrupt energy commerce in the Gulf have carried strategic benefits and risks for Tehran, including by bringing Iran into direct conflict with the United States in 1987-1988.

In these situations, Iran has the military capacity—using mines, speed boats, submarines, shore-based cruise missiles, aircraft, and other systems—to disrupt the flow of commercial shipping into and out of the Persian Gulf. There also appears to be a consensus that the U.S. military has the capacity to counter Iran's forces and restore the flow of shipping, if necessary. However, such an effort would likely take some time—days, weeks, or perhaps months—particularly if a large number of Iranian mines needed to be cleared from the Gulf. Iran does not appear to have taken steps to actively

attempt to disrupt the Strait's shipping during the June 2025 conflict with Israel; it remains unclear whether Iran was unwilling or unable to do so.

6.4. West Africa – Gulf of Guinea Piracy



Much of the piracy that affects West Africa is a product of the disorder that surrounds the regional oil industry. A large share of the recent piracy attacks targeted vessels carrying petroleum products. These vessels are attacked because there is a booming black market for fuel in West Africa. Without this ready market, there would be little point in attacking these vessels. There are indications that oil may also be smuggled outside the region. In particular, these attacks have involved refined petroleum products, typically carried in fairly small craft known as "product tankers" or "chemical tankers."

Piracy incidents in the Gulf of Guinea, 2012

6.5. Eastern Mediterranean Gas and Security Disputes

Tensions are growing in the Eastern Mediterranean between Turkiye and its neighbours as part of a long-running dispute over the delimitation of maritime boundaries related to oil and gas rights. Turkiye is also objecting to the building of an electricity interconnector between Greece, Cyprus and Israel through waters it claims and, in August 2024, sent warships to block ongoing survey work. Turkiye's Libyan partner, the Tripoli-based Government of National Unity, has also objected to Greece's auctioning of contracts to explore for gas in the seas south of Crete. These tensions are overlaid by other disagreements, notably about migration to Europe, the status of the unrecognised Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, and the Israel–Hamas war, raising the risk of renewed brinkmanship at sea as the European Union sustains political and financial backing for the electricity interconnector.

On the other side in January 2019 Egypt, Israel, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority established the East Mediterranean Gas Forum (EMGF) in an effort to coordinate energy policies and establish a regional gas market. The group will attempt to develop and organize the region's rising gas market, allowing its members to tap their vast natural gas resources, and potentially become an exporting

hub for Europe. Although the formation of the EMGF may be a step in the right direction, Turkey's exclusion remains a major stumbling block to the future of energy cooperation in the region. Incorporating Turkey into the Forum will improve EMGF's prospects of success, although Turkey is unlikely to be invited to join as long as Cyprus remains in the Forum—or without a resolution between the two countries.

6.6. Arctic Route Militarization

The Arctic is rapidly emerging as a global critical geopolitical flashpoint, courtesy of intensified military and economic competition among Russia, the United States, and China. Driven by climate change, projections suggest that the Arctic will be ice-free during the summer of 2025. The melting ice has unlocked previously inaccessible resources and maritime routes, such as the Northern Sea Route (NSR), substantially making the region increasingly strategically important. The great powers view these newly accessible and lucrative resources, positioning themselves to seize strategic advantage. As a consequence, Russia has expanded its Arctic military presence, the United States has strategically repositioned its forces, and China has increased economic investments with potential dual-use implications. The current multipolar international order and inherent security dilemmas heighten the chances of unintended military escalation in the Arctic.

6.7. Caribbean Maritime Crime & Smuggling

The Caribbean Community comprises states and territories with varying income levels, development outcomes, language profiles, ethnic groups, economic structures, and political systems. The geographical features, porous borders, and economic disparities in the Caribbean region provide conditions easily exploitable by criminal networks, especially those involved in the smuggling of migrants, firearms, narcotics, and human trafficking. These crimes contribute to regional instability and insecurity especially in the sea. With these issues non-state crime organizations be able to maritime crime and smuggling including

7. Stakeholders and Actors

7.1. International Organizations

EUNAVFOR ATALANTA plays a vital role in the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy and EU's Naval Diplomacy for the Indo-Pacific. Since 2008 supporting the Coastal States in the combined effort for peace, stability and Maritime security:

- Permanent protection of World Food Program (WFP) and other vulnerable vessels within the Area of Operations;
 - Piracy and armed robbery at sea, prevention, deterrence and repression;

- Illicit maritime flows disruption and deterrence, including illicit trade financing criminal and terrorist networks;
- European Union (EU) Integrated Approach to Somalia together with EUCAP Somalia, EUTM Somalia, EU DEL Somalia and EU Special Representative to the Horn of Africa;
- Deconfliction, cooperation with and support to International organizations: naval forces, independent deployers and commercial shipping;
- Robust rule-based framework to transfer pirates to regional states for their prosecution.

EUNAVFOR ASPIDES is an EU military operation contributing to the protection of freedom of navigation, to safeguarding maritime security, especially for merchant and commercial vessels in the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Gulf under the EU Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). The EUNAVFOR ASPIDES within its defensive mandate is to provide maritime situational awareness, accompany vessels, and protect them against possible multi-domain attacks at sea.

The Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA) is an intergovernmental organization that coordinates regional efforts to protect the marine and coastal environments. It prepares regional protocols and strategies to preserve marine resources and mitigate all types of pollution sources. The organization's legal foundation is based on the 1982 Jeddah Convention, and it was officially established in Cairo in September 1995 through the "Cairo Declaration." PERSGA's permanent headquarters is located in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, with a Regional Emergency Mutual Aid Center for Marine Emergencies (EMARSGA) hosted by Egypt in Hurghada. The organization includes member states bordering the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, namely: the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Sudan, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Republic of Djibouti, the Republic of Yemen, and the Federal Republic of Somalia.

