

NAVY NEWS WEEK 9-2

25 February 2019

Africa must invest in the new 'high seas' treaty

With its vast coastline and high levels of organised crime, treaty negotiations must include Africa's priorities.

20 Feb 2019

by [Agnes Ebo'o](#)

The world's largest crime scene is not in any specific country or region. It is the area known as the 'high seas' – those parts of the oceans that fall outside the national jurisdiction of coastal states. Governance and regulation are limited here, given the principle of the freedom of the seas. As a result, fragile habitats have been damaged by deep-sea bottom trawling (fishing vessels that scrape the ocean floor) and unique marine biodiversity has been destroyed. Species such as tuna have also been [severely](#) overfished. Many of these crimes and activities have been attributed to organised criminal groups operating at sea, but legal sea users that carry out illicit schemes are also responsible. In 2012, the UN General Assembly noted the existence of 'possible connections between transnational organised crime ... and fisheries in certain regions of the world'. A UN Office on Drugs and Crime [study](#) on transnational organised crime in the fisheries sector identified illegal fishing and overfishing, the dumping of toxic waste and pollution from vessels as common criminal activities carried out by networks on the high seas. These are also called transnational fisheries crime, or transnational environmental crime. In September 2018, the UN launched formal discussions for a treaty to conserve the marine biodiversity on the high seas. The talks are a [welcome](#) development, and not just for conservationists. This historic and long overdue process, which follows over a decade of debate, is expected to take two years of negotiation before a treaty is adopted in 2020. Already dubbed the 'Paris Agreement for the ocean', it would be the first international legally binding instrument to protect marine life in international waters. The treaty will cover two marine areas – the high seas and the Area – as defined by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The high seas represent 'all parts of the sea that are not included in the exclusive economic zone, in the territorial sea or in the internal waters of a State, or in the archipelagic waters of an archipelagic State'. The Area refers to 'the seabed and ocean floor and subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction'. Until now, under UNCLOS, 'all States, whether coastal or land-locked, [have] freedom of navigation, overflight, freedom to lay submarine cables and pipelines, to construct artificial islands and other installations permitted under international law, freedom of fishing, and freedom of scientific research'. The resources in the Area are viewed as the common heritage of mankind. The exploitation of these resources is based on a first-come, first-served principle. This has been a grey area in international law, leaving the high seas open to criminals. Particularly relevant to the new treaty are those forms of transnational organised crime committed at sea that have been identified by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. These include vessel-source pollution, such as the illegal and deliberate discharge of oil into the ocean, and fisheries crimes. The latter often overlap with other forms of organised crime, such as drug smuggling and human trafficking. Legal loopholes have until now prevented the prosecution of those who commit these offences. The new high seas treaty is an opportunity to remedy that. The future treaty won't replace or supersede UNCLOS or other relevant legal instruments. It will be called the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and will cover conservation and sustainable use of marine resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction. Renowned marine biologist and professor at the University of British Columbia, Daniel Pauly, advocates for a total ban on [fishing](#) in the high seas, saying that 'all the species that are taken from the high seas – like tuna – could still be caught in nationally controlled coastal waters'. For the African Union's 55 member countries, which include 38 coastal states, better high seas regulations will enable better governance of the continent's marine resources. The treaty will ensure that all states, including those that are landlocked, participate more equally in the global maritime economy. Africa could benefit significantly from the treaty, and African countries are jointly participating in negotiations under the banner of the [G77](#) group, and China. How they negotiate the inclusion of the continent's priorities will be key. Before the first conference in September 2018, where the group was represented by Egypt as rotating president, matters relevant to Africa were identified during the preparatory sessions. Most were retained as focus topics for the two-year cycle of conferences. They include genetic resources, environmental impact assessments, capacity building and the transfer of marine technology. Better regulation of the high seas should help stem the uncontrolled exploitation of the oceans and the seabed. For African states, this means participating in and benefiting from the international maritime economy. To achieve this, African governments will need to clearly articulate their positions and priorities, and play a proactive role in the treaty negotiations.

Source: <https://issafrica.org>

Promising signs of Africa's global leadership on maritime security

Africa is acutely vulnerable to maritime crime, which has become a low risk, high reward business.

