

## NAVY NEWS WEEK 32-5

10 August 2017

### Moroccan sailor's family calls for intervention over kidnap by Nigerian pirates

The family of one of the Moroccan officers kidnapped called on the government authorities to intervene.(AFP)

By Staff Writer, Al Arabiya English Monday, 7 August 2017



The family of a Moroccan merchant navy officer abducted by Nigerian pirates in the Gulf of Guinea issued an appeal to the government to intervene amid silence surrounding the kidnapping of the crew of a Panamanian navy ship, a week ago. Independent news website [Hespress](#) reported on Monday that it has received an appeal letter from the family of one of the two kidnapped Moroccan officers, one a captain and the second an engineer. In the letter the family demanded that the Moroccan authorities intervene through the

Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of International Cooperation with the Nigerian authorities to rescue the men and start negotiations with the kidnapers. In its first reaction the Moroccan government confirmed that it was following the matter, the report said. It quoted the Moroccan government spokesman, Mustapha al-Khaliji, making a statement in which no new details had been disclosed. Last week, Moroccan and Nigerian media outlets reported that unidentified pirates had intercepted a vessel carrying the Panamanian flag about 15 nautical miles southwest of the island of Bonny, operating for a Congolese maritime shipping company. "Two Moroccan merchant navy officers are among the crew of a ship targeted by an act of piracy in Nigerian waters on 31 July," Casablanca-based, Moroccan privately-owned website [Le360](#) reported on August 2. Contacted by Le 360, a source from the Moroccan Royal Armed Forces [FAR] confirmed the information, adding that it was indeed civilian sailors and not members of the FAR. "In recent days, Nigerian pirates have killed 31 people of different nationalities in five similar incidents reported to the country's authorities," both websites said in their reports.

Source: <http://english.alarabiya.net>

### Mumbai court sends 16 Somali pirates to 7 years in prison

**Mumbai, Aug 7 (PTI) A court here today sentenced 16 Somali pirates to seven years in jail for hijacking a fishing vessel which had sailed from Iran in 2011 and taking its Iranian and Pakistani crew hostage**

By [PTI Feeds](#) | Published: August 7, 2017 9:19 PM IST

Mumbai, Aug 7 (PTI) A court here today sentenced 16 Somali pirates to seven years in jail for hijacking a fishing vessel which had sailed from Iran in 2011 and taking its Iranian and Pakistani crew hostage. "Sessions judge J C Jagdale sentenced the accused to seven years in jail for conspiracy, attempt to murder, kidnapping and offences under Unlawful Activities Prevention Act," said special public prosecutor Ranjeet Sangle. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 14,000 on each of them, while directing the government to deport them to Somalia after they serve their prison terms. The judge, however, acquitted them of the charges of 'kidnapping for ransom' (for which the maximum punishment is death), murder and offences under the Arms Act. Indian naval ship **Suvarna**, on anti-piracy patrol off the coast of Lakshadweep, was informed on March 26, 2011 that **Maersk Kensington**, a merchant vessel, was attacked by pirates operating from **MV Morteza**, a hijacked vessel, and two skiffs. **INS Suvarna** rushed to the spot and directed the pirate vessel to stop engines. However, the pirates opened fire. The retaliatory fire by the Navy led to a blaze on **MV Morteza**. The Navy rescued its crew members — 12 Iranians and four Pakistanis — and took 16 Somali pirates into custody. **MV Morteza** had set sail from Chah Bahar in Iran with 18 crew members. It was hijacked near Seychelles and taken to Somalia by the pirates, who rigged it up as a 'mother vessel' for launching piracy attacks. The crew were kept captive on board, and witnessed several piracy attempts, the prosecution said. One of the crew members committed suicide due to torture by the pirates, while another was shot dead by the pirates when **INS Suvarna** was approaching it. The Navy and the Indian Coast Guard had nabbed a total of 120 pirates between January and March 2011. All of them were handed over to the Yellow Gate police in Mumbai, and tried in a court here. One of them died during the trial. All others pleaded guilty. On August 2, the court had sentenced 15 pirates to seven years' imprisonment. Judgements in remaining two cases are awaited. Source: <http://www.india.com>