One of the international organizations that is taking actions in these areas is NATO with the Operation Ocean Shield. Building on the two previous counter-piracy missions conducted by NATO, Operation Ocean Shield initially focused on at-sea counter-piracy activities. NATO vessels conducted, for instance, helicopter surveillance missions to trace and identify ships in the area; they also helped to prevent and disrupt hijackings and to suppress armed robbery. NATO also agreed, at the request of the UN, to escort the United Nations Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA) supply vessels to the harbour entrance of Mogadishu, Somalia. Over time, the operation evolved to respond to new piracy tactics: the Mar. 2012 Strategic Assessment, for instance, highlighted the need to erode the pirates' logistics and support-base by, among other things, disabling pirate vessels or skiffs, attaching tracking beacons to mother ships and allowing the use of force to disable or destroy suspected pirate or armed robber vessels. With Operation Ocean Shield, the Alliance also broadened its approach to combating piracy by offering, within means and capabilities to regional states that request it,

assistance in developing their own capacity to combat piracy. In sum, NATO's role was to prevent and stop piracy through direct actions against pirates, by providing naval escorts and deterrence, while increasing cooperation with other counter-piracy operations in the area in order to optimize efforts and tackle the evolving pirate trends and tactics. Operation Ocean Shield was approved by the North Atlantic Council on Aug. 17, 2009 and it was terminated on Dec. 15, 2016.

Also the United Nations is taking actions about Gulf of Aden and Somalia Piracy with UN bodies including United Nations Security Council (UNSC), International Maritime Organization(IMO), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and UN Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA). Supported by UNODC, Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP) assists regional states ,especially Somalia and Yemen, with legal and judicial capacity building to arrest, prosecute, and imprison pirates and combat illicit trafficking.

7.2. Non-State Actors

Due to its proximity to the Middle East and the instability of the countries in the region, a large number of non-state actors are active in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. The majority of these actors are criminal organizations that harm the global economy and engage in smuggling by attacking vessels on the trade route.

The most powerful and actively engaging of these non-state actors is the Houthis, officially known as Ansarullah. This political and military organization, which emerged in Yemen and controls a large part of the country, including the capital, has a significant impact on regional and global balances. They generally adopt an anti-Western and anti-Israel stance. With technological development, Houthis has gained important technological and military power, conducting land and sea attacks using UAVs, UCAVs, and drones. Although they state that they primarily target ships assisting or trading with Israel due to their anti-Israel stance, the attacks in the region cause global security and economic disruptions. Especially because of their attacks in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, most companies have preferred to use the Cape of Good Hope, the southern tip of Africa, as their trade route.

El-Shabaab is an internationally recognized armed terrorist organization operating in Somalia. The group, which initially gathered on the foundation of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) that briefly controlled the Somali administration in the 2000s, later split from this organization and took more radical actions. The organization established ties with Al-Qaeda in subsequent years and aims to establish a strict Sharia state in Somalia. For these purposes it is taking actions to overthrow the Somali Federal Government and establish an Islamic emirate that includes surrounding states including Kenya and Uganda. It poses a danger particularly in the Gulf of Aden and the territories

of Somalia by preventing the establishment of a stable, centrally authoritative government in Somalia.

7.3. NGOs and Private Security Companies

The Somali NGO Consortium is a voluntary coordination mechanism established by NGOs for NGOs. The organisation's aim is to create a coordinated voice which is critical for the successful implementation of development and humanitarian aid activities, given the extremely insecure environment, the complexity of the operating environment, and the large number of organisations working in Somalia. This organization is harbor many NGOs that had various purposes and actions about development and progress of Somalia

Various Private Security Companies (PSCs) operate on the Gulf of Aden and Somalia because of high-security vulnerabilities and the high value of the cargo on commercial and oil vessels passing through the region . The lack of strong central governments in countries surrounding the Gulf of Aden, such as Somalia and Yemen, along with the absence of regulation for these private security firms, increases their usage. A significant portion of the trading companies utilizing the region employ these PSCs instead of relying on international organizations or state navies. This situation raises the transportation cost of commercial goods, leading to economic losses.

7.4. Shipping Corporations and Insurance Actors

The Gulf of Aden, the strait connecting the Indian Ocean to the Red Sea and consequently to the Mediterranean Sea, lies on the transit route used by most shipping companies transporting goods and oil from East and Central Asia to Europe or North America. The main shipping companies and their countries that transport commercial products can be listed as:

- Maersk (Denmark)
- Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) (Switzerland/Italy)
- Hapag-Lloyd (Germany)
- CMA CGM (France)
- COSCO (China)

Furthermore, BP, the energy company from United Kingdom, is the leading oil and tanker company operating on this route worldwide. However, most countries have their own private tanker companies.

Maritime insurance is divided into three main categories: Hull and Machinery (H&M) Insurance, Cargo Insurance, and Protection and Indemnity (P&I Clubs)
Insurance. However, when considering the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, there are

some specific changes to the insurance policies such as war risk premiums. This premium results in higher fees due to the security vulnerability in these regions unlike standard insurance. For example, following the attacks in the Red Sea, insurance companies requested additional war risk premiums from ship owners, ranging between 0.5% and 2% of the cargo value, on top of the normal premiums which are typically around 0.1% of the cargo value. The London insurance market, called Lloyd's of London, serves as the center for war risk underwriting, and by constantly updating risk premiums, they have designated the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea as High-Risk Areas.

7.5. Local Coastal Communities

Local Coastal Communities are communities active along the coastlines of Somalia, Yemen, Djibouti, Eritrea, and Ethiopia, generally engaging in fishing and trade. These communities are among the groups most severely affected by the piracy and smuggling in the Gulf of Aden. However, they can also be the root cause of certain problems. Because of these communities form the origin and still provide support for local pirate groups. Furthermore, they can be used as transit, accommodation, or base areas for non-state actors or migrants.

8. Country Positions and Policy Approaches

8.1. Major Power Countries

"Since Vessel Value published its 2024 World Fleet Ranking, much has changed in supply chains and fleet modernization. There has been little change at the top of the rankings. China continues to outpace Japan. China's shipowners have secured the country's leading position with a fleet worth an impressive \$255 billion, ahead of Japan, whose fleet reached almost \$231.4 billion. The report highlights significant transformations in asset values and dynamic changes in the ownership market in 2024."



