Strategic Insights
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Photo: Port-au-Prince Port in the wake of the earthquake (Credit: CNN)
Introduction
Karsten von Hoesslin, Senior Analyst, Risk Intelligence

The waters off eastern Sabah state (Malaysia) made international headlines as the United States Embassy in Kuala Lumpur issued a travel advisory for the remote area. Fearing a repeat of the 2000 Sipadan kidnappings and subsequent criminal and insurgent activity, the region has been placed on high alert. Malaysian Institute for Maritime Affairs Researcher, Dr. Sumathy Permal, examines why the security alert may have been issued and how the Malaysian security services are responding to the advisory.

Catastrophe struck the impoverished Caribbean island-nation of Haiti, with one of the strongest earthquakes the region has ever experienced. In response, the international community has launched one of the largest-ever rescue operations with emphasis on the sea. The severe damage to Port-au-Prince port has created additional challenges for relief efforts and the security of foreign aid and shipping. In the wake of the natural disaster, port security is likely to be redefined particularly in developing nations in order to contingency plan for not just conventional security threats, but natural ones as well. PhD Candidate Timothy Martin assesses the security situation and post-quake environment in Haiti.

In addition to piracy and the escalating threat of insurgency, Somalia is also plagued by rampant smuggling. The level of smuggling has in fact become so severe that it is a crucial common practice for access to basic needs for the survival of the Somali people. The MaRisk Feature Analysis examines the various levels of smuggling within the extensive coastlines of northern, central, and southern Somalia where Senior Analyst Dr. Stig Jarle Hansen explores the threat of smuggling and particularly the illegal trade in weapons, charcoal, and toxic waste within Somalia.

It has been over three years since the ReCAAP initiative was established in order to enhance the security of Asia Pacific waters at the government-to-government level. Senior Analyst Karsten von Hoesslin returns to the subject of assessing ReCAAP’s performance since its inception. Within its first 40 months, the organization has navigated through the occasional hurdle and made headway whilst calming the seas of cooperation along the way.

A Guide to MaRisk: Risk Intelligence’s online threat monitoring solution, MaRisk, uses zoomable maps with multiple icons for more enhanced threat classification. Please refer to the reference chart for MaRisk icons in order to better utilize the accompanied maps.
On alert: Elevating maritime security in eastern Sabah
Dr. Sumathy Permal, Maritime Institute of Malaysia

Introduction:
On 15 January 2010, the United States embassy in Kuala Lumpur issued a tourist travel warning of Sabah state in Malaysia. The US suspects that there are criminal and terrorist groups planning acts of violence against foreigners in eastern Sabah. The Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), based in the southern Philippines, is the primary suspect. The US warned tourists to avoid resorts located in eastern Sabah including Semporna and the islands of Mabul and Sipadan. This was followed with a similar warning by the Australian government, which issued travel advice and to “exercise caution and monitor developments that might affect your safety in Malaysia because of the risk of terrorist attack.” Tourists are strongly advised to reconsider the need to travel to the islands, dive sites and coastal areas of Eastern Sabah.

The travel advisory warning could be an immediate reaction of the United States and the Australian government from the current controversy in Malaysia over the use of term “Allah” by the Christian community in Borneo. The United States, which practices extreme caution over religious issues, may fear that the terrorist and militants in Southern Philippines would take advantage of the current religious frictions in Malaysia to stage violent activities against non-Muslim foreign tourists in the Sabah maritime domain. A similar warning was issued by the Australian embassy in Kuala Lumpur in 2001 after foreign tourists were kidnapped from Sipadan Island.

Sabah’s sea route has been identified as the main path used by criminals and smugglers to sneak into Sabah and whose presence could be a threat to the state’s security and prosperity. Besides, the island’s dive sites and coastal areas of Eastern Sabah were declared unsafe for tourists because the sea route has been identified as the main route used by criminals and smugglers to sneak into Sabah and whose presence could be a threat to the state’s security and prosperity of kidnapping incidents in 2001. Between 2000 and 2005, kidnappings occurred from Sipadan, Mataking and Pandanan Islands, near Lahad Datu. These incidents received the attention of Malaysia’s national security enforcement agencies including the navy and the army that focus on national maritime security preparations in the area. The threat, however, of potential terrorist and organized criminal activities spilling over into Sabah from the Southern Philippines remains.