### Beijing sends warning with second naval drill in Yellow Sea

The exercise comes after North Korea conducted its second intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) test on July 28. The four-day drill within a cordoned-off area between the coast of Qingdao and the waters east of Lianyungang – a potential flashpoint for regional security – is aimed at sending a message of deterrence and showing its military might to North Korea,

the United States and others in the region, analysts say. Beijing has not released detailed information about the live-fire drill, aside from saying it would be carried out from Saturday until Tuesday, according to notices from the PLA Navy's North Sea Fleet and the Shandong Maritime Safety Administration. It follows a similar three-day naval exercise from July 27 to July 29 in the Yellow Sea – the northern part of the East China Sea. Analysts noted the timing of the drill, which comes after flare-ups between Beijing and Washington over Pyongyang's latest missile test. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Thursday called on all parties to avoid taking "any actions that will lead to an escalation in tensions" on the Korean peninsula. Malcolm Davis, an expert in Chinese defence at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, said the latest drill was about deterring North Korea while acting as a show of force for the US and Japan. "It's basically a warning to Pyongyang," he said. "The Chinese would really like to get the North Koreans to back down, but it largely depends on whether [North Korean leader] Kim Jong-un is ready to do that." The drill also comes as US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi prepare to meet at the Asean Regional Forum of foreign ministers in Manila on Saturday. "Nothing is ever coincidental in international relations – the timing does reinforce the message," Davis said. "But China can only do so much, and I think that the main Chinese focus there will be on avoiding a trade war with the Americans." China calls for calm tack on North Korea sanctions ahead of Asean summit It could also be seen as a "call for peace" in the Yellow Sea, according to Collin Koh, a maritime security expert at Singapore's Nanyang Technological University. Koh said it signalled to nations such as the US that they should "not even entertain the thought of military action against North Korea" "This is a very normal part of diplomacy – there are talks and negotiations, but there is always in the background some sort of drum-beating," he said. But Koh cautioned: "The danger here is, we'll never know ... These countries are all quite heavily armed and are operating in quite a constricted space." Euan Graham, director of the international security programme at the Lowy Institute, argued that China's naval drills could benefit North Korea's interests, while serving as a warning to the United States. "The so-called [Sino-US] honeymoon period is now over, and the two sides are moving towards a more conflictual relationship that's playing out in several domains and several geographic areas, and the Yellow Sea is – no surprise – one of them," he said. Graham added that the Yellow Sea could become part of the wider North Korea conflict if the US felt China was obstructing its freedom to operate near its ally South Korea. Beijing reportedly conducted a massive missile test against a US Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) target in Inner Mongolia last Saturday, a day before the People's Liberation Army celebrated its 90th anniversary with a major parade at the nearby Zhurihe training base. Beijing-based military expert Zhou Chenming said the missile test in Inner Mongolia could also be seen as a response to the escalating tension over North Korea. "Everyone knows the Korean peninsula is unsafe because of Pyongyang's missile tests, but no one can figure out a better way," he said. "Nuclear powers like Russia and the US are all testing missiles, and now Beijing wants to remind the world that it's also a nuclear power." The US test-launched an ICBM on Wednesday, and successfully shot down a simulated intermediate-range ballistic missile with its military defence system last weekend. The THAAD system was tested in Alaska, but the US has also deployed a THAAD system in South Korea, drawing China's ire. Russia also test-launched an ICBM from a nuclear submarine in June in the Barents Sea in the Arctic.

**Source : South China Morning Post**



**HMAS Canberra (L02)** inbound in Melbourne, 50 shades of grey. Still not sure of the purpose of her visit. **Photo : Dale E. Crisp (c)**

## **HMS Queen Elizabeth Set to Sail Home**

Posted by Eric Haun Aug 7, 2017



The U.K. Royal Navy's new 65,000-metric-ton aircraft carrier, **HMS Queen Elizabeth**, the largest warship ever to be built in Britain, has been undergoing sea trials since setting sail from Scotland's Rosyth dockyard in June, and is now set to enter her new home in Portsmouth in around two weeks. The warship will be the latest in a long line of famous Royal Navy ships to call Portsmouth home, though the exact date of the historic moment is to be determined depending on weather conditions. The window for entry will

open August 17, with her arrival expected no later than the August 22. "In just two weeks' time, the most powerful warship ever built for Britain's famous Royal Navy is set to sail into her proud new home in Portsmouth," said U.K. Defense Secretary, Sir Michael Fallon. "**HMS Queen Elizabeth** will be the Royal Navy's flagship for the next 50 years, keeping us safe by deploying across the seven seas, using her strike power to deter our enemies." With only three other countries in the world building aircraft carriers, **HMS Queen Elizabeth** will give Britain the capability to lead the way in tackling global issues in an increasingly uncertain world, from providing humanitarian relief to high-end war fighting. And with the state-of-the-art F-35B Lightning fighter jets on track to make their first trial flights from the carrier's deck next year, the U.K. is now building toward delivering carrier strike capability. Both aircraft carriers are being delivered by the Aircraft Carrier Alliance.

Source: <http://maritimeglobalnews.com>



Goodwill hunting.....the Royal Navy looks after the shorebased support for the crew of the Type 23 frigate **HMS Sutherland** by taking over a hundred of the crew's friends and families out for a four hour cruise in the English Channel Aug 3.