• CHINA:

In terms of the quantity of ships, China continues to hold the top spot. With a fleet value of \$255,236 million, it surpassed Japan to take the lead. According to Rebecca Galanopoulos of Vessel Value's blog, "this is due to the fact that China has bulk carrier and container fleets worth \$68.4 billion and \$63.5 billion, respectively," adding that "the value of the fleets in both markets has been growing over the past year."

• JAPAN:

Japan fell to second place this year. This happened despite the fact that the value of the fleet increased from \$206.3 billion in 2024 to \$231.3 billion in early 2025 since the last ranking, i.e. about 12% year-on-year. In recent years, shipowners have focused on increasing the bulk carrier fleet.

Japan's bulk carrier fleets added almost 60 ships during the year. The increase in ship values last year contributed to the increase in the value of this sector in Japan. Bulk carrier values remained close to 15-year highs last year. With older, 20-year-old Capesize ships reaching a peak of \$20.32 million in October 2024, Galanopoulos notes.

• GREECE:

Greece once again maintained third place, both in terms of the overall value and the number of ships in the fleet operating on the market. While China has more tankers, the value of Greece's tanker fleet is significantly higher at \$71.3 billion, surpassing China's by \$23.3 billion, Vessel Value estimates. Greece also has the second-largest LNG fleet, with 143 ships and a fleet value of \$32.4 billion. The value of that fleet is up by just over \$1 billion from last year, a result of high demand for tankers and LNG shipments.

• UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

The United States maintained fourth place with a fleet value of \$116.4 billion. Over the year, the value increased by over \$16.5 billion compared to the last Vessel Value report. The value of the fleet of American shipowners is determined by the strong cruise industry. The fleets of cruise ship operators are the strongest asset with \$58.6 billion. The maritime position of the United States fleet is determined by Carnival and Royal Caribbean. Since the last report, the value of the cruise fleet in the hands of American shipowners has increased by almost \$10 billion. The United States also has a strong position in the ro-ro market, with a fleet worth \$2.6 billion. In terms of the number of ships, with a fleet of 40 ro-ro, the United States is behind Japan and Turkey, which have 88 and 50 ships, respectively.

The situation may change in the near future among the top five countries ordering ro-ro ships in the years 2020-2024, Japan came first with contracts for 10 ships. Next are Grimaldi from Italy (8 ships) and France (6 units).

• SINGAPORE:

Singapore has maintained its fifth place in the ranking, with a fleet value of around USD 107.2 billion. This means an increase in the value of the fleets of shipowners from this country by over USD 21 billion compared to last year. Shipowners from Singapore are in fourth place in terms of the number of ships they own. The highest value is held by Singapore's LPG and OSV fleets. They are the second largest fleet group in the world in terms of value. Their Vessel Value is estimated at USD 14 billion and USD 4.4 billion each, respectively. The value of this sector has been created by the market. As a result of the growing demand for gas transport services, the value of fleets has increased by around 50.5% compared to the last report

8.2. Middle Power Countries

• SOUTH KOREA:

South Korea has maintained its position as the sixth maritime country, and its fleet is currently worth USD 69.6 billion. This means an increase of "only" almost USD 2 billion compared to last year. Korean shipowners have fewer ships than the 10th fleet in the ranking, but they have new and high-value ships. In terms of the number of operators, the Republic of

Korea is outpaced by the United Arab Emirates. South Korea's position was determined by investments in the maritime transport sector of LNG tankers. The value of the Korean fleet of tankers for transporting liquefied gas ensured that it maintained its fourth position with a valuation of USD 17.2 billion.

• UNITED KINGDOM:

The UK has moved up one position in the fleet value ranking for another year, taking seventh place in 2025. This is despite the fact that Albion is not in the top ten in terms of the number of ships. In this case, a similar mechanism was at work as in the case of the United States. Just over 25% of the value of the UK fleet is provided by cruise ship owners. The cruise industry is the most valuable sector in the UK fleet.

• NORWAY:

Norway now ranks eighth with a total fleet value of \$68.5bn, almost \$10bn more than in the previous report. The UK has moved one place up from its neighbour. The increase in the value of the Norwegian fleet has been driven by investment in the maritime transport of liquefied gas, which is also carried out by one Norwegian operator from the United States to Poland. The value of the Norwegian LNG fleet is around 20% of the country's total fleet value, at \$13.6bn. The LPG fleet accounts for around 4.5% and is worth \$3.1bn. Oil tankers also make up a significant percentage of the Norwegian fleet. This share is estimated at around 16%, with a total value of \$10.9 billion. Norway is also the second largest owner of car transporters, which account for around 15.8% of the total fleet value (\$10.8 billion).

• SWITZERLAND:

Switzerland once again made it into the top ten this year with a fleet value of USD 68 billion. This is largely information about MSC's activity and results from the investment activity of this shipowner. In 2024, MSC continued its policy of dynamic development of the container fleet by investing in new and market-acquired units. During the year, MSC acquired 63 used ships from the secondary market and signed contracts for 64 new container ships. All planned construction will be carried out in Chinese shipyards and launched on the market between 2026 and 2029.

GERMANY:

Germany has recorded a decline in the global rankings for the second year in a row. It moved from ninth to tenth place in the Vessel Value table. Traditionally, a significant part of the German fleet is the container fleet. German shipowners rank second in terms of the number of such ships. However, in terms of value, the German container fleet ranks fifth with a container fleet value estimated at USD 27.7 billion. This is a significant increase compared to the last report. In January 2024, the German container fleet was valued at \$17.8 billion.

8.3. Coastal States in High-Risk Zones

"If you are heading out on a beach vacation, have no fear about the swashbuckling ways of the pirates. Your vacation destination is most likely safe from being pillaged or looted by modern-day pirates."

Three areas of the globe do, however, have regular incidences of piracy that should be noted. The areas with the highest incidences of pirate attacks on other ships include the Singapore Straits with 35 attacks since 2021 according to <u>Statistica</u>. Additionally, Peruvian waters have experienced 18 attacks and 38 incidents along the coast of West Africa.

Other areas where piracy has taken place include the "Gulf of Guinea, Strait of Malacca, Sulu and Celebes Seas, the Indian Ocean, and Falcon Lake."

