

Summaries

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Maritime piracy in Africa; global and local explanations to piratical activity in Nigeria and Somalia

S. Eklöf Amirell

This article aims to explain where, when, how and why piratical activity has taken off in Nigeria and Somalia since the 1970s. The geographical and historical conditions of the continent are compared with those of the other main region of piratical activity in the world during recent decades, Southeast Asia. A critical evaluation is then made of the available information concerning the problem and the different possible, local and global, explanations for the recent surge in African piracy, including opportunity, inequality and the proliferation of small and light weapons. The widespread notion that contemporary piracy can be explained with reference to state failure is challenged, and the rise of organized piratical activity, particularly in the Niger Delta and off the Somali coast, is instead understood as a result of the interaction of local social and political dynamics with transnational and global influences.

Trends in maritime piracy; differences between Southeast Asia and Somalia

M. Bruyneel

This article analyzes the development of maritime piracy in the last decennium. Various sources show that piracy in Southeast Asia has declined, probably due to a better cooperation between coastal states in this region in promoting maritime security and increasing surveillance of coast guards and navy vessels. Also a gradual improvement of the social economic situation seems to have contributed to the diminution of piracy as a source of income for the inhabitants of coastal regions. The dramatic rise of piracy incidents

in recent years is mainly caused by the increasing activities of pirates in the Somali waters and the Indian Ocean. Extreme poverty, internal conflicts and the collapse of state authority in Somalia seem to have contributed to this development. The author discusses various types of piracy and differences in operating between Somali and Asian pirates.

How to protect merchantmen against maritime piracy?

H.A. L'Honoré Naber

In spite of the recent growing international naval presence in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean Somali pirates still continue to attack passing merchantmen trying to hijack these and kidnap the crews. It seems logic to consider what security measures can be taken on the ships themselves against piracy attacks. After analyzing the dilemmas surrounding armed self-defence the author describes how various technological devices, some still developing, could contribute to greater security on board. Just as important however, is the development and appliance of an anti-piracy policy, at the shipping company as well as on board. Information sharing and communication are crucial to an efficient anti-piracy policy. Also crewmembers should know what to expect when a piracy attack occurs and how to act. The structural protection of important waterways is a primary task for naval forces, while the merchantmen themselves could take care of primary protection against piracy attacks. This would diminish their dependence on naval presence, which can never be large enough to effectively prevent piracy.

Privatising anti-piracy services

C. Liss

In the past few years, an increasing number of Private Security Companies (PSCs) – also sometimes referred to as Private Military Companies (PMCs) – have emerged offering and conducting anti-piracy services. These companies offer services in addition to security provided by states and their government agencies. PSCs are today hired to provide anti-piracy services in different parts of the world, but mostly in strategically important waterways where piracy is a serious security concern. This article examines the employment of PSCs in two such waterways, namely the Malacca Straits and the

Gulf of Aden, and discusses the risks, challenges and benefits of privatising maritime security.

International maritime piracy: Towards a supranational jurisdiction?

G.G.J. Knoops

The increase of piracy attacks in the Horn of Africa as of 2007-2008 as well as its changing face towards types of maritime terrorism, has given rise to the question as to whether the contemporary system on the Laws of the High Seas needs to be revisited.

In particular, the question merits thought as to the effectiveness of the adjudicatory system in piracy cases. At present, this is left into the hands of national jurisdictions to decide whether to investigate and prosecute such cases. However, the discretionary powers of states as to such prosecutions result in many lacunae. Should or could the International Criminal Court, instead of national jurisdictions, assume jurisdiction in these matters? If not, is there ample argument for the advent of an ad hoc international criminal tribunal on this area? In this article, answers to these queries will be provided.

Pioneering for solutions to Somali piracy

B. van Ginkel, J. Hemmer, S. Kamerling and F.-P. van der Putten

Recent years have seen a surge in piracy in the Gulf of Aden, followed by growing international involvement in pursuing pirates off the Somali coast. The piracy problem is multifaceted and includes complex geopolitical, regional, legal and operational challenges. But the commitment demonstrated by a broad range of actors to fight piracy in Somali waters also offers unique opportunities. The unprecedented awareness of and attention to the region's insecurity provides international stakeholders with the momentum to strengthen their ties and address the root causes. This article gives a comprehensive account of the piracy issue and presents recommendations to nations engaged in counter-piracy activities.