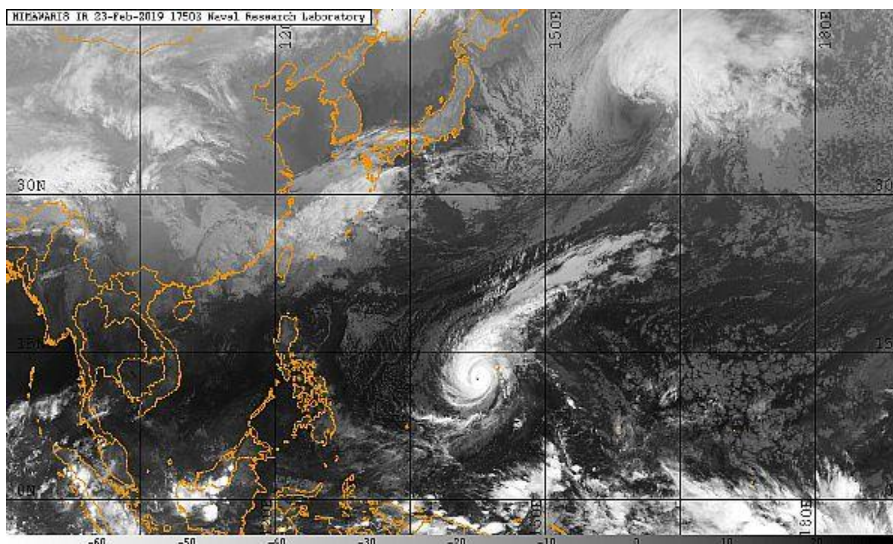
19 Feb 2019

by [Timothy Walker](#) and [Denys Reva](#)

Piracy and armed robbery at sea have long been regarded as a threat to international peace and security. But other types of maritime crime are just as significant. The African Union's (AU) 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy [identifies](#) numerous relevant transnational organised crimes, including: illegal arms and drug trafficking; illegal oil bunkering/crude oil

theft along African coasts; maritime terrorism; human trafficking; and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and overfishing. These crimes cannot be dealt with unilaterally. African states are increasingly realising that enforcing the law and securing the seas requires concerted transnational and multilateral collaboration. Transnational maritime crime should make African countries nervous. They are acutely vulnerable given the number of crimes threatening them, their limited ability to prevent or respond to them, and their growing transnational nature and sophistication. These offences are committed by organised criminal groups engaging in multiple, interlinked and international crimes, regardless of borders. Profits from these enterprises are used to diversify or enhance operations. The failure to prevent or punish maritime crimes means the sea is becoming a place where risk is low and reward is great. The United Nations (UN) Security Council, encouraged by its three non-permanent African members (the A3), has recently become the leading forum for determining how best to fight maritime crime. This complements decades of work undertaken by other UN agencies. Earlier this month, the UN Security Council [debated](#) the threat posed by transnational organised crime at sea. The 5 February meeting was organised and chaired by Equatorial Guinea's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Simeón Oyono Esono Angue, the UN Security Council president for February 2019. The Executive Secretary of the Gulf of Guinea Commission briefed the gathering, as did the Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). This builds on other recent discussions, for example the one Côte d'Ivoire [initiated](#) at the UN Security Council on 18 December 2018 on the threat drug trafficking poses to stability in West Africa. On 13 June last year an Arria Formula meeting was co-organised by Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, the Netherlands and the United States to discuss the threat maritime crime poses to international peace and security. African states taking a leading role on the UN Security Council is a welcome shift from the lamentable [seablindness](#) that has prevailed on the continent. 'Seablindness' refers to the general lack of interest in the importance of the seas and of humanity's dependency on their safe, secure and sustainable usage. The International Maritime Bureau's 2019 Annual Report of Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships at Sea [shows](#) the increasing sophistication of the threat and the growing transnational nature of maritime crime's scope and impact. Reported attacks against shipping in the waters between Côte d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of the Congo more than doubled from 37 incidents in 2017 to 79 in 2018. Some of these are petty incidents of theft in port, rather than piracy as defined by the law of the sea, but the total includes six hijackings, the taking of 130 hostages and 78 seafarers being kidnapped for ransom. Kidnapping has become a lucrative crime. Four hijackings close to the Port of Cotonou in early 2018 show both a preparedness to hijack in or just outside ostensibly safer territorial waters and anchorages of a state, and the ease with which hijackers can sail the ship and crew away. Some gangs strike quickly and widely. In a few hours just outside Cameroonian territorial waters on 23 November 2018, 18 people were kidnapped from five vessels. The number of kidnappings-for-ransom and reported assaults in the ports, anchorages and territorial waters of West African coastal states and on the high seas, is increasing. This shows the ability of maritime criminal networks to [shift](#) and diversify their modus operandi.