These modern pirates target the largest trade routes in these areas in hopes of amassing materials, money and valuable cargo to fund their lifestyles. In some cases, the bounty is used to fund crime groups, wars and local governments. If cargo is unavailable or deemed not valuable, the pirates may take the crew of the opposing vessel hostage and demand a ransom to earn their booty.



"Pirate attacks on global map"

8.4. Landlocked States' Interests

1. Indirect Economic Benefits:

While landlocked countries do not engage in direct maritime trade, they are indirectly affected by piracy because they are connected to global trade networks.

a. Import and Export Costs:

- These countries generally transport their goods through the ports of neighboring coastal countries.
- If piracy increases in certain sea lanes (e.g., the Gulf of Aden or the Strait of Malacca), shipping insurance and transportation costs increase.
- As a result, this increases commodity prices and can lead to economic instability.

b. Energy Security

- Oil, natural gas, and fuel are primarily transported by sea.
- When piracy threatens energy flows, landlocked countries are also affected by rising energy prices.
- This poses a strategic risk, especially for landlocked countries dependent on energy imports.

2. International Law and Security Interests

Landlocked countries benefit from maintaining global stability by supporting international maritime security.

a. Global Security Stability:

- Piracy can be linked not only to maritime transport but also to international terrorism and illicit trade (arms, drugs, and human trafficking).
- Therefore, landlocked countries view combating piracy as part of international security.

b. Diplomatic Reputation and Contribution:

• Some landlocked countries (such as Switzerland or Austria) gain international prestige and diplomatic influence by contributing to international maritime security funds or supporting UN maritime security operations.

3. Interests Related to Logistics and Trade Corridors:

- Land-based countries often rely on "transit corridors" (e.g., the Kazakhstan-Caspian Sea-Baku-Black Sea route).
- If piracy threatens some of these routes, diversifying trade routes becomes essential.
- Therefore, land-based countries support regional maritime security initiatives against piracy because they protect the continuity of these trade routes.

4. International Cooperation and Defense Industry Interests:

- Counter-piracy operations increase military and technological cooperation between countries.
- Land-based countries can contribute to this process in areas such as defense technologies, satellite surveillance systems, or intelligence sharing.
- This translates to both economic gain (defense exports) and political influence.

5. Indirect Security Risk: Trade Dependence

- In the age of globalization, even a landlocked country is indirectly dependent on sea routes for imports and exports.
- When piracy increases, supply chain disruptions occur. This can:

Slow economic growth,

Increase inflation,

Cause political instability.

8.5. Common Conflicts in Policy Approaches

"Because piracy occurs primarily in international waters, policy conflicts often arise over how different countries approach the issue."

1. Military Intervention or Diplomatic Solution?

Some countries (e.g., naval powers like the United States and France) advocate military operations to combat piracy. Others (e.g., some African or Asian countries) prefer peaceful solutions such as diplomatic negotiations and economic development aid.

2. Economic Interests or Human Rights?

Some countries prioritize protecting maritime trade routes in pirate areas. However, others argue that the methods used to combat piracy may violate human rights (e.g., ill-treatment of suspected pirates, extrajudicial killings).

3. International Responsibility Sharing

Some countries (for example, off the coast of Somalia) form international naval coalitions to combat piracy. However, some countries refuse to participate, reasoning, "These areas are too far for me; why should I send troops?"

4. Coastal and Landlocked Countries Approach

Coastal countries pursue more active policies because maritime trade is directly affected. Landlocked countries, on the other hand, evaluate this issue through indirect economic or security implications.

5. Legal Approaches: The Question of Jurisdiction

Because piracy is generally committed in international waters, the question of "which country will prosecute?" arises. Some countries advocate for "universal jurisdiction" (any country can prosecute), while others maintain that only the coastal state has jurisdiction.

8.6. Cooperative vs Competitive Maritime Policies

1. Cooperative Maritime Policies

These policies involve countries acting together to protect their common interests at sea, ensure security, consolidate resources, and maintain international stability.

Key Features:

- It is based on international cooperation and diplomacy.
- Joint action is taken on issues such as maritime safety, environmental protection, and combating piracy.
- It has a win-win approach.
- It is generally supported by the UN, the IMO (International Maritime Organization), or regional maritime organizations.

Examples:

- 1. Joint Counter-Piracy Operation off the Coast of Somalia:
 - The US, EU, NATO, and many other countries are conducting joint anti-piracy patrols off the coast of Somalia under the name Combined Task Force 151.
 - This is a clear example of cooperative maritime policy.
- 2. Red Sea and Indian Ocean Security Cooperation:
 - Coastal countries in the Horn of Africa (Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, etc.) and their naval forces are sharing information and conducting joint exercises to combat piracy and illegal fishing.

- 3. Mediterranean Migrant Rescue Operations (EU NAVFOR MED "Operation Sophia")
 - European Union countries have established joint patrol fleets in the Mediterranean to combat illegal migration and human trafficking.
- 4. UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)
 - Ratioed by more than 160 countries, it establishes international rules for the sharing of the seas, environmental protection, and resource use.
 - This is also a collaborative policy framework.

2. Competitive Maritime Policies

These policies describe situations in which countries compete or conflict with each other to maximize economic and strategic benefits from the seas.

Key Features:

- National interests and sovereignty are paramount.
- Competition occurs over maritime jurisdictions, energy resources, fishing zones, or sea trade routes.
- Tensions can often result in diplomatic crises or military demonstrations.

Examples:

- 1. Energy Competition in the Eastern Mediterranean
 - Serious disputes are brewing among Turkey, Greece, Cyprus, Israel, and Egypt over natural gas exploration areas and maritime jurisdictions.
 - This is a classic example of competitive maritime politics.
- 2. South China Sea Dispute
 - China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia are claiming sovereignty over energy resources and sea lanes around the Spratly and Paracel Islands.
 - Tensions are further exacerbated by US freedom of navigation patrols.
- 3. Conflicts Over Fishing Grounds
 - Japan and South Korea over the Dokdo/Takeshima Islands, and the UK and France over the English Channel fishing, are typical examples of competitive maritime politics.
- 4. The Struggle for New Sea Routes in the Arctic
 - As the melting ice caps opened new trade routes, Russia, the US, Canada, and Norway began competing for regional dominance and access to natural resources.