Threat of terrorist and militants in islands and the coastal area of Sabah:
The Sulu Archipelago comprises of the provinces Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi. All of the above face the threat of extremist and militant activities from the Southern Philippine’s Mindanao Island. Islamic militants such as the Moro National Liberation Front (MLF) and the ASG are identified as the major militant groups operating in the Southern Philippines. The ASG has been based on the islands of Basilan and Jolo since its formation in the early 1990s, and is very familiar with the surrounding maritime areas. This includes the coastal areas of Borneo in the Sulu and Celebes Seas. It was from these islands that the ASG launched raids against tourist resorts in Malaysia and Palawan Island in 2000 and 2001.

In 2004, ASG was reported to be responsible for the sinking of the SUPER FERRY 14 in Manila Bay, which killed 116 people and injured 300 after attempts to extort protection money from the vessel’s owner, Socipo Ferry Lines, had failed. In January 2009, three Red Cross workers, including an Italian and a Swiss national were kidnapped in the southern Philippines, suspected to be carried out by the ASG.

Another case in point is that the island’s dive sites and coastal areas off eastern Sabah was declared not safe to tourists because of the kidnapping incidents within the past decade by terrorists and...
criminals. There were also incidents between 2000 and 2005 where foreigners have been kidnapped from the east coast of mainland Sabah. The kidnappings occurred from Sipadan, Mataking and Pandanan islands (off the south-eastern coast), near Lahad Datu on the east coast and at sea off the east coast of Borneo.

The U.S State Department Country Reports on Terrorism for 2008 mentioned that the Sulu-Sulawesi littorals are hard to monitor. The geography of the islands in the Sulu-Sulawesi region made the area difficult for authorities to conduct sufficient surveillance. The ASG are based in the southern Philippines but Sabah has served as a facilitation centre and location for kidnappings in the past and the ASG also kidnaps for ransom, whose targets have been locals as well expatriates. As such Sabah enforcement has to be vigilant in assessing the threat of terrorist activities in the area. Anti–hijacking drills by the Royal Malaysian Navy, (OSTEX EAST 2/2009) are an ongoing training mechanism that other enforcement agencies such as the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency should also participate in.

The ongoing separatist movement within the Sulu Archipelago and on Mindanao has gained U.S attention which is actively supporting Philippine troops in defeating the ASG and MILF. The Philippine military, assisted by US forces, continues to conduct operations against the ASG network on the island of Jolo. In 2009, an estimated 500-700 uniformed U.S military officials were stationed in the Philippines. The Philippines government pledged to conduct more offensive operations to capture the militants by end of 2009 with intelligence provided by American counter terrorism forces. In light of the increased pressure of counter insurgency activities from the military on Jolo and Basilan Islands, it is possible that militants may relocate to the more southern Sulu Archipelago Islands such as Tawi Tawi and therefore closer to the Borneo coast and Malaysian border. Confirmed reports already suggest that there has been southbound movement towards Tawi Tawi.

In May 2008, Malaysia’s National Security Council was called to closely watch developments in the southern Philippines with the collapse of the Moro peace deal and release of former rebel leader Nur Misuari. The withdrawal in April 2009 was a clear indication of the failure of the peace process involving the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Philippines government. Further there were worries that the freed Misuari has the potential to restructure the MILF into a stronger militant group and continue to hamper peace talks with the MNLF. The Malaysian government recommended to suspend the Zamboanga-Sandakan ferry service, impose bonds on incoming visitors, and require ferry passengers to have return tickets and step up enforcement at all levels of government.