Source: <https://issafrica.org>



WASHINGTON (Feb. 23, 2019) Naval Research Laboratory satellite image of typhoon Wutip in the western Pacific Ocean at 1750Z showing the storm passing south of Guam. The Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) last reported that Wutip was approximately 170NM Southwest of Anderson AFB, Guam, and tracking northwestward at nine knots. The storm has maximum sustained surface winds at 115 knots gusting to 140 knots. (U.S. Navy photo/Released)

Royal Navy Warship Upsets China

February 21, 2019

by [Bloomberg](#)

by Andy MacAskill (Reuters)

Britain on Thursday admitted that talk by its defense minister of deploying a warship in the Pacific had complicated the delicate relationship with China. When asked directly on BBC radio if the relationship had been damaged by Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson's threat to deploy a new aircraft carrier to the Pacific, finance minister Philip Hammond said:

"It is a complex relationship and it hasn't been made simpler by Chinese concerns about royal navy deployments in the South China Sea."



An officer stands on the deck as the White Ensign flies from the stern of the ship during the Commissioning Ceremony of the Royal Navy's aircraft carrier **HMS Queen Elizabeth**, in Portsmouth, Britain December 7, 2017. REUTERS/Richard Pohle/Pool-

British media reported that China cancelled trade talks with Hammond because it was upset about Williamson's speech.

Hammond said he was disappointed that the Chinese had reacted in the way they had. *"This is entirely premature, the aircraft carrier isn't going to be at full operational readiness for another couple of years, no decisions have been made or even discussed about where its early deployments might be,"* Hammond said. (Reporting by Andy MacAskill and Kate Holton; editing by Guy Faulconbridge, Bloomberg)

Source: <https://gcaptain.com>



NORTH SEA (Feb. 20, 2019)
The guided-missile destroyer **USS Gravely (DDG 107)**, the German navy replenishment tanker **FGS Spessart (A 1442)**, right, and the Polish navy guided-missile frigate **ORP General K. Pulaski (FrR 232)** conduct surface exercises in the North Sea. **Gravely** is deployed as the flagship of Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 to conduct maritime operations and provide a continuous maritime capability for NATO in the northern Atlantic. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Mark Andrew Hays/Released)

Navantia Proposes Solution for Netherlands Submarine Programme

In its bid for the Walrus Replacement Program, Navantia is proposing an adaptation to Dutch requirements and local content of the Spanish Navy S80 Plus submarine. With a modern design and a similar size to Walrus-class of about 3,000t, the reference design is already fully compliant with Dutch requirements such as growth potential. The expeditionary S-80 design is fully funded and already in production, therefore the minimal technical, schedule and financial risks provide an advantage compared with completely new solutions. The modern design and new yard infrastructure with a highly automated construction will lead to a solution offering substantial savings respect to any competing offer. Navantia's proposal is the only one offering its parent Navy solution, providing the possibility of a common fleet of eight expeditionary submarines offers sharing resources and cooperation in the fields of training, logistics support and operations, a unique joint capability within Nato. Past cooperation between the two countries with the Auxiliary Oiler Replenishment and Landing Platform Dock programmes has proven to be very successful. Through the S80 programme, Navantia has strong relationships with many Dutch naval suppliers and Dutch naval knowledge partners. During the bidding process, the company has identified numerous additional parties that will be included in the final solution. There is a clear commitment to work with Dutch naval industry and technology base to ensure full involvement and retention of Dutch submarine capabilities for the entire life cycle of the submarines. Navantia has no exclusive teaming relations and can therefore consider sharing the construction with

Damen at a later stage. The evolved S-80 on the shortlist offers the best and most cost-effective solution, as well as being the benchmark for all new designs.

Source : Naval technology

Despite Putin's Swagger, Russian Navy Struggles To Modernize

February 21, 2019

by [Reuters](#)

by Andrew Osborn (Reuters)



Tugboats escort the Russian Navy guided missile cruiser **Varyag**, upon arrival for a goodwill visit, at Pier 15, South Harbor, Metro Manila, Philippines April 20, 2017. REUTERS/Romeo Ranoco

President Vladimir Putin calls improving the Russian navy's combat capabilities a priority. The unfinished husks of three guided-missile frigates that have languished for three years at a Baltic shipyard show that is easier said than done. Earmarked for Russia's Black Sea Fleet, the frigates fell victim to sanctions imposed by Ukraine in