Photo : Raymond Wergan, Newton Ferrers. (c)

## Navy Announces New Distribution Policy for Senior Enlisted Supervisors

Release Date: 8/7/2017 11:12:00 AM

From Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs



U.S. 5TH FLEET AREA OF OPERATIONS (Aug. 2, 2017) Chief Electrician's Mate David Weber explains a how to properly don firefighting equipment during a general quarters drill aboard the amphibious dock landing ship **USS Carter Hall (LSD 50)**. **Carter Hall** is part of the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group, which is deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations in support of maritime security operations to reassure allies and partners, and preserve the freedom of navigation and the free flow of commerce in the region. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Darren M. Moore/Released)

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- The Navy announced Monday in NAVADMIN 192/17 that it is implementing a new distribution policy for active component (AC) and full time support (FTS) senior enlisted supervisors (E7 - E9) designed to improve manning levels at sea and other operational units. Effective immediately, the new policy will lead to a more efficient assignment of senior enlisted leadership across the Navy. "Our number one priority is to keep the Fleet properly manned," said Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. Robert Burke. "We are aggressively using all force shaping levers to do just that." Over the past several months, the Navy has implemented several policy changes designed to improve enlisted sea duty manning at every experience level (apprentice (E1-E4), journeyman (E5-E6) and supervisor (E7-E9)). This policy change is the next step to improve Fleet manning. Currently, there are 25 ratings that are overmanned ashore and the Navy anticipates that more than 1,100 supervisors will be able to be transferred to operational units in the next several months. This has largely resulted from strict adherence to sea-shore-flow and sea-shore-rotation rules, regardless of when an individual is selected for chief petty officer. The revised rules will more closely resemble officer career paths, which respect the need for rotation ashore but also recognize the critical need for leaders at sea. "Chiefs are the Navy's critical leadership element," Burke said. "This change places chief petty officers into a "career path" vice "sea-shore-flow" paradigm, much like that for officers. It is essential that we have our deck-plate leaders, including newly selected chiefs, where it counts - on ships and submarines, in aviation squadrons, and in other operational or Fleet production units on the leading edge of our combat teams." Assignments for all enlisted supervisors, including those selected for advancement to chief petty officer, will be reviewed to maximize Fleet manning readiness. When detailing senior enlisted personnel, sea-shore-flow and sea-shore-

rotation concerns will continue to be considered, but will be secondary to Fleet manning requirements. "Chief Petty Officers have always been the bedrock of our Navy," said Rear Adm. John Meier, assistant commander, Navy Personnel Command for Career Management. "They inspire, train and motivate the young men and women who join our Navy and who frequently go to operational sea-duty commands on their first assignments." The new redistribution guidelines and business rules will be followed until the sea-shore-flow plan for enlisted AC Sailors in NAVADMIN 190/16 and sea-shore-rotation plan for enlisted FTS Sailors in NAVADMIN 395/02 are updated. Chiefs will be considered eligible for reassignment if they are assigned:

\* To an unfunded billet

\* In excess of authorized supervisor billets

\* To a billet of a lower paygrade.

Chiefs are encouraged to consider the Voluntary Sea Duty Program and the Sea Duty Incentive Pay Program (SDIP). These programs allow chiefs to proactively manage their career and provide benefits including geographic stability, the opportunity to negotiate for choice orders, and SDIP for eligible ratings.

Source: [www.navy.mil](http://www.navy.mil)

**This might well be an indication that inexperience on the bridge might have played a role in the USS Fitzgerald collision.**

## US to Haul Stricken Destroyer from Japan to US for Repairs

Posted by Eric Haun

Aug 8, 2017



The U.S. Navy on Tuesday said it will haul the guided missile destroyer severely damaged in a collision with a freighter in Japanese waters back to the United States for repairs as soon as September. The collision killed seven sailors aboard the **USS Fitzgerald** and ripped a hole below the vessel's waterline. Naval engineers in Japan have patched up the destroyer but extensive damage that nearly sank the warship means it is unable to sail under its own steam. "*The Fitzgerald may be moved in September but it could be later than that,*" a spokesman for the U.S. Seventh Fleet said. The U.S. Navy plans to hire a commercial heavy lift ship to carry the destroyer. In the tender for the contract it has said that the furthest possible journey could be as far as to

naval dockyards in Maine on the U.S. east coast. The collision in the early hours of June 17 with a Philippine-registered cargo ship in waters close to Tokyo Bay resulted in the greatest loss of life on a U.S. Navy vessel since the **USS Cole** was bombed in Yemen's Aden harbour in 2000. It has sparked multiple investigations by U.S., Japanese and Philippine authorities. In the first detailed account from one of those directly involved in the collision, the cargo ship's captain in a report seen by Reuters said it signalled the Fitzgerald with flashing lights around 10 minutes before the collision, but that it did not respond or alter course. (Reporting by Tim Kelly; Editing by Nick Macfie Source: <http://maritimeglobalnews.com>)