After the 2001 kidnapping of tourists from Sipadan and Pandanan Islands, Malaysian security enforcement jointly established the Ops Pasir in Sabah. This is a combination of tri service operations formed under the command of the army in Sabah and was aimed to provide full security in the Sabah maritime domain especially from the threat of separatist activities. The Malaysian government has thus far spent RM100 million for Ops Pasir since it was implemented. Since the inception of Ops Pasir, there have been no security breaches within Malaysian waters from any insurgency or militant groups stemming from the Southern Philippines. Given that piracy and other illegal maritime activities are often
unreported, it is not possible to confirm that the region is free from piracy, however Malaysian efforts to combat all organized criminal and terrorist activities has increased security in the region.

In early 2009, the United States provided Malaysia with nine radars for monitoring and surveillance over the maritime area of Sabah. The project, called “Initiative 1206,” is aimed to monitor the country’s coastlines from any threat. The Army Joint Force 2, which is charged with safeguarding the waters off Sabah’s east coast will receive combat boats and support equipment to upgrade firepower and enhance its defence capabilities. The boats and equipment were part of the programme to install the radar surveillance system under Initiative 1206. The radars are expected to be installed in stages at specific locations, including the Malaysian islands in 2010. The radar surveillance Initiative 1206 was handed over by the United States government to Malaysia to enhance the capabilities of its armed forces in protecting the country’s sovereignty and security.

The radar system was specially designed to conduct surveillance off the Sabah east coast from Kudat to Tawau. The radar, which is operated by the joint forces based at Kukusan Camp can detect suspects as far away as 70 kilometres. Once the radars are fully operational, it will allow security forces to react faster and more efficiently to potential maritime threats.

**Conclusion:**
Generally, non-traditional security threats in Sabah’s maritime borders are contained. However the major security problem in the tri-border area is the threat of terrorist activities (ASG and the MILF) from the southern Philippines. As such, the threats arising from terrorist and separatist activities in the Southern Philippines remains and will continue to have a negative implication to Sabah maritime border security.

Trilateral coordination and capacity building is currently in urgent need and the application of existing strategic alliances between the governments of Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia is crucial. One example is the exercise PHIMAL between Malaysia and Philippines. Although theoretically such exercises are aimed to improve maritime security in the tri-border area, in reality the coordination is still lacking. The Philippines security agency lacks the assets and funds to conduct routine border patrols as well as joint patrols with its maritime neighbors. This has eventually left the maritime border “ungoverned”. Although Malaysia is attempting take the leading role in securing the tri-border area encompassing the Sulu and Celebes Seas, it too lacks specific assets such as aerial platforms for surveillance. Joint border patrols with neighboring countries, particularly the Philippines and Indonesia, must be consistent and continuously improved.

**Dr. Sumathy Permal**
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In the wake of disaster: How the Haiti earthquake is likely to redefine the notion of port security
Tim Martin, Deaken University

Introduction:
The Haiti earthquake is an important reminder that the security of maritime ports is vital in order to maintain the logistics of aid and fast response in the wake of such a disaster. This is particularly the case for developing nations with minimal infrastructure and/or marginal port facilities to begin with. Although the French and American foothold in the Caribbean island-nation prior to the earthquake has made a difference to help speed up the logistical effort, security initiatives that had been adopted prior to the earthquake did not prepare the port for such an emergency. This is intriguing since Haiti seems to experience a high level of natural catastrophes. Therefore it is likely that this crisis, more than any other natural disaster, might inadvertently affect how port security management occurs in the future, especially in relation to ports in developing countries that are subject to natural disasters, or for port facilities that may be used as gateways for disasters in landlocked countries.

The concept of port security in recent years has been preventative rather than responsive. The International Ship and Port Facility (ISPS) Code, for instance, appears to have done little to assist in this emergency. The ISPS Code has provided Haiti’s ports with ‘security’ in one sense but not in the sense of securing the ports during disaster relief. Haiti’s ports have been seeking to comply with American and ISPS measures since 2004 via a public and private development project, the Maritime Security Alliance for Haiti (MSAH). This is a collaboration between a sea of acronyms: the national Port Authority, Association Maritime d’Haïti (AMARH), Association des Terminals Privés (ASOTEMP), Haiti Terminal, International Maritime Terminal (IMT) and Maritime Logistics of Haiti (MLH). This project was funded by USAID through consultation with Florida Ports Council (FPC) and locally with Association des Industries d’Haïti (ADIH). All of this was initiated by the Caribbean Central American Action (CCAA) that facilitates Caribbean trade but still has a stated focus on maritime port security and disaster mitigation. However, the security threats envisioned and level of disaster management planning has not taken into consideration the logistical challenges created by such large-scale destruction of Port-au-Prince’s port infrastructure, the key link in the foreign aid logistics chain in an emergency. Therefore the aforementioned bureaucratic alphabet soup did little to provide a contingency plan for a human security-related catastrophe in an otherwise disaster prone region.