2014 after Russia annexed the Crimean peninsula, prompting Kiev to ban the sale of the Ukrainian-made engines needed to propel them. With Moscow unable to quickly build replacement engines for the Admiral Grigorovich-class frigates, construction stopped. Russia is now cutting its losses and selling the three ships to India without engines. The navy's problems stem largely, but not exclusively, from the Ukrainian sanctions. There are also problems, for different reasons, with new equipment for the army and air force. The picture that emerges is that Russia's armed forces are not as capable or modern as its annual Red Square military parades suggest and that its ability to project conventional force is more limited too. *"You need to always distinguish between reality and the shop window,"* said Andrei Frolov, editor-in-chief of Russian magazine Arms Exports. *"Red Square is a shop window. It's like in restaurants in Japan where there are models of the food. What we see on Red Square are models of food, not the food itself."* Western diplomats and military experts say Putin has long projected an image of military might to strengthen his and Moscow's image at home and abroad, but that Russia is overhauling its military far more slowly than China. *"Moscow's problems mean its ability to project conventional military force — something it is doing in Syria and has done in Ukraine — is not as great as the Kremlin would have the world believe,"* said one Western official with knowledge of Russia's military. In a speech on Wednesday, Putin did not mention the navy's engine problems, focusing instead on how it is due to receive seven new multi-purpose submarines ahead of time and 16 new surface ships by 2027. Defense spending has risen sharply under Putin. But Russian officials and military experts say Moscow has a shortage of modern factories and skilled labor and does not have the available financial resources needed to reverse decades of post-Soviet decline as quickly as it wants. Frolov said Russia had successfully produced prototypes of new weapons systems, but struggled to move to serial production. That does not mean Russia's military is not a force with which to be reckoned. Some of its hardware, such as its S-400 air defense systems, is world-class. Putin has also spent heavily on missile technology, unveiling new hypersonic systems. But Russia's air force and army, like its navy, are experiencing re-armament problems. Its new stealth fighter first took to the air more than nine years ago and a super tank made its Red Square debut almost four years ago. Neither is due to be deployed in large numbers soon, government officials say.

Naval disarray

The program to build Russia's most advanced stealth frigate, the Admiral Gorshkov-class, has been paralyzed by sanctions — even before the sanctions hit it took 12 years to build the lead ship, which entered service last summer. Russia hopes to add 14 more such ships to its navy, but has no engines for 12 of those vessels. Moscow is trying to develop its own gas turbine engines and its own full-cycle manufacturing base. That task has been handed to aircraft manufacturer NPO Saturn, which is part of Rostec, an industrial conglomerate run by Sergei Chemezov, who served as a KGB spy with Putin. Ilya Fedorov, Saturn's then director, said in 2014 he had concerns about costs, and the company failed to deliver the first engines to the navy in 2017. Fedorov told the Russian news agency Interfax at the time that *"all our ships run on these turbines, and if we don't make our own everything will grind to a halt."* Fedorov is no longer with the company. Viktor Polyakov, Saturn's current director, said early last year that prototypes of its three new engine types had passed tests and that serial production had begun. Chemezov told Reuters at a military exhibition in Abu Dhabi this month that an undisclosed number of engines had been handed to the navy. But none has yet been fitted to the frigates. Saturn says it has received

initial orders from the Ministry of Defense. But one source close to the matter said the ministry had not yet guaranteed how many engines it would buy. *"We shouldn't expect Russia to start fully fledged serial production for at least another five years,"* said Serhiy Zgurets, director of Defense Express, a Ukrainian consultancy. Alexei Rakhmanov, head of Russia's United Shipbuilding Corporation, said in December that the first Russian-made engine should be fitted to the fourth of 14 more planned frigates in the *"very nearest future."* Even if that happens, Igor Ponomarev, the head of the St Petersburg shipyard making the new stealth frigates, says that vessel is not due to be ready before the end of 2022. The rest of the program is likely to stretch into the 2030s.

Troubled stealth fighter and tank

Russia's planned new Sukhoi Su-57 stealth fighter jet is also experiencing problems. Moscow had initially been expected to procure about 150 of the fifth-generation Su-57s, but defense industry and government officials say they now expect just one plane, the first serially-produced aircraft, this year. A further 14 may follow. Experts say the costs of mass-producing the new plane are simply beyond Russia. Plans for Russia's super tank have also foundered. Oleg Sienko, the then director of the factory which produces the new T-14 Armata battle tank, said in 2016 Putin had approved the purchase of 2,300 Armatas. Since then, various prototypes have been tested, but the tank had to be reworked. The army will receive the first 12 serially-produced tanks of around 100 only by the end of this year, Defense Ministry sources told daily newspaper Izvestia this month. Dr Richard Connolly, a Russia specialist at the University of Birmingham, said Moscow's military might should not be underestimated but Russia was still suffering from the legacy of an economic crisis that followed the Soviet Union's collapse, hitting state arms orders and the military-industrial complex. *"It's not as easy as simply saying, 'Right, we've got the money, so go and make it happen', because a lot of the shipyards have rusted,"* Connolly said.

