



Research Report General Assembly 1

Addressing Maritime Pirating in Africa
and Asia

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Introduction

Piracy has traditionally been the act of robbery and criminal violence by ship or boat-borne attackers upon another ship or a coastal area, typically with the goal of stealing cargo and other valuable items or properties. However, times have changed and today we also see kidnapping and hostage situations where the goal is to acquire a ransom payment. Many cargo ships which sail predictable and frequent routes are very vulnerable to piracy. For example, the Strait of Malacca in South East Asia is a famous route for big ships carrying huge amounts of goods. Countries which play a significant role in this are India and Somalia. Furthermore, the Strait of Malacca with Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia are significant countries and the countries bordering the Red Sea which are Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Egypt and Sudan.

The committee

Our committee is GA1, formally known as the United Nation's General Assembly First Committee. The First Committee deals with disarmament, global challenges and threats to peace that affect the international community and seeks solutions to challenges to international security.

The issues of GA1 fall under seven categories:

- Nuclear weapons
- Other weapons of mass destruction
- Outer space (disarmament aspects)
- Conventional weapons
- Regional disarmament and security
- Other disarmament measures and international security
- Disarmament machinery

The work of the body is split into three stages: (1) general debate, (2) thematic discussions and (3) action on drafts. The GA1 is the only Main Committee of the General Assembly entitled to verbatim records coverage.

Historical fact: GA1's first resolution was created in 1946 in London.

Keywords

Maritime Piracy = an act of robbery or criminal violence by ship or boat-borne attackers upon another ship or a coastal area, typically with the goal of stealing cargo and other valuable items or properties.

International Waters = Those parts of the ocean that are not legally recognized as being under the jurisdiction of any national government.

Offshore = Situated at sea some distance from the shore.

Globalization = the development of an increasingly integrated global economy marked especially by free trade, free flow of capital, and the tapping of cheaper foreign labour markets

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Mother Ships = ships used to extend the reach of their attacking speed boats and resupply the attacking speedboats.

Overview

Piracy is a major problem for the world economy and for the safety of people. Small boats will attack larger vessels. These can be private vessels like sailboats or yachts, fishing vessels, cruise ships and cargo ships. The pirates will often board the ships and steal money or cargo that the ship has. A very new issue is the kidnapping and hostage situations where the pirates ask for a ransom. Very few attacks have led to murder or shipwreck.

Many of us are aware of the dangers that the international waters bring. Cargo ships are already equipped with high-pressured hoses, barbed wire, fire weapons, laser weapons which send big light flashes and can blind pirates and audio weapons which create enormous sound waves and can scare off and keep away pirates. Also, diverse patrol companies have been formed to either guide a boat to its destination safely or patrol places where pirates have been frequently active or sighted. Other options that have been chosen are taking other, less dangerous routes.

The major parties involved are all the countries that use aquatic transport for import and export with routes along these pirate hubs. These countries are seeing a decrease in their economic wealth because of an increase in costs for cargo companies. Also, shipping companies like Maersk are involved as their costs are increasing due to modern marine piracy. As the shipping of cargo by plane becomes more attractive to companies that produce and sell goods, companies which are involved in the transport of cargo by sea may go bankrupt. Other parties affected are the cruise companies. Their revenue will also decrease as holidaymakers choose alternatives for fear of pirates. A not so obvious party affected are the countries that the pirates originate from because the pirate's actions negatively affect the status and image of these countries. For example, Somalian people are often associated with pirates and this is a prejudice a country does not want to create.

Arguments

Piracy can cost the global economy billions. Based on calculations made by Oceans Beyond Piracy, maritime piracy is costing the international economy between \$7 to \$12 billion, per year. There are a lot of costs to piracy. For example, ransom costs. This is a big problem in Somalia, where a lot of piracy takes place with the intention of asking a ransom in return for releasing the crew. The ransoms are predicted to be around 176 million dollars per year. However, it is important to note that the true cost of these ransoms is actually twice as high because of the additional costs incurred. Another cost is the cost of insurance, where maritime insurance premiums increase due to the increase in risk.

An option to prevent the attacks by pirates is to take a longer route around South Africa. This, however, is a lot longer and therefore requires much more fuel, higher wages for the crew and more food and water for the crew. If only 10% of the ships rerouted themselves, this would cost the global economy 2.95 billion dollars. Another

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cost that ships see is the cost of deterrent security equipment like high-pressure water cannons or guns. This can cost up to 2.5 billion dollars per year.

Many countries affected by piracy witness a negative external effect on their economy. Many large investment companies are unwilling to situate an office in one of these countries as the waters surrounding them are dangerous. This impact is clearly visible on the employment rate and the GDP. The export and import of goods becomes difficult in those countries and this affects its speed of globalization. All the costs mentioned above increase the costs and this will therefore decrease any profits. To counter this, prices of the goods must go up everywhere and, as a result of this negative impact on economies, wealth is lost. Economists expect this cost to reach 1.25 billion dollars per year.

A crucial argument for countries actively fighting against pirates, is that more fisherman, tourists and the crew of cargo ships will be safe in international waters.

However, there are also arguments against the active war on piracy in Asia and Africa. Whilst many naval forces are willing to secure the high waters against piracy, this service is not free and can come at a price. For example, the cost of hiring the US naval force is around 90000\$ per day. All in all, this can amount to 2 billion dollars per year. The pirates who are arrested also have to be prosecuted. The total estimated cost of prosecuting all the pirates amounts to 31 million dollars. A different reason for not using naval forces against pirates is the mistaking of other ships for pirates. For example, in February 2012, Italian marines opened fire on a vessel in the Indian ocean killing 2 of the 11 crew members. The marines thought that the vessel was a pirate ship but later it seemed to have been a fishing boat.

Timeline of Events

- In 1995 the IBM (International Maritime Bureau) starts a database detailing all piracy attacks.
- In the late 2000s, the emergence of piracy off the coast of Somalia spurred a multi-national effort led by the United States to patrol the waters near the Horn of Africa.
- The attack against the German-built cruise ship the Seabourn Spirit offshore of Somalia in November 2005.
- In 2008, VSOS became the first authorized armed maritime security company to operate in the Indian Ocean region.
- The International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) in 2011 changed its stance on private armed guards, accepting that operators must be able to defend their ships against pirate attacks.
- 8 April 2009, the Maersk Alabama hijacking took place 240 nautical miles off the coast of Eyl, Somalia. The US navy was required to end the siege four days later. A major production movie was made called *Captain Philips*.

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Resolution

In order to resolve this issue, we must agree upon a resolution. It is therefore your task to write a resolution which could resolve Maritime Piracy in Asia and Africa. In your resolution you must adopt a stance on this issue. We would like you to represent the norms and values of your country and not your personal ideas and values. You must therefore research how your country regards this issue taking into account economic, cultural and ethical factors. If your country is not immediately affected by this issue, research all the countries you are allied with and the stance they take on this issue so you know which resolutions to help with and vote on. Furthermore, your resolution must also include any possible solutions in detail.

Links and sources

<http://www.un.org/en/ga/first/>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/piracy-international-law>

<https://www.interpol.int/en/Crime-areas/Maritime-piracy/Maritime-piracy>

<https://www.rand.org/topics/maritime-piracy.html>

<https://www.raconteur.net/finance/maritime-piracy>

<https://www.icc-ccs.org/reports/2018-Q2-IMB-Piracy-Report.pdf>

<https://www.simsl.com/Downloads/Piracy/EconomicCostPiracyOEFReport.pdf>

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/04/17/the-seven-ways-to-stop-piracy/>