



RHUMB LINES

Straight Lines to Navigate By



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Combating the Threat of Piracy

"Piracy is a problem that starts ashore and is a threat to the security of all nations. We have been successful not only in our coalition efforts to help disrupt, deter and thwart piracy, but also in communicating and coordinating with other naval forces deployed to the region. While we cannot guarantee safety of every vessel that transits these waters, our role is to help provide security and stability in order to create a lawful maritime order."

– Vice Adm. Bill Gortney, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command

As of March 2009, Combined Task Force 151 and other cooperating naval forces have encountered more than 250 pirates; 127 of which were disarmed and released, and 126 of which were turned over for prosecution.

The international threat of piracy

- Piracy is an international problem that requires an international solution.
- The piracy problem emanating from Somalia has grown from the economic, social and political strife that has gripped that country since the mid-1990s.
- Piracy is a universal crime, and all countries of the world are obligated to cooperate to the fullest extent possible in the repression of piracy. Piracy threatens the freedom and safety of maritime navigation throughout the world, and undermines economic security.
- International organizations, governments, militaries and the shipping industry have a shared responsibility to repress the universal crime of piracy and ensure a lawful maritime order.

The international naval effort to counter piracy

- The U.S. Navy leads a coalition of nations sending ships and aircraft to deter maritime pirate activity, allowing the shipping industry time to implement self-protection measures and enabling the international community to establish a legal framework to hold pirates accountable for their actions.
- To date, more than more than 15 nations have deployed naval forces to the Gulf of Aden in support of counter-piracy operations. They have either deployed independently or as part of coalition, European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization efforts. Collectively the efforts of all these forces are making a difference.

The maritime industry's response to piracy

- There are countless examples of shipping companies and individual merchant mariners taking proactive measures and acting as the first line of self defense against these armed criminals operating at sea.
 - They are posting lookouts who provide early warning of potential attackers.
 - They are maneuvering their vessels and increasing speed to avoid the pirates' small skiffs.
 - During a recent failed attempt, a merchant mariner was able to push the pirates' ladder away from the ship, foiling the attack.
 - Some merchant companies have also employed onboard security teams.

Key Messages

- Piracy is a universal crime, and all countries of the world are obligated to cooperate to the fullest extent possible in the repression of piracy.
- The U.S. Navy leads a coalition of nations sending ships and aircraft to deter maritime pirate activity, allowing the shipping industry time to implement self-protection measures and enabling the international community to establish a legal framework to hold pirates accountable for their actions.

Facts & Figures

Disposition of pirate paraphernalia (as of 24 Mar):

- 21 pirate vessels destroyed
- 7 pirate vessels confiscated
- 133 small arms confiscated
- 28 Rocket Propelled Grenade launchers, 51 Rocket Propelled Grenade projectiles
- 21 ladders