Additional reporting by Pavel Polityuk in Kiev, by Gleb Stolyarov and Anton Zverev in Moscow and by Stanley Carvalho in Abu Dhabi, Editing by Timothy Heritage

Source: <https://gcaptain.com>

Johor Bahru port limits issue can be resolved more quickly than water issue: Malaysia foreign minister



The Republic of Singapore Navy Independence-class littoral mission vessel **18 Justice** and on the left the Singapore Police Coast Guard patrol vessel **PH 59 Blacktip Shark** keeping a sharp eye at the Malaysian Bouytender **Polaris** which vessel anchored in disputed (Singapore) waters sparking a row between both countries **Photo : Piet Sinke** www.maasmondmaritime.com (c)

The Johor Bahru port limits issue between Singapore and Malaysia can be resolved more quickly compared to the issue over water, Malaysia's Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah said on Thursday (Feb 21). He mentioned eight issues concerning both countries, including the Instrument Landing System procedures for Seletar Airport, as well as the 1974 airspace agreement. One or two of those issues have the potential to be resolved in the near future, he said. *"For the moment, I see the Johor Bahru port limits issue as being one of the eight involving relations between Malaysia and Singapore which can be resolved first,"* the minister told reporters in Kuala Lumpur. *"I believe there will be good relations with Singapore and the discussions will be smooth,"* he added. *"On the port limits, it can be resolved in the near future compared to the water issue, which I expect to take more time as it is quite complicated."* The two countries are locked in a maritime dispute sparked by Malaysia's unilateral decision to extend the Johor Bahru port limits last October, and the subsequent intrusion of Malaysian government vessels in Singapore waters. Singapore lodged a *"strong protest"* with the Malaysian government, saying its neighbour's extended port limits had encroached into Singapore's territorial waters off Tuas. According to Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) on Tuesday, the attorneys-general of Singapore and Malaysia met in December last year for water talks, but discussions were *"overshadowed"* by the maritime and airspace issues. Still, Mr Saifuddin said talks on the 1962 Water Agreement between Singapore and Malaysia are on a positive note, and that the government is optimistic about it even though more time is needed. What is most important is that the government had made progress and held discussions with Singapore, he added. *"On the water issue, I and the Singapore foreign minister are looking for a suitable date in the near future to meet and hold further discussions,"* said the Malaysian minister. *"The willingness of the Republic is very encouraging, compared to before when there was no progress."* Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad wants to review the terms of the water agreement, saying last June that the price of raw water sold to Singapore is *"ridiculous"*. The 1962 Water Agreement, which expires in 2061, entitles Singapore to draw up to 250 million gallons a day (mgd) of water from the Johor River. Singapore pays 3 sen per thousand gallons of raw water and sells treated water back to Johor at 50 sen per thousand gallons, a fraction of the cost of treating the water. Johor is meanwhile entitled to a daily supply of treated water of up to 2 per cent or 5 mgd of the water supplied to Singapore

source : Channelnewsasia

Saab Receives Order for 9LV Fire Control System from Norway

Press release

18 February 2019

Saab has received an order from Vard Group A/S for delivery of the 9LV Fire Control System (FCS) including the Fire Control Director Ceros 200 to the Norwegian Coast Guard's new Jan Mayen class vessels. The 9LV FCS is used to detect, monitor and combat threats with unprecedented accuracy. *"We are proud to continue supporting the Norwegian Coast Guard's fire control capabilities with 9LV FCS, which meets Norway's requirements for high precision, availability and quality"*, says Anders Carp, head of Saab's business area Surveillance. Vard Group is building the Jan Mayen class vessels with the first delivery planned for 2022. Saab will undertake the work in Järfälla, Sweden. The 9LV FCS provides rapid, reliable defence against any threat in any environment, including advanced sea-skimming missiles and asymmetric surface threats. One of the core components, Ceros 200, is based on radar and optronic technology which gives the system very high precision in all weather conditions. It is used on more than 200 ships around the world.

Source: <https://saabgroup.com>



The French frigate **D 645 La Motte Picquet** inbound for Amsterdam. **La Motte-Picquet** is a F70 type anti-submarine frigate of the French Navy. She is the fourth French vessel named after the 18th Century admiral count Toussaint-Guillaume Picquet de la Motte

Photo : Cor van Niekerken ©

Algeria getting more FPB 98 patrol boats

Written by defenceWeb -

20th Feb 2019



An Ocea FPB 98 patrol boat.

The Algerian Navy has started taking delivery of ten new FPB 98 patrol boats from France's Ocea, with the second one departing St Nazaire, France, for Algeria. The vessel (**El Safi**, 332) was seen at St Nazaire on 14 February after sailing from its production site at Les Sables d'Olonne,

reports Mer et Marine. The first (331) was delivered recently. This is Ocea's second contract from Algeria for FPB 98 vessels, with the French shipyard having delivered 21 FPB 98 vessels between 2008 and 2012. According to Ocea, the FPB 98 is 32 metres long and six metres wide, has a crew of 14 and a top speed of 20-35 knots with a range of 1 200 nautical miles at 12 knots. Armament can include a 30 mm cannon – **El Safi** was seen with a weapon station on the vessel's bow. A rigid-hulled inflatable boat (RHIB) can be launched from the back of the vessel – Algeria's new FPB 98s carry a single RHIB. Ocea has sold a number of FPB 98 boats around the world, including to Benin, Suriname and Nigeria.