The airstrip is the most efficient and time sensitive way to get aid
and supplies on the ground. However, the most significant point of entry for long term resupply and reconstruction are the ports. In the case of Port-au-Prince where up to 50% of the city was destroyed, a significant amount of heavy-lift equipment is required which only a deep-water port facility can accommodate. The Toussaint L’Ouverture International Airport is faced with severe overcrowding and the destruction of the civilian control tower has led to American military controllers assuming command. Civilian relief efforts have been hampered simply due to the overwhelming volume that the small airport is not able to accommodate. For example, Médecins Sans Frontière tried to fly in crucial equipment, including medical supplies but claimed that one of their aircraft was sent away due to the bottleneck. Delivery of the aid cargoes that did land was sporadic, hampered by the temporary blocking of Port-au-Prince’s roads with debris, and affected by the lack of trucks for transport. Sadly the death of a number of United Nations experts working specifically on disaster management in the UN office in Port-au-Prince, coupled with the virtual non-existence of Haiti’s government, has only further hampered the relief effort.

Aid and supplies of course are not only needed now but will be for a prolonged period of time. The long-term aid distribution and reconstruction effort cannot be addressed purely with aerial supplies and therefore the port will play the most crucial role in Haiti’s rehabilitation. The distribution of aid in sizeable quantities is the next immediate step to stabilizing Haiti. United States Defence Secretary Robert Gates stated that helicopters were simply not adequate to transport the substantial aid cargo from ships offshore that would meet the requirements of approximately two million people affected by the destruction of Port-au-Prince and its suburbs.

In this case, the maritime ports provide a crucial element in the immediate and ongoing aftermath of such incidents. The capacity of a devastated developing city such as Port-au-Prince to manage its own rescue is dramatically reduced if the critical infrastructure is also damaged or destroyed. Despite the rubble and cracks throughout the network, road transport was more or less intact. Haiti’s principal maritime port of Port-au-Prince was the primary alternate to the airport for airlifting material goods of aid and supplies in sufficient quantities for ongoing needs. Although Canada was able to fly 200 tons of aid in, it took eighteen flights to do so. Colombia, on the other hand, is sending a naval vessel with 400 tons of aid to Haiti, along with the hospital ship ARC CARTEGENA carrying medical supplies, water and food. An emergency of this scale requires that ships can dock safely and unload effectively. Unfortunately, the maritime port area of Port-au-Prince was heavily damaged. Consequently, Gates ordered the deployment of US vessels and personnel, both military and civil, to clear the harbour and assess the condition of the only pier within the port that remained standing after the quake. A nearby pier was completely submerged with only its container bridges and cranes above the water. A smaller port facility to the north was also unusable. The remaining South Pier was also damaged and had numerous toppled containers in the water along its length. The short-term options were therefore limited. The two vessels that were berthed at the time, the STELLA MARIS and MICHAEL J. were also damaged when a crane collapsed on top of the vessels. Only 228 of the 1,350 metres of pier
space were serviceable and only one truck at a
time was allowed on the pier, which appeared to
have been compromised structurally from the
quake. It was estimated that repairs would take at
least 15-30 days.

