Committee: Disarmament and international security

Topic: The Question of Creating an international response to maritime piracy

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Summary

Maritime piracy—the plundering, hijacking, or detention of a ship in international waters—has evolved over the centuries but remains a challenge to international law. Maritime piracy is an international threat to most countries in the world that are involved in either tourism or trade. If ships are hijacked, what is being carried will not reach the destination and there can be serious economic damages. Moreover, piracy will disincentivise much of the tourism of certain geographical areas.

With an increasingly globalised world, it is becoming more important to ensure that ships that are travelling in international waters are not in danger. This is especially true as in 2020 there have been 195 ships attacked, and 5 people in the last 5 years have been killed. However, overall, the amount of piracy incidents that occurred in 2021 are the lowest since 1994.

Definition of Key Terms

Maritime piracy: The plundering, hijacking, or detention of a ship in international waters

Plundering: Steal goods from (a place or person), typically using force and in a time of war or civil disorder.

Hijacking: An act of unlawfully seizing an aircraft, vehicle, or ship while in transit.

International water: Areas of the sea or ocean that are too far out to fall under any nation's jurisdiction.

Amnesty: The pardoning of a (usually legal) offence committed by an individual or group. Amnesty is given only by individual countries to those who have committed some sort of offence.

Background Information

Piracy has a long history and began over 2000 years ago in Ancient Greece when sea robbers threatened the trading routes of Ancient Greece. Roman ships were also attacked by pirates who seized their cargoes of grain and olive oil. Historic examples include the waters of Gibraltar, the Strait of Malacca, Madagascar, the Gulf of Aden, and the English Channel, whose geographic structures facilitated pirate attacks.

Piracy has always concentrated in certain geographical areas, usually near less developed countries as it is easier for the pirates to not be tackled. Currently, the Gulf of Guinea continues to be particularly dangerous for seafarers with 43% of all reported piracy incidents occurring in the region. Nonetheless, areas like the Singapore Straits, Indonesia and the Americas are all endangered because

of piracy. The most recent attack recorded is in Angola. The description of the attack is as follows:

29.01.2022: 0110 UTC: Posn: 08:47.5S – 013:15.2E, Luanda Anchorage, Angola. Two crew boats alongside each other were boarded by three unauthorised persons while at anchored. Duty crew on routine rounds noticed the unauthorised persons and immediately raised the alarm. Upon hearing the alarm and seeing the alerted crew, the unauthorised persons escaped with their accomplices in a canoe. Nothing reported stolen. Incident was reported to the Port Authorities.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

- **UNODC,** its mission is to contribute to global peace and security, human rights and development by making the world safer from drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism.

- **Europol,** Europol is the European Union's law enforcement agency. The main goal is to achieve a safer Europe for the benefit of all the EU citizens.

- **Interpol**, it aims to promote the widest-possible mutual assistance between criminal police forces and to establish and develop institutions likely to contribute to the prevention and suppression of international crime.

- Efforts amongst the **Indonesian**, **Malaysian** and **Singaporean** authorities are being carried out to reduce the piracy incidents in this part of the world.

- **Somalia and Nigeria**

Timeline of events

Date	Description
1400 to 1200 BC	The first report of piracy
1997	UNODOC, United Nations Drug Control Programme and the Centre for

	International Crime Prevention, was signed.
2009 - 2016	Operation Ocean Shield. This 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.
2010	Record year with the highest number of maritime piracy incidents ever recorded (445)

Possible Solutions

- Live with piracy as an unavoidable nuisance. Somali hijackers earned 30-40 million dollars in ransom in 2008, the expenditure to combat piracy would be much greater.

- Prevent or deter piracy with naval patrols and convoys

- Arm the cargo ships.

- Take the war to the pirate lairs on shore.

- Attack the commanding heights of piracy by going after the financiers, not the pirates.

- Stop paying ransom.

- Back a government in Somalia, or any country affected by piracy, that will eliminate piracy as a matter of on-shore law enforcement.