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



ATLANTIC OCEAN (Feb. 16, 2019)
The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier **USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72)** participates in a replenishment-at-sea with the Henry J. Kaiser-class fleet replenishment oiler **USNS Leroy Grumman (T-AO 195)**. Abraham Lincoln is underway conducting a composite training unit exercise (**COMPTUEX**) with Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 12. The components of CSG-12 embody a team-of-teams concept, combining advanced surface, air and systems assets to create and sustain operational capability. This enables them to prepare for and conduct global operations, have effective and lasting command and control,

and demonstrate dedication and commitment to becoming the strongest warfighting force for the Navy and the nation. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Mark Logico/Released)

China just finished a month of unannounced drills in the South China Sea to test its wartime command system

Liu Zhen, SCMP.com
Feb 21, 2019, 8:09 AM



ERIC FEFERBERG/AFP/Getty ImagesA jet takes off from an aircraft carrier

- China tested its navy, air force, and missile unit with drills in the South China Sea and western and central Pacific.
- The month-long war games included live-fire exercises.
- The exercise had no pre-planned

scenarios and no advance notice was given in order to simulate wartime conditions.

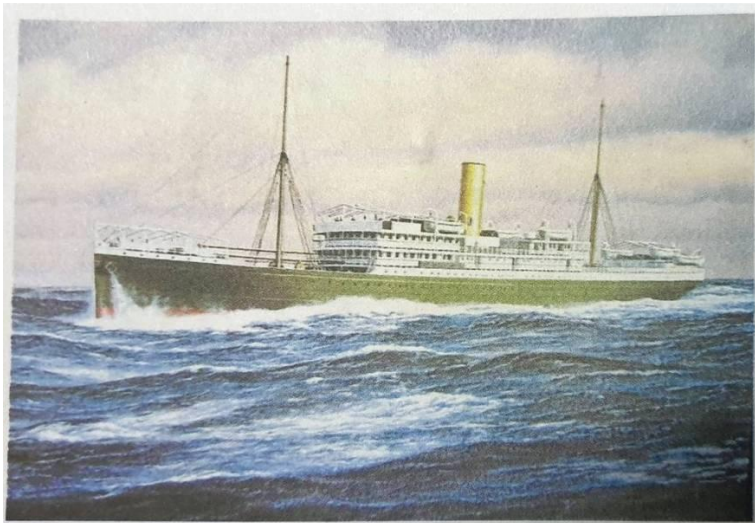
China has conducted a month of drills in the South China Sea and the western and central Pacific involving its navy, air force and missile unit. Military observers said the exercises indicated the People's Liberation Army wanted to put its wartime command system to the test and also strengthen its missile defences in the South China Sea. The waterway is one of the world's busiest and is subject to overlapping territorial disputes involving China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei. Several of China's newest warships took part in the exercises, according to a statement from the navy's South Sea Fleet. They included guided missile destroyer the Hefei, guided missile frigate the **Yuncheng**, amphibious landing dock **Changbaishan** and the replenishment oiler **Honghu**. To simulate a real wartime situation, the exercise had no pre-planned scenario and no advance notice was given, with all command instructions and procedures following an actual combat situation, the statement said. *"This training enabled us to deepen our knowledge of a systematic combat situation at sea and improve our capabilities,"* it said. Other training included repelling advancing vessels, rescue by force and live-fire exercises. Over the course of the 34-day mission, which began on January 16, the joint forces carried out 20 drills. A source close to the PLA said the Rocket Force also sent a communication group to take part because one of the drills involved missile defence, and troops stationed on Chinese-controlled islands in the South China Sea also joined the exercises. *"The Rocket Force would like to deploy its HQ-9 anti-air missiles and YJ anti-ship missiles on Woody Island on a permanent basis,"* according to the source, who requested anonymity. Woody is the largest of the contested Paracel Islands in the South China

Sea. It is also claimed by Taiwan and Vietnam but is under China's control. The PLA has set up missile positions on Woody Island as well as several other man-made land features in the Spratly chain. Satellite images earlier showed missiles launchers installed on these artificial islands, but they have since been removed. "China has not deployed assault weapons on islands in the South China Sea partly because the US is conducting frequent reconnaissance flights in the region," the source said. Hong Kong-based military analyst Song Zhongping said the latest exercises were an attempt by the PLA to better integrate the Rocket Force's conventional and tactical units with the Southern Theatre Command, which oversees the South China Sea. He added that the PLA had been restructuring its command chain since 2015. "The Rocket Force's nuclear missile power falls directly under the Central Military Commission, but responsibility for the conventional missile force would be transferred to the theatre command during wartime," Song said. "This exercise was to put to the test the so-called combined force command, with all these capabilities."