There are seventeen ports servicing coastal traffic
along the Haitian coastline, eight of which receive
international traffic, and three of substantial size;
Port-au-Prince has the public piers and a private
pier at Terminal Varreux SA (also badly
damaged). The alternative, the deep water
container port of Cap Haitian to the north of the
country has become the secondary logistics base
for the World Food Program offloading cargo as
well as US Naval and Coast Guard vessels.
Another significant problem is access to and from
the port as the roads have been cluttered with
debris and are partly damaged. The key is
repairing all of Port-au-Prince’s maritime facilities
as quickly as possible whilst ensuring that the
road networks remain usable for the continued
incoming aid at increasing levels.

US Coast Guard cutters arrived quickly off the
coast of Port-au-Prince working with the Haitian
Coast Guard, which has a limited capacity in
providing either security, assessments, or repairs.
Taking soundings, marking submerged rubble and
containers and inspecting the damaged port were
key tasks for the joint operation but the security of
the port, as in Port-au-Prince itself, is a priority
because the city's surviving law enforcement
capabilities are seriously overwhelmed. US
troops are flooding into the city and are expected
to provide security for the aid and rescue effort but
they are not a law enforcement solution, as
soldiers are generally not trained in constabulary
services. The earthquake damaged the main
prison in Port-au-Prince allowing approximately
4,000 prisoners, including gang leaders
connected to high-level organized crime
syndicates to escape into the shattered city. In
the virtual absence of a fully-functioning police
force, these criminals have begun to return to old
ways of gang rivalries, controlling turf in the Cité
Soleil slum areas of Port-au-Prince, located in the
port area. Furthermore, the major road networks
leading to and from the port cross through these
suburbs. These areas have long been no-go
zones where drug trafficking and human
trafficking syndicates have flourished. Brazil had a
peacekeeping force of 145 soldiers in Cité Soleil
but lost 18 of them, including three of its
commanders in the earthquake during a building
collapse. All of their weapons were looted. Since
the initial quake, armed criminal gangs have been
accused of attacking rescue workers trying to pull
bodies from the rubble, and contributing to the
insecurity felt by aid workers and locals. At night,
gunshots are often heard, and there are reports of
women being raped due to the lack of adequate
street lighting. Vigilante groups for the protection
of citizens are active with the encouragement from
the incapacitated police services but this is not an
ideal security solution. The UN Secretary-General
Ban ki-Moon has requested that the Security
Council send reinforcements to support the UN
peacekeeping mission to Haiti, which will add to
the existing 7,000 peacekeepers and 2,000 police
already in Haiti. Reinforcements will include 2,000
peacekeeping troops and 1,500 police units.
These extra personnel are likely to stay deployed
in Haiti for at least six months and should fill the
current gaps in Port-au-Prince security, following
the virtual disappearance of the Haitian Police,
and an overall sense of a lack of security
coordination.

In the port area the US is providing better security
than what the rest of the city is experiencing. The
US Army's 82nd Airborne division were guarding
the port facilities but the US Coast Guard will
likely be the agency in charge of providing
maritime security in the longer term lasting
months and even possibly years. The US Coast
Guard flew in 33 personnel of a 'Coast Guard
Advanced Port Security Team' on 21 January that
consisted of various tactical law enforcement
team' members from Miami and San Diego.
These policing units will provide protection for the
US 'Marine Transportation Recovery Unit' while
they reconstruct the port and the reorganisation of
the Haitian Coast Guard is vital. The submerged
containers and rubble will continue to limit the
draft size of vessels supplying the relief efforts
organised by the US 'Agency for International
Development' so this clearance process has been
deemed a priority. US and French divers did
manage to clear some underwater obstructions
within the first week, however, only shallow draft vessels and barges carrying a maximum of 150 containers are able to access the piers until more work is done. Within a few days a vessel out of Mobile Alabama, the 278 foot US-flagged barge CRIMSON CLOVER, managed to get dockside and cautiously unloaded 100 containers of wheat and vegetable oil. Following this success, other shippers have been contracted by USAID to deliver relief cargoes consisting of around 560 20-foot containers to Port-au-Prince and Cap Haitian from the US ports of Lake Charles (Louisiana), Mobile (Alabama) and Port Everglades (Florida).