## Crashed US Military Aircraft Found off Australian Coast

Posted by Eric Haun

Aug 7, 2017



An Australian Navy survey ship has located a U.S. military aircraft that crashed off the Australian northeast coast at the weekend and left three Marines missing, Defence Minister Marise Payne said on Monday. The navy divers will conduct remotely operated underwater vehicle operations before considering sending down divers, Payne said in a statement. The U.S. Marine Corps had suspended a search for the three Marines missing since the MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft crashed while on regular operations on Saturday. The Marines have described the incident as a "mishap" and said it was under investigation. "Royal Australian Navy survey ship **Melville** arrived in Shoalwater Bay overnight," Payne said in the statement. "Shortly after

commencing survey operations in the area, the submerged aircraft was located." The aircraft had taken off from the **USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6)** amphibious assault ship and was on regular operations when it crashed, according to the Marine Corps. Twenty-three other personnel aboard the aircraft were rescued. The Marine Corps said earlier it had shifted

from a search-and-rescue effort to a recovery operation, which could last several months. (By James Regan; Editing by Clarence Fernandez and Nick Macfie)  
Source: <http://maritimeglobalnews.com>



ATLANTIC OCEAN (Aug. 5, 2017) An F/A-18E Super Hornet assigned to the "Tomcatters" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 31, bottom, and an F/A-18F Super Hornet assigned to the "Blacklions" of VFA-213 fly in formation above the **HMS Queen Elizabeth (R08)** during exercise **Saxon Warrior 2017**. The U.S. and U.K. co-hosted carrier strike group exercise demonstrates interoperability and capability to respond to crises and deter potential threats. (U.S. Navy photo by Capt. Jim McCall/Released)

## After Malabar Naval exercise, India and US to conduct joint military exercise 'Yudh Abhyas 2017' Over 200 Indian soldiers from the Gorkha Rifles will take part in the military exercise.

By Zee Media Bureau | Last Updated: Tuesday, August 8, 2017 - 12:46



Representational Image

New Delhi: As the stand-off between the Indian and Chinese troops along the border in Sikkim continues, India and the United States of America will conduct "**Yudh Abhyas**" joint exercise between their armies in September.

The exercise Yudh Abhyas – 2017, will be held from September 14-27 at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in the US. Over 200 Indian soldiers from the Gorkha Rifles will take part in the military exercise. The exercise will be the 13th in the **Yudh Abhyas** series, which started in the year 2004 under US Army Pacific partnership programme. It had participation of about 225 personnel of the US Army and similar strength of Indian Army. Over the years the two countries have decided to progressively increase the scope and content of the combined exercise. The exercise could irk China as India, Japan and the United States of America held the **Malabar Naval Exercise-2017** in the Bay of Bengal in July in a bid to achieve deeper military ties among the three nations. American 100,020 tonne supercarrier **USS Nimitz** that can carry 90 fixed wing aircraft and helicopters (**CVN68**), guided-missile cruise **USS Princeton (CG59)**, guided-missile destroyers **USS Howard (DDG83)**, **USS Shoup (DDG86)** and **USS Kidd (DDG100)**, a Poseidon P-8A aircraft as well as a Los Angeles fast-attack submarine participated in the trilateral naval exercise. Besides, Japan Maritime Self Defence Force ships 27,000 tonne **JS Izumo (DDH 183)**, 6,300-tonne destroyer **JS Sazanami (DD1 13)** along with Indian Naval Ship **Jalashwa** and the 45,400 tonne **INS Vikramaditya** - a modified Russian Kiev-class aircraft carrier, also took part in the joint Naval exercise. India also deployed two Kamorta class anti-submarine warfare corvettes - the first anti-submarine warfare stealth corvettes built in India. Also participating from the Indian Navy were two Shivalik class frigates - the first stealth warships built in India, two destroyers, a Kora class 1,350-ton guided missile corvette, and tanker **INS Jyoti**. India and China are engaged in the standoff in the Doklam area near the Bhutan tri-junction since June after a Chinese Army's construction party attempted to build a road. Doka La is the Indian name for the region which Bhutan recognises as Doklam, while China claims it as part of its Donglang region. India has said Beijing's action to "*unilaterally determine tri-junction points*" violated a 2012 India-China

pact which says the boundary would be decided by consulting all the concerned parties. The two countries share a little over 200 km of border in the Sikkim sector.