Source: <https://www.businessinsider.com.au>

No DMV support for Cape Town Mendi memorial service

Written by defenceWeb -
21st Feb 2019



The SS Mendi, on which 646 South African soldiers died in 1917. Painting by Peter Bilas.

A Peter Bilas painting of the **SS Mendi**, courtesy of The Observation Post.

The apparent snubbing and withdrawal of financial assistance to an **SAS Mendi** memorial service in Cape Town has drawn an outraged reaction from Peter Dickens, publisher of the South African contemporary military history site The Observation Post. He was reacting to a weekend newspaper report which said the

Department of Military Veterans (DMV) would no longer support the Gunners Association commemoration ceremony at the **SS Mendi** memorial in Cape Town. DMV spokesman Mbulelo Musi reportedly told the Sunday Times "we cannot be encouraging an approach that says we still belong to an imperial past". **"In a democratic dispensation, we can't be encouraging an approach that says we still belong to an imperial past. It cannot be, for it defeats the purpose of what our democratic government stands for, which is reconciliation, social cohesion and nation building."** Musi said both world wars were "wars of colonialism" that had little to do with South Africa's democratic freedom. **"Colonialism was by nature divisive — it is the opposite of what we stand for as South Africans post-'94,"** Musi said. **"We must be sensitive to these matters."** Musi said the department would take part in Armed Forces Day "in the spirit of trying to say we are all together. It is unfortunate that people move outside the efforts of the nation." Dickens said the report made for "grim and sad reading for any statutory force victim". "It's utterly unacceptable and the DMV needs to be held account by the veterans fraternity they serve for their revisionist history which discredits all military service and sacrifice of South African statutory forces pre-1994, including those of the **SS Mendi**." "In addition, wholesale discrediting of the Gunners Association because of 'colonial' origins has ramifications for all veteran associations under the Council of Military Veterans (CMVO) in South Africa, including the South African Legion and the Memorable Order of Tin Hats (MOTHs) whose origins date back to World War 1." Dickens point out he as president of the South African Legion England branch was "assured the South African Legion of Military Veterans, as a charity organisation concerned with Remembrance will continue to remember the fallen of all South African military personnel irrespective of race, gender or historical epoch and irrespective of the views presented by South Africa's Department of Veterans in the article". He maintains the time has come for South Africans to "truly evaluate our values". **"The South Africans lost on the SS Mendi suffered the indignity of South African 'white' politicians once. It is simply inconceivable they may suffer the same indignity again — only this time done by the African National Congress and its government organs."**

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

India's submarine rivalry with China in the second nuclear age

15 Feb 2019
[Ramesh Thakur](#)

There are substantially fewer nuclear weapons today than at the height of the Cold War. Yet the overall risks of nuclear war—by design, accident, rogue launch or system error—have grown in [the second nuclear age](#). That's because more countries with fragile command-and-control systems possess these deadly weapons. Terrorists want them, and they are vulnerable to human error, system malfunction and cyberattack. The site of great-power rivalry has shifted from Europe to



Asia with crisscrossing threat perceptions between three or more nuclear-armed states simultaneously.

Image courtesy of the [US Naval Institute](#) on Wikimedia Commons.

With North Korea now possessing a weaponised ICBM capability, the US must posture for and contend with three potential