9. Key Problems of the Agenda

9.1. Legal Ambiguities in International Waters

International waters constitute one of the most critical issues in maritime security because they lie outside the sovereignty of different states and the sharing of legal authority becomes complex. Although the jurisdiction of states is defined within the framework of international law, primarily UNCLOS, in practice, serious uncertainties arise, especially concerning crimes committed in international waters. These uncertainties both slow down intervention processes and make it difficult to effectively prevent threats such as piracy, smuggling, IUU fishing, and terrorism.

Jurisdiction Overlaps and Flag State Issues

The fundamental principle in international law is that a ship is subject only to the jurisdiction of its flag state. However, the registration of many ships under Flags of Convenience (FoC) with low supervision and loose legal regimes leads to weak oversight. This situation;

- complicates the investigation of crimes,
- obscures responsibility,
- provides space for piracy and smuggling activities.

The inability of some FoC states to respond quickly to security incidents effectively nullifies the intervention authority.

Uncertainties in Intervention Authority

Intervening against a ship in international waters is explicitly lawful only in cases of "universal crimes" such as piracy or slave trade. However;

- drug trafficking,
- human trafficking,
- IUU fishing,
- arms trafficking,

In such activities, the direct intervention authority of states is not always clear. Factors such as the ship's flag, the location of the incident, the nature of the crime, and agreements between states make the process even more complex.

Other Elements Creating Gray Areas

The source of legal gaps in international waters is not only the limits defined in UNCLOS. Additionally:

- States categorizing the same act differently (terrorism vs. piracy)
- Different interpretations of coastal states' rights over EEZ

- The unclear legal status of private maritime security companies (PMSC)
- The increasing presence of non-state armed actors in international waters make it difficult to establish a common legal framework.

Impact on Security Operations

In practice, these uncertainties lead to the following problems:

- Delays in intervention and escalation of threats
- Command and control problems in multinational task forces
- Post-operation judicial gaps
- Increased security costs for commercial vessels
- Spread of regional instabilities to global trade

Therefore, legal uncertainties in international waters are not merely a "legal debate" but a strategic security vulnerability that directly affects the global economy and maritime security

9.2. Lack of Enforcement & Jurisdiction Disputes

One of the most critical structural problems in maritime security is the insufficient enforcement capacity encountered in international waters and within coastal states' jurisdictions, together with the jurisdictional disputes that arise between states. These two elements combined create large gaps in the detection, interception and punishment of maritime crimes, paving the way for the continuation of threats such as piracy, smuggling, terrorism and IUU (illegal, unreported and unregulated) fishing.

Limited Maritime Capabilities of States

Many states' navies and coast guards;

- remain inadequate in monitoring wide maritime jurisdictions,
- lack radar and surveillance infrastructure,
- have limited rapid response capability on the open sea,
- cannot finance long-duration patrol operations.

These capacity deficiencies are particularly evident in developing countries. Therefore, in high-risk areas, criminal organizations and pirate groups exploit the weakness of state authority.

Jurisdictional Conflicts

Because jurisdiction in maritime law becomes complicated especially in gray areas, disputes frequently arise between states. The main causes of such conflicts are:

• Coastal state – flag state jurisdiction overlaps

- Different interpretations of security powers in the EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone)
- Competing claims of rights in areas where maritime boundaries are not fully determined
- Uncertainty over to whom military authority belongs in multinational operations

Such disputes lead to delays in operations and enlargement of security gaps.

Enforcement Problems in International Operations

Multinational maritime task forces such as NATO, EU NAVFOR, and Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) face various limitations in operations because they do not share a common legal basis of authorities:

- Even if a vessel is boarded, arrest, seizure and prosecution procedures are difficult to distribute among states.
- Although offenders are captured, many countries do not want to assume prosecution responsibility, which popularizes "catch and release" practices.
- The domestic laws of some states make it difficult to use evidence obtained in international operations.

Therefore, the deterrence effect of operations decreases and criminal organizations act more boldly.

Enforcement Gaps Stemming from FoC (Convenience Flags)

FoC systems, which register as flag states for only a nominal fee but in practice do not exercise control, are among the biggest causes of enforcement deficiency:

- Inspections are almost non-existent
- Ships' safety standards are not questioned
- Criminal activities can remain off the record
- Requests for investigations often go unanswered

This situation creates an almost "legal haven" for maritime crimes.

Conclusion: The Institutional Dimension of the Security Gap

Enforcement deficiencies and jurisdictional disputes create a multiplier effect that strengthens all other threats affecting maritime security:

- Piracy and robbery attempts increase
- Smuggling networks expand more easily
- IUU fishing becomes uncontrollable
- Terrorist organizations are more willing to use maritime routes

So, this problem should be addressed not only legally but also as an operational, economic and geopolitical security issue.

9.3. Funding Gaps in Maritime Security Operations

One of the most serious structural problems affecting maritime security is the insufficiency of the resources allocated by states and international institutions to this field. The vastness of maritime jurisdictions, the high cost of operations and the increasingly sophisticated methods used by criminal organizations increase the necessary funding for security every year. However, many states, especially developing countries, do not have the capacity to bear this financial burden.

Maritime security operations require large costs in terms of both human resources and technological infrastructure. Long-range patrol vessels, modern radar systems, unmanned aerial vehicles, satellite monitoring networks, coast guard training and port security investments are areas that require significant budgets. Therefore, many countries lack the capability to constantly monitor their maritime areas and operate with a security approach that only "reacts" to critical incidents. This situation is easily exploited by criminal organizations.

A similar financing problem is also experienced at the international level. Multinational task forces, naval coalitions and maritime operations under the UN umbrella often lack a sustainable budget structure because they are financed by voluntary contributions. Some countries show limited participation in operations because they do not want to bear the financial burden; this narrows the area of activity of the task forces and reduces operational intensity. Especially in fields such as piracy, human smuggling and illegal fishing, the lack of funding significantly reduces the deterrence of operations.