Source: <http://zeenews.india.com>

## Protecting South Africa's vital external interests

*Written by Helmoed Romer Heitman, Monday, 07 August 2017*

South Africa has external interests that are important or vital to the economy, some vulnerable to disruption and requiring protection commensurate with risk and threat levels that may arise in the future. One such interest is the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, which is critical to meeting the water requirements of the industrial and economic heartland of South Africa, and which will in future provide 1 000 MW peak electrical power from a pumped storage plant. The potential risk lies in instability or insurrection in Lesotho, but the technical risk is fairly low: The dams are massive structures beyond the ability of likely irregular forces to damage, and the water runs through tunnels difficult to damage, although it could be possible to block an intake to cause some disruption of the water supply. The pumped water scheme, though, offers potential for sabotage of the pumps, the generation plant and the power lines. In Mozambique there are the Cahora Bassa hydro-electric power station (4% of South Africa's requirements with the potential to provide more), the gas fields that are becoming important to South Africa, and Maputo port, which once handled 40% of Gauteng exports and is growing in importance as part of the Maputo Corridor with annual capacity of 13 million tons. The potential risk lies in renewed insurgency, which could see these installations targeted, and the technical risk is more complex. The Cahora Bassa dam is an unlikely target, but blocking water to the turbines would disrupt power generation, while the converter and repeater stations and the 893 km transmission lines inside Mozambique are soft targets. The gas infrastructure includes 865 km of pipeline as a soft target, and the gas fields and processing plants as more difficult but more damaging targets. Maputo port and its rail link to South Africa present a similar target mix, including some 100 km of railway, plus the challenges of a sprawling target and of potential mining of the port or its approaches. That may seem unlikely, but is within the skills of an irregular force using improvised mines. Remember also the 1984 Libyan mining in the Red Sea. Then there is the Mozambique Channel, through which flows half of South Africa's imported oil (30% of energy requirements), as well as trade with East Africa, the Middle East and parts of West Asia. Here the primary risk is piracy. While there have been no attacks since the SA Navy began its patrols, that is no guarantee of future security. The greatest danger would be if people on either coast were to conclude that piracy is a viable venture. The geography of those coastlines would make countering local piracy extremely difficult, similar to the difficulties in South-East Asia. To the west, Botswana has been considering building power stations to supply South Africa, and there are the Namibian gas fields that are being looked to as a future energy source. Taking a longer view, there is also the Grand Inga hydro-electric scheme in the DRC, which is planned to provide 15 000 MW to South Africa. Here the medium-term risk seems very low, with neither Botswana nor Namibia likely to face major instability, let alone insurgency. While that does not entirely rule out sabotage, it makes it unlikely. In the longer term, however, the power lines from Grand Inga could present a very difficult security challenge – assuming the security situation in the DRC allows it to be built. The protection of these various installations is in the first instance the responsibility of the host countries, for whom these are major economic assets. But what if a situation arises that renders their efforts insufficient, for instance major rebellion or insurgency? Could South Africa afford to simply hope that those governments find a way to protect the flow of water, electricity and gas? That might be an option in respect of the Cahora Bassa electricity supply, but less so in respect of Mozambique's gas, and definitely not in the case of water from Lesotho. The rail link to the Maputo is also not something South Africa could afford to see broken for any extended period. The risk of such disruption is low, but the potential for serious economic damage is sufficiently high to demand contingency planning by the Defence Force. That should focus on operations in conjunction with the armed forces and police services of the countries concerned, but there must also be plans for autonomous action if that should become necessary. The first step must be to work with Lesotho and Mozambique to analyse potential risks and the relevant protection/reaction force requirements, jointly develop plans to deal with those risks, and then conduct exercises to verify and fine-tune those plans. Once this has been done, there will be a reasonably accurate picture of what forces are required. Of particular importance will be clear guidelines to govern when support or autonomous intervention would take place, and clear lines of communication and authority in each country and between them. The actual force levels required will depend on the threat level, the nature of the threat and its likely duration as the strategic situation evolves. The nature of the required forces is easier to predict: Infantry for protection tasks, helicopter-mobile infantry for reaction forces, marines and patrol craft for Maputo port, and UAVs to patrol power- and gas pipelines, the Maputo rail line and the Maputo port environs. For a moderate threat situation, that would probably translate into a battalion for the Highlands Water Project, a brigade (APC-mounted infantry only) for the electricity and gas supplies from Mozambique, and a battalion with a Marine detachment and Navy patrol craft for Maputo port; Oryx helicopters for reaction forces, Rooivalk helicopters for top cover and reconnaissance, and spotter aircraft and UAVs for power-line, gas pipeline and port approaches surveillance. These would be contingency forces, trained for the role, held at a level of readiness determined by the threat level, and provided with liaison officers from the local forces if deployed. The Mozambique Channel, by contrast, will require standing patrols to discourage any piracy. Ideally there would be two ships on patrol with a tender to replenish them at sea, avoiding port calls that make patrols predictable. Assuming embarked helicopters, surveillance UAVs might suffice for support, although a mix of manned aircraft and UAVs would be better. Occasional deployment of a submarine to provide unnoticed surveillance would be valuable, as has been well demonstrated

in the Caribbean by the Colombian and Netherlands navies. A forward base in Mozambique would make supporting the patrols more efficient.