nuclear adversaries—China, Russia and North Korea. The only continent to have experienced the wartime use of atomic weapons, Asia is also the only continent on which nuclear stockpiles are growing. The total stockpiles in Asia make up only 3% of global nuclear arsenals, but warhead numbers are increasing in all four Asian nuclear-armed states (China, India, North Korea and Pakistan). None of them has yet ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, although China is a signatory. Asia stands alone in nuclear testing in this century. The Cold War nuclear dyads have morphed into interlinked nuclear chains, with a resulting greater complexity of deterrence relations between the nuclear-armed states. Thus, [as I've previously argued](#), the tit-for-tat suspensions of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty by the US and Russia has a significant China dimension. The nuclear relationship between India and Pakistan is historically, conceptually, politically, strategically and operationally deeply intertwined with China. While Pakistan's nuclear policy is India-specific, the primary external driver of India's policy has always been China. Until recently, the China threat did not extend to India's maritime environment. Of late, India has become increasingly concerned about the growing Chinese naval presence in the Indian Ocean, including submarines, and the operational reinforcement of China-constructed strategic deep-water ports in Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. This is now taking on a nuclear tinge. During the Cold War, American ICBMs served a dual purpose. At the time, the submarine-based nuclear force wasn't accurate enough and the ICBMs made up for that. The submarine force was also vulnerable to a disabling strike by the enemy. Today's SLBMs are highly accurate, hard to detect and almost invulnerable. A 2010 [study by a US Air Force team](#) concluded that the US could meet all its perceived national security and extended deterrence requirements with just 311 nuclear weapons, with 192 single-warhead SLBMs mounted aboard 12 Ohio-class submarines as the core component. The balance, providing insurance, would be made up of 100 single-warhead ICBMs and 19 air-launched cruise missiles aboard B-2 stealth bombers. This analysis is [backed by William Perry](#), former US defence secretary, who argues that the US should scrap its ICBMs regardless of whether or not Russia reciprocates. A substantial numerical superiority in nuclear warhead stockpiles is of no military–operational consequence. Located in fixed positions, land-based ICBMs are easier to detect, target and destroy. Thus, submarine-based nuclear weapons deepen US–Russia strategic stability by enhancing survivability and reducing successful first-strike possibilities. In addition, nuclear propulsion allows submarines to stay submerged for long periods and operate at huge distances from home ports and potential targets. By contrast, the race to attain a continuous at-sea deterrence capability through nuclear-armed submarines is potentially [destabilising in Asia](#) because the regional powers lack well-developed operational concepts, robust and redundant command-and-control systems, and secure communications over submarines at sea. China's submarine nuclear-deterrent patrols began in December 2015. The People's Liberation Army Navy currently has [four Jin-class ballistic missile submarines](#) (SSBNs) with missiles over 7,000 kilometres in range in active service, and [another two SSBNs have been constructed and may already be in operation](#). By 2020, its total submarine fleet is [likely to increase](#) from 56 to between 69 and 78 boats. In comparison, India has two SSBNs with nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles of less than intercontinental range, one SSN and 15 conventional submarines. Pakistan deploys five diesel-electric submarines. The Indian Navy currently has a fleet of 140 warships. On 3 December, the government announced approval of [another 56 new warships and six submarines](#) to be built over the next decade. Given the peninsular nature of its coastline, India plans to have a fleet of four SSBNs by 2022 to enable it to maintain continuous at-sea deterrent capability off each seaboard. The INS *Arihant* ('slayer of enemies'), India's first indigenously designed, developed and constructed nuclear submarine, completed its inaugural deterrence patrol and returned to shore on 5 November. The project was approved in 1984 and work on the submarine began in 1998. It was formally launched by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in July 2009. Its atomic reactor was activated in August 2013, and it was inducted into the Indian Navy by PM Narendra Modi in August 2016. The *Arihant* is expected to carry 12 theatre ballistic missiles with ranges of 700 to 1,000 kilometres, although the Defence Research and Development Organisation is working on intermediate-range ballistic missiles with ranges of between 3,500

and 5,000 kilometres. But to target cities and forces deep inside China and Pakistan from sea, India will need SLBMs in the 6,000- to 8,000-kilometre range. India isn't acquiring that sort of capability anytime soon. SLBM capability is critical to giving operational credibility to the doctrine of no first use. The inaugural deterrence patrol included trialling the redundancy and survivability of the several layers of secure communications between the ***Arihant*** and the National Command Authority, India's supreme decision-making body on the bomb. One of the key differences between China and India is their respective political systems. This manifests itself in the naval rivalry in two ways. First, not having to worry about periodic re-election by citizens through the ballot box, Chinese leaders are not compelled to factor in short-term electoral compulsions. Instead their defence acquisition decision-making is guided by long-term strategic calculations, requirements, needs and vision. By its very nature, defence acquisition is long term and capital-intensive, and much of it is confidential. Second, with perceptions of public corruption a major political issue in India—including at present with respect to the [acquisition of 36 Rafale jets](#) from France for the Indian Air Force—plus the need to cater to many different bureaucratic and business as well as political constituencies, India's defence acquisition decision-making is far inferior to China's. Consequently, its indigenous program to design, develop and deploy nuclear submarines—'Make in India'—has been plagued by long delays and cost overruns, and the country has fallen [further behind China](#) in naval capabilities. The corruption of India's political discourse will cast a long shadow over India's defence capability while China leaves it in the dust.

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The launch of the ***Tasman*** at February 15th at Royal Bodewes shipyard in Hoogezand
Look at how narrow the waterway is where this vessel is launched.

Photo : via Wilco Hijstek ©

Workhorses of the sea



The ***Olympic Delta*** outbound from Rotterdam Waalhaven

Photo : Leen van der Meijden ©