Another dimension of the financing gap emerges in port infrastructure. Because raising port security standards, improving screening systems, modernizing container control infrastructure and personnel training are high-cost areas, many countries postpone these investments. This situation allows activities such as drug trafficking, arms transfers and illegal migration to occur more easily through ports.

As a result, the lack of funding constitutes one of the most fragile links in the maritime security chain. The weakening of coordination between states, the reduction of operational frequency and the decline of monitoring capacity provide criminal organizations with a wider area of movement and directly threaten the security of international trade. Therefore, in order to ensure maritime security effectively, not only military and legal reforms but also the establishment of a sustainable financing model emerges as a critical necessity.

9.4. Technological Vulnerabilities

Since modern maritime activities have become heavily dependent on digital systems, technological fragilities have become one of the fastest-growing risk areas in maritime security. Both commercial vessels and port operations use a wide technological infrastructure ranging from navigation systems to cargo-tracking software, from communication networks to automatic identification systems. Even the smallest malfunction in this infrastructure can directly affect ship safety, global trade flow and critical sea routes.

Especially GPS and AIS manipulations are among the most frequently encountered types of vulnerabilities in recent years. Pirate groups, smugglers or non-state armed actors can alter ships' position data to lure them into traps, disrupt their routes or prevent them from being tracked. Similarly, cyberattacks targeting ships' bridge equipment can disable automation systems and cause serious navigation errors. In some cases, it has even been reported that cyberattacks have taken full control of ships.

Ports are also severely vulnerable to technological threats. Container-scanning systems, cargo management software, port entry-exit databases and camera networks are attractive targets for organized crime groups. By infiltrating these systems, fake documents can be created, container records can be altered and drug or weapon transfers can be facilitated. The collapse of a port's IT infrastructure halts ship operations and causes major delays in multinational supply chains.

Another dimension of technological fragility is the capacity gap between countries. While developed states allocate significant budgets to cybersecurity investments, many developing countries have limited means in terms of both technical personnel and infrastructure. This gap allows criminal organizations to target weak points more easily and creates critical vulnerabilities in the regional security chain.

When all these elements come together, technological threats cease to be merely a cybersecurity issue and become a strategic risk in terms of international trade, energy transportation and the protection of maritime jurisdictions. For that reason, the modern needs of maritime security require not only physical patrols or military measures but also a robust digital defense infrastructure.

9.5. Militarization of Maritime Jurisdictions

The militarization of maritime jurisdictions has become an increasingly common phenomenon in contemporary maritime security discussions. Many states are expanding their naval forces to protect trade routes, gain influence over energy

resources and increase their presence in disputed regions. This process creates a more intense, more competitive and more error-prone security environment at sea.

In various regions, naval patrol activities have increased, modern surveillance systems have been activated and long-range weapons and unmanned maritime vehicles have become more widely used. This picture leads areas that were mostly used for civilian activities in the past to gradually acquire a military character. This trend is clearly observed in the South China Sea, the Eastern Mediterranean, the Gulf of Aden, the Black Sea and the Indo-Pacific region.

The increased military presence creates various challenges for civilian maritime transportation. Commercial vessels are sometimes forced to change course due to military exercises, encounter unexpected inspections in certain areas and are exposed to more complex navigation conditions within dense sea traffic. It is also known that some actors resort to "gray zone" methods involving pressure and harassment against fishing vessels, research ships or commercial vessels. Such practices reduce predictability at sea and weaken confidence in international rules.

The rise in militarization also increases the risk of tension between states that confront each other. Navies sailing in close proximity, warning shots, harassment maneuvers or misinterpreted communications can turn into incidents capable of triggering crises. This risk is more pronounced in regions where communication channels between states are weak. The fact of multiple states assert rights over the same maritime area further increases this complexity.

Despite many states justify militarization as a defensive measure, the overall picture reveals a more sensitive and fragile maritime security environment. Competition over energy resources, strategic straits and exclusive economic zones pushes countries to invest more in military capabilities. This situation affects regional power balances and, in the long run, places the security of international trade and cooperation initiatives within an uncertain framework.

9.6. Lack of Regional Cooperation

The lack of regional cooperation is one of the fundamental problems that makes maritime security fragile. Although states operate in close geographical proximity in many maritime basins, they struggle to establish a common approach against threats. Behind this situation are factors such as political rivalries, historical disputes, economic conflicts of interest and sensitivities regarding national sovereignty.

In some regions, information sharing between coast guard and naval units is limited. States may act hesitantly when sharing incidents close to their territorial waters or keep certain data closed for strategic reasons. This picture creates a basis for the

easier spread of transnational threats such as smuggling networks, illegal fishing activities, human trafficking routes or the movements of armed groups. Similarly, incompatibilities arise between search and rescue responsibility areas, and rapid coordination may not be achieved in emergencies.

The influence of regional organizations also often remains limited. Legal frameworks may be insufficient, and enforcement mechanisms may remain weak. Some platforms are only consultative in nature and cannot produce binding decisions. This delays the organization of joint patrols, the establishment of joint operations centers or the development of standard procedures.

The low level of trust between states is another factor that makes cooperation difficult. Some countries hesitate because they believe participation in joint operations will require intelligence sharing. In addition, in some regions, economic rivalries, disputes over energy reserves or continental shelf disagreements make acting together even more complex.

Ultimately, the lack of regional cooperation allows threats to spread across a wider geography, increasing the burden on security institutions and weakening the safety of international maritime trade. Unless an effective regional coordination mechanism is established, it is expected that existing threats will re-emerge in different forms.

9.7. Humanitarian and Economic İmpacts

Threats in the field of maritime security do not only produce strategic or military consequences; they also directly shape humanitarian conditions and global economic stability. Every incident in regions with weak security levels causes disruptions in trade flows, increases costs and deepens the vulnerability of local communities. This situation becomes more pronounced in developing countries that are highly dependent on maritime transportation.

Humanitarian impacts often intertwine with economic consequences. Activities such as piracy, human trafficking, irregular migration and IUU fishing reduce the living standards of regional communities and make access to basic security needs more difficult. Due to these threats, commercial vessels may need to change their routes, increase their navigation speed or employ private security services. These measures both increase fuel consumption and raise transportation costs. The rising costs are reflected in the global supply chain, creating a chain of price increases that reaches consumers.