Source: <http://www.defenceweb.co.za>



The iconic *Vasa* at Stockholm  
Photo : Michael Cassar (c)

## The Med Migrant Crisis and Defend Europe

August 8, 2017 [Guest Author](#)

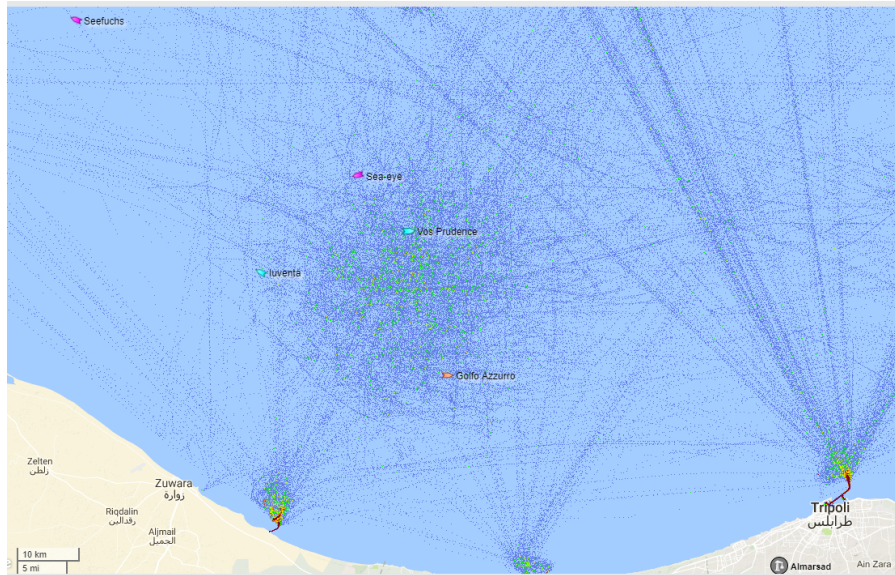


A banner reading 'Stop Human Trafficking' attached to the side of the *C-Star*. (Angelos Tzortzinis/AFP)

By [Claude Berube](#) and [Chris Rawley](#)

This summer while many European vacationers bask on sunny Mediterranean beaches, out in the water, hundreds of people are fighting for their lives while an increasingly more complex and robust collection of maritime non-government organizations (NGOs) (see Table 1) alternatively try to rescue them from drowning or send them back to Africa. The line between maritime human trafficking and a flow of refugees at sea has been blurred. In response to the ongoing migrant wave, the group Defend Europe recently raised enough money to charter a 422-ton ship, the *C-Star*, to convey a team of its activists to Libya. They arrived in the search-and-rescue zone off the Libyan coast on August 4-5. The authors understand the complexities of this situation in the central Mediterranean particularly with regard to strongly held political positions by both sides. We try not to take sides in political battles, especially as we sit on the board of directors of the Center for International Maritime Security (CIMSEC). Our interest is simply to discuss how organizations use the sea as a venue to proactively accomplish their own goals and deter their opponents' goals. Our piece at [War on the Rocks](#) discusses the search-and-rescue NGOs and the approaching counter-NGO ship *C-Star*. As it has arrived on station off Libyan territorial waters, we spoke with Thorsten Schmidt, spokesman for Defend Europe. What is the *C-Star*'s mission? "*We came to the conclusion,*" Schmidt says, "*to get activists who are independent and fair. We need to get our own ship to get people there and to observe the left-wing NGOs.*" Schmidt contends that the media has been embedded with the NGOs and therefore have a bias in support of their work. When asked if *C-Star* had an embedded reporter or asked for a reporter from any media organization, he stated that they just wanted their own activists to report with cameras. The search-and-rescue (SAR) NGOs have operated between Libya and Sicily for two years. When Defend Europe began to consider their own maritime mission, they were approached by the owner of a ship to charter. The ship was the *C-Star* (formerly the *Suunta* – a Djibouti-flagged [floating armory](#) in the Red Sea). The owner is Sven Tomas Egerstrom, formerly associated with the Cardiff-based [Sea Marshals](#) which [he was terminated from on 26 March 2014](#). Although there have been some questions as to [whether \*C-Star\* has armed guards aboard](#), it is unlikely. Schmidt told us that the ship had no weapons aboard. More