In addition, maritime security issues lead to operational delays at ports and increases in insurance premiums. An increased risk in a specific region causes

insurance companies to classify the area as high-risk. This high-risk classification threatens the sustainability of commercial routes and may cause some firms to completely leave the region. Such a development represents a serious loss of income for coastal communities that are already economically fragile.

From a humanitarian perspective, irregular migration and human trafficking are the threats with the most visible impacts. People venturing out to sea in unsafe vessels face life-threatening hazards such as storms, insufficient food and water, and the risk of drowning. An increase in the number of such incidents imposes a significant operational burden on regional navies and coast guard units. Legal and diplomatic disputes arising during the admission processes of rescued individuals to ports also directly affect ship operations.

Finally, IUU fishing threatens both economic and social stability. The depletion of fish stocks eliminates the livelihoods of coastal communities and triggers forced migration movements. This situation leads to the emergence of a poverty cycle fueled by security risks.

10. Maps, Charts, and Visual Data10.1. Maritime Chokepoint Maps

















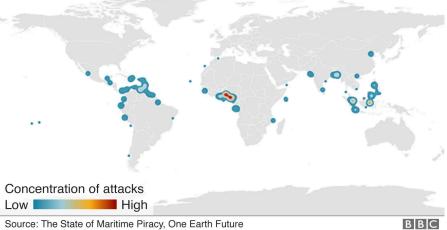


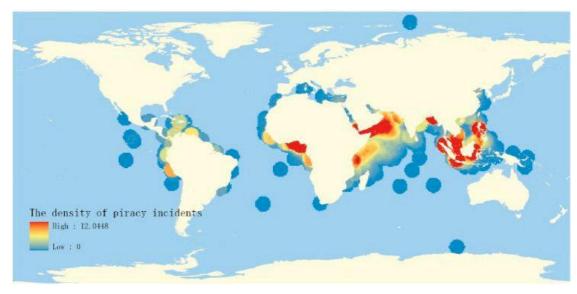




10.2. **Piracy Heatmaps**

Piracy and armed robbery at sea 2018

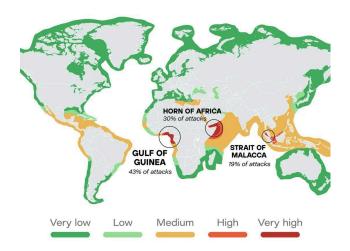




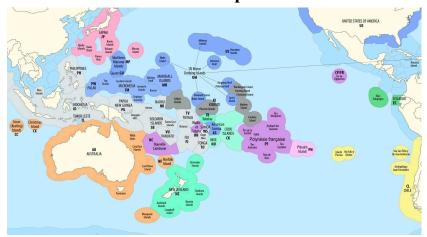
Historical World

Piracy level

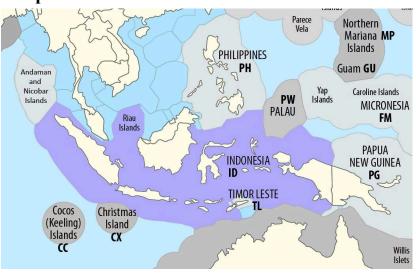
piracy in the world (2019-2020)



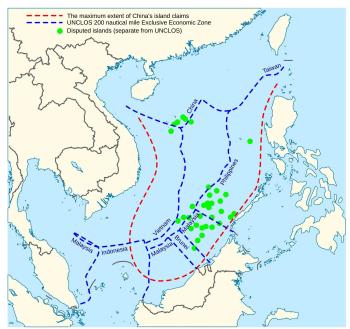
10.3. Territorial Waters / EEZ Maps



Map of the Territorial Waters of the Pacific Ocean



Maritime territory and Exclusive economic zone of some Southeast Asia and Pacific countries



Map of the nine-dash line and EEZs



Map of the Territorial Waters of the Atlantic and Indian Ocean

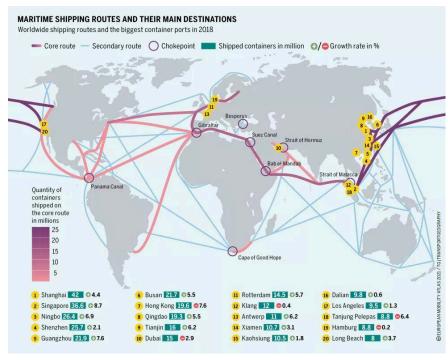


Exclusive Economic Zone Map

10.4. Maritime Trade Flow Charts



Major maritime shipping routes and strategic passages





10.5. Smuggling Route Illustrations



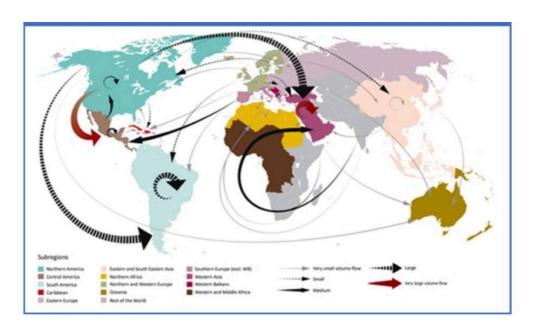
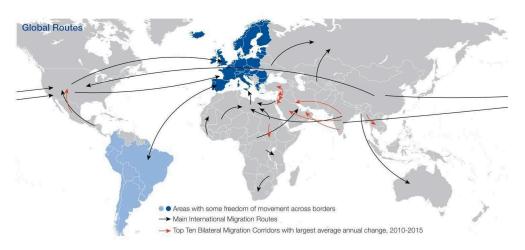


Figure 12: Some of the World's Many Migration Routes

Sources: Adams, 2015; Conant, Chwastyk & Williams, 2015



11. Timeline

11.1. Evolution of Maritime Security

1. Introduction

The concept of maritime security has continually evolved throughout history in response to changing geopolitical dynamics, trade structures, and technological advancements. Initially addressed solely through a military and sovereignty-based approach, maritime security has now become a multidimensional international security domain. This evolution reveals that the seas are not only a battlefield but also a center for economic, environmental, and human security.