practically, we assessed in our previous piece that Defend Europe does not have the funds to support a ship for an extended mission beyond two weeks as well as the more costly endeavor of an armed guard team. Ships transiting the Gulf of Aden will only pay armed guards for a few days. That is a function of both need and cost in higher-risk areas. The ship was detained both as it transited the Suez Canal and when it pulled in to Famagusta, Cyprus. It is unknown what exactly happened. Several reports suggested the ship had false documents or was transporting foreign nationals to Europe. Schmidt states that in both cases the authorities found nothing on the ships. Once on station, **C-Star** will spend a week in the company of search-and-rescue NGOs and on the lookout for both migrant boats and human traffickers. Their cameras will be their weapons. According to Schmidt, nine out of ten migrants using the sea do not migrate from war-torn countries as refugees. When they reach the Libyan coast, he says, human traffickers put them on gray rafts and enough food and fuel to get to the 12 nautical mile territorial limit of Libya where search-and-rescue NGOs then pick up the migrants and take them to Europe. The traffickers use smaller, high-speed boats to follow the rafts then, when the NGOs have rescued the migrants, the traffickers take the motors and return them to Libya. Schmidt notes that in some cases, the traffickers join the migrants so that they can establish networks in Sicily and beyond. Italian authorities in Lampedusa this week seized the



**Iuventa**, owned by the SAR NGO Jugend Rettet, accusing them of [aiding and abetting traffickers](#).

NGO Rescue Vessels off the Libyan Coast – 30 July 2017 (via MarineTraffic.com)

If **C-Star** encounters a migrant boat in distress, Schmidt says it will render assistance first by notifying the [MRCC in Rome](#), and then

bring them aboard. According to Schmidt, the ship has “*hundreds of life vests*.” When asked about how it might accommodate for potentially dozens of refugees from a boat in distress, he says “*the ship is fully equipped with an extra amount of water and food. Of course there are several activists on board with medical aid skills*.” Instead of taking the migrants to Sicily or other European ports, they intend to take the migrants to closer, non-European ports such as in Tunisia. It is unknown if they have secured the diplomatic agreements to make those transfers happen. Defend Europe argues that this makes sense since there are closer countries than Italy that aren’t unstable like Libya. Defend Europe wants an end to human trafficking but, as Schmidt says, “*we are just one ship and you can’t stop it with just one ship...We are an avant garde but need help*.” Though they have an abbreviated mission this time, the \$185,000 they have raised ensures that they will look to a second and third mission. Already, he says, two more ship owners have contacted them.

**Table 1: NGO Rescue & Interdiction Vessels Operating in the Mediterranean**

Organization	Vessel	Gross Tonnage	Flag
Jugend Rettet	<b>Iuventa</b>	184	Netherlands
Lifeboat Project	<b>Minden</b>	Unk.	Germany
MOAS	<b>Phoenix</b>	483	Belize
MOAS	<b>Topaz Responder</b>	1198	Marshall Islands
MSF	<b>Bourbon Argos</b>	2343	Luxembourg
MSF	<b>Dignity I</b>	648	Panama
MSF	<b>Vos Prudence</b>	2937	Italy
Proactiva Open Arms	<b>Astral</b>	Unk.	United Kingdom
Proactiva Open Arms	<b>Golfo Azzurro*</b>	350	Panama
Proactiva Open Arms	<b>Open Arms</b>	427	Spain
Save the Children	<b>Vos Hestia</b>	1678	Italy
Sea Eye	<b>See-Eye</b>	Unk.	Netherlands
Sea Eye	<b>Seefuchs</b>	Unk.	Netherlands



Organization	Vessel	Gross Tonnage	Flag
Sea Watch	<b>Sea Watch-2</b>	Unk.	Netherlands
SOS Méditerranée	<b>Aquarius</b>	1812	Gibraltar
Defend Europe	<b>C-Star</b>	422	Mongolia

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## Philippines says China Wanted Non-legally Binding South China Sea Code

Posted by Michelle Howard  
Aug 8, 2017

China pushed for a maritime code of conduct with Southeast Asian countries that would not be legally binding, the Philippine foreign minister said on Tuesday. Alan Peter Cayetano said some countries wanted the South China Sea code to be legally binding, and China preferred the less forceful "binding". He said all parties realised it was better to drop all mention of it from the framework and move forward. The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China hailed the adoption on Sunday of a negotiating framework for the code of conduct (COC) as progress towards preventing disputes. Cayetano cited the framework as an example of how parties that were historically at odds were co-operating, but his comments indicate that China had initially set out to create a code that had no legal binds. "Everyone is more open to negotiations," Cayetano told a news conference. "At first, words about being non-legally binding, China dropped, just said 'OK, approve the framework and go to the COC'." Critics say Beijing's end game is to either negotiate what amounts to a gentleman's agreement, or stall and buy time to expand its defence capability on its manmade islands. ASEAN has long wanted to sign China up to a set of laws to prevent disputes over energy reserves, fishing, and land reclamation, and avoid military conflicts in the South China Sea, where Taiwan, Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and China have competing claims. ASEAN and China say the framework is only a guide for how the code will be established, but critics say the failure to outline as an initial objective the need to make it legally binding and enforceable creates doubts about how effective the pact can be. Australia, Japan and the United States on Monday urged ASEAN and China to ensure the code is "legally binding, meaningful, effective, and consistent with international law". China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Sunday said it was too soon to discuss components of the code, but whatever is agreed must be stuck to. "If China is saying now that we're going for 'binding', will we stop talking to them?" Cayetano asked. "The problem with legally binding is ... what are the penalties, what are the mechanisms for adjudication, what tribunal, what court and who will enforce?." "I think some countries are just being practical." How to address Beijing's assertiveness in the South China Sea has long been ASEAN's most divisive issue, with China's influence on the group looming large and complicating efforts to reach consensus decisions. China is particularly sensitive to even oblique references in ASEAN statements to its artificial islands and rapid development of defence facilities in disputed waters. Host the Philippines, which is expanding its economic ties with China, made no mention of those in its chairman's statement on the 27-nation ASEAN Regional Forum issued late on Tuesday. (Reporting by Manuel Mogato; Writing by Martin Petty; Editing by Neil Fullick and Alister Doyle)

Source: <http://maritimeglobalnews.com>

## Insurers Grow Anxious as Containerships Get Bigger and Cargo More Valuable

August 3, 2017 by [The Loadstar](#)



**MOL Comfort** showing signs of extreme hogging before breaking up in the Indian Ocean in June 2013.

By Mike Wackett (The Loadstar) – With CMA CGM reportedly ready to sign a letter-of-intent for [nine ultra-large container vessels \(ULCVs\) of 22,000 teu](#), insurers are

becoming increasingly concerned that their exposure may be too concentrated. At a conference in Seoul, South Korea, this week, shipbuilder Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI) revealed it was in competition with a Chinese yard for the order from the French carrier. So far CMA CGM has declined to comment, but has not denied the reports, something it has been quick to do in the past when linked spuriously to big ship orders. Notwithstanding liner industry [concerns that the sector is already](#)

[overtonnaged](#), the prospect of yet more behemoths being put into service has reignited the concerns of insurers. In [a LinkedIn post today](#), Michael Hauer, head of marine reinsurance for the Singapore branch of Munich RE, says the insurance industry needs to try to understand the likely exposure when – not if – a ULCV gets into trouble. Indeed, when the 2008-built 8,110 teu [MOL Comfort broke its back](#) off the coast of Yemen in 2013, resulting in a total loss of the ship and 4,380 containers, the insured cargo loss was reported at some \$300m. Marine insurers typically calculate their average exposure per box at \$50,000-\$100,000, but Mr Hauer said amounts recorded for single containers lost from the MOL Comfort were considerably higher. Mr Hauer said the growth in size of containerships, more than double in the last decade or so, also means that historical large loss values “*must be called into question*”. He said: “*We have long understood and accepted that for certain trades/commodities we can expect high-value goods to be in a single box, maybe even into the millions – but surely we are talking low single-digit millions, are we not? We are aware that these expectations are, for a number of – largely perishable – commodities, becoming increasingly unrealistic. We are aware of a number of instances where the value of a single pallet can be \$1m or more.*” Mr Hauer went on to list some examples of single container losses, including a truck accident involving a cargo of pharmaceuticals resulting in a claim for around \$50m. “*Values of these products within a single 40ft reefer container regularly reach \$50m,*” wrote Mr Hauer who even suggested that the figure is “*possibly conservative*”. “*We can only begin to find answers to manage these large exposures if we understand them.*” He argued that the insurance industry could not “*continue making assumptions based on what has gone before*”. “*Too much has, and is, changing. If we as underwriters do not recognise and manage these trends, it is certain that our capital providers will,*” warned Mr Hauer.

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Source: <http://gcaptain.com>



One of the most famous square-rigged merchant sailing vessels of Germany has arrived back in home waters: The picture shows the „*Pamir*“ at the Peters-Werft at Wewelsfleth near Hamburg where she will undergo a major refit to become a museum vessel in the Port of Hamburg. She will be put back into her 1927-condition to resemble her life as one of the so-called “*Flying-P-Liners*”, sailing vessels of the F. Laeisz Reederei renowned for their reliability and speed, all starting with a “P” in their names. The dyke in the foreground nicely resembles an imaginary waterline of the deeply laden vessel...

Photo : Dr. Lars Stemmler bremenports GmbH & Co. KG (c)