2. The Classical Period: The State-Centered Approach (16th–19th Centuries)

During the Classical period, maritime security was primarily based on the concept of command of the sea. During this period, naval power was directly linked to states' military capacity and colonial expansion.

- Britain's global supremacy was supported by the doctrine of "sea power," and Mahan's (1890) work, The Influence of Sea Power upon History, formed the theoretical basis for this idea.
- In this understanding, maritime security essentially meant the protection of trade routes by states through naval power.
- Threats such as piracy, smuggling, and piracy were viewed as criminal elements that needed to be suppressed solely by military means.

3. The Cold War Era: Geostrategic Competition and the Militarization of Maritime Areas (1945–1990)

The Cold War reshaped the concept of maritime security based on geopolitical competition.

- The United States and the Soviet Union made the seas a part of strategic deterrence with nuclear submarines, aircraft carriers, and sea-based missile systems.
- During this period, maritime security became more associated with the concepts of military balance, maritime sovereignty, and deterrence.
- However, this military intensity also led to the emergence of new regulations in international law; for example, the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) was founded during this period.

4. The Post-Cold War Period: The Multidimensional Security Approach (1990–2001)

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, maritime security began to focus on economic and environmental risks rather than military threats.

- With globalization, maritime transportation increased, bringing problems such as piracy, illegal fishing, and human and drug trafficking to the forefront.
- Maritime security began to be defined not only by states' naval policies but also by international cooperation, environmental security, and trade security.
- This period marked the birth of the concept of "non-traditional maritime threats."

5. The 21st Century: A Comprehensive and Multi-Actor Understanding of Maritime Security

The global security paradigm following September 11, 2001, has directly impacted maritime domains.

- New factors such as maritime terrorism, port security, energy supply security, cyber threats, and new sea routes created by climate change (e.g., Arctic routes) have emerged.
- During this period, maritime security has become an area of cooperation involving not only states but also international organizations (IMO, NATO, EU), the private sector (shipping companies), and civil society organizations.
- The concept of "Blue Economy Security" has also come to the fore in this era, establishing a direct link between the economic sustainability of the seas and security policies.

6. Current Trends and Challenges

The modern understanding of maritime security requires a holistic management approach.

- Maritime Domain Awareness, combating transnational crime, sustainable use of marine resources, and protecting the marine environment have become key priorities.
- However, the resurgence of great power competition (e.g., China-US tensions) and conflicts over energy corridors are reviving classic security concerns. Therefore, maritime security is now considered a complex security system that simultaneously encompasses both cooperative and competitive dynamics.

7. Conclusion

The evolution of maritime security reflects how states have managed the balance between power, economy, and the environment throughout history. In today's world, maritime security is no longer a solely military issue; it has become the intersection of economic, environmental, and human security. Therefore, modern maritime policies require a delicate balance between national interests and global responsibility.

11.2. Key Incidents Relevant to the Agenda

2005-2011: Peak Piracy Off the Coast of Somalia:

- Description: Piracy off the coast of Somalia has increased significantly since 2005. Approximately 237 attacks were reported in 2011.
- Why It Matters: These incidents have significantly increased global trade insurance costs by reducing the threat of sea shrinkage.

• Result: In 2008, UN Security Council Resolution 1816 was adopted, formalizing international intervention.

2008: "Operation Atalanta" - The EU's First Maritime Operation

- Initiated by: European Union (EUNAVFOR)
- Purpose: To protect merchant ships against piracy off the coast of Somalia and ensure the safety of WFP (World Food Programme) vessels.
- Significance: Considered the EU's first large-scale joint maritime security operation.

2009: Maersk Alabama Incident

- Case: Somali pirates seized the US-flagged Maersk Alabama.
- Result: The US Navy's USS Bainbridge intervened, and Captain Richard Phillips was rescued.
- Impact: It generated widespread media coverage and strengthened US maritime security strategies. (This incident was also the subject of the film "Captain Phillips")

2013-2017: Reducing Piracy Through International Cooperation

- Result: As a result of joint patrol operations conducted by NATO, the EU, China, India, Japan, and many other countries, piracy incidents decreased by 90%.
- Importance: This period is a classic example of the success of a cooperative approach to maritime security.

2009: China Submits "Nine-Dash Line" Map to the UN

- Introduction: China formally submitted its historical claim in the South China Sea to the UN with the "nine-dash line" map.
- Significance: Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei rejected this claim; regional tensions erupted.

2012: Scarborough Shoal Crisis (China-Philippines Standoff)

- Case: Tensions erupted between the Philippine Navy and the Chinese coast guard over Scarborough Shoal.
- Result: China effectively took control.
- Impact: Caused deep diplomatic divisions within ASEAN.

2013–2016: Philippines Arbitration Case Against China

- Case: The Philippines appealed China's maritime jurisdiction claims to the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague.
- Result: In its 2016 decision, the court found China's claims invalid.
- China's Response: Rejected the decision; continued to build artificial islands.
- Significance: A precedent-setting decision in international maritime law.

2020-Present: US Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs) Patrols

• Description: The US Navy conducts regular patrols to emphasize freedom of navigation in areas China deems illegal.

• Significance: Freedom of navigation is intended to be protected by international law, but China considers this a violation of sovereignty.

1982: UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

- Content: "Freedom of navigation" was formally defined in international law.
- Importance: The right of all states to free navigation on the high seas was guaranteed.

1988: US-USSR "Black Sea Bumping Incident"

- Case: US warships USS Yorktown and USS Caron collided with Soviet ships while conducting a freedom of navigation patrol in USSR territorial waters.
- Result: The US emphasized its commitment to protecting the principle of freedom of navigation.

2015: US Launches FONOP in the South China Sea

- Case: The destroyer USS Lassen patrolled within 12 nautical miles of a Chinese artificial island.
- Impact: Sparked a new security crisis in China-US relations.

2022–2024: Taiwan Strait and South China Sea Tensions

- Case: The US, Japan, Australia, and the Philippines held joint exercises to support freedom of navigation.
- Result: China labeled this a provocative action; regional military activity increased.

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