A French naval vessel, the FRANCIS GARNIER docked to unload soldiers in the first few days after the earthquake as well as medical equipment and excavators but at the risk of completely toppling the badly damaged pier. The US Sealift Command salvage ship USNS GRASP also arrived to clear the port debris. Secretary Robert Gates expects that the primary piers within Port-au-Prince can be reopened within two weeks, however, this seems to be a very optimistic assessment. Barges have been brought in as temporary floating docks for cranes and a

causeway barge is currently being used for vehicle traffic. A barge handling ship, an oil-delivery ship and a high-speed ferry is also being used to replace the damaged piers. Other naval assets include the US Naval hospital ship COMFORT, which was anchored out at sea tending to survivors who are in critical condition. Overall, naval vessels have generally been more cautious, although it appears that the French and American naval forces have cooperated in getting the port functioning at least within a minimal capacity.

The Haiti earthquake has shown that ports can be vulnerable to natural disasters, which consequently is the primary logistical point for both short and long term aid delivery. When Indonesia was hit by a tsunami in 2004, the only substantial access was by sea, where naval amphibious craft were used. Port security after a disaster will always depend on a number of variables, including extent of damage, logistical needs of a particular situation and the capacity of local authorities to provide security. In the case of the Haiti earthquake, security was immediately recognised as a major issue both in the short and long term. Haiti’s ports are small to medium sized and can only service a limited capacity at the best of times but the problem of getting vehicles to deliver aid supplies when it did arrive in Port-au-Prince, or via Cap Haitian, was compounded by roads blocked with rubble or cracked by the earthquake, and most importantly, a shortage of fuel.

In the long term, the US Military, like the Coast Guard, will need to remain on-station for some months, possibly even years to provide security as the Haitian Government, police force and critical infrastructure are redeveloped. Temporary logistics already in place need to be strengthened and rebuilt. In time, reconstruction equipment will
arrive on increasingly larger vessels that will be vital in the long-term reconstruction effort. As this happens, the volume of aid can increase as the needs of the city are reassessed. Although the efforts to get the port up and functioning have been thus far efficient, serious consideration of future disaster management when infrastructure is destroyed must be a part of port security planning. In Haiti, it was fortunate that the US and French military forces were nearby and able to assist, but as the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami illustrated, natural elements can incapacitate a port facility as severely as any conventional conflict or terrorist attack with far less predictability. During the post-tsunami response, international aid efforts first had to negotiate with the Indonesian government over access to Aceh and consider the fragile political environment between the government and both the Gerakan Aceh Merdeka’s (GAM) political wing and possible splinter elements. Eventually it was realised that the tsunami had destroyed significant infrastructure on both sides of the conflict. Furthermore, Bandar Aceh and the most significantly affected areas had poorly developed and relatively insecure port facilities. Similar to the situation in Port-au-Prince, foreign forces not only had to operate under difficult circumstances but also have had to provide their own security as there appeared to be no contingency plan in place.

Conclusion:
Current maritime security upgrades in recent years have only facilitated the day-to-day security of port operations, whereas the security of ports must be part of a wider response mechanism, perhaps in collaboration with regional states through CARICOM, OAS, and of course, the US. The lessons learned in this instance are that indigenous security forces may be non-existent due to corruption, a lack or resources, or a damaged chain of command after a catastrophe, but it is vital that ports and vessels still have a secure operating environment. Haiti has been hit by hurricanes and a major earthquake and was already struggling with its own security and stability before the aforementioned disasters occurred. Developing countries like Haiti (or Indonesia) that clearly do not have the capacity to cope with the added security demands that arise in the wake of large-scale emergencies need to assess all aspects of port logistics security. The Haitian port facilities and roads will be repaired in due time in order to accommodate the necessary docking of larger ships and the delivery of equipment and supplies. During this time the capacity of the city to provide its own maritime security for the ongoing logistical challenges faced by trying keep Port-au-Prince alive will depend on the goodwill of countries such as the US, French and other donor countries. As more aid supplies and heavy equipment is chartered to Haiti for the relief effort, shippers will need to know there is safe access to permanent or temporary wharfs, and that adequate provisions have been made to unload cargoes onto barges alongside when no other options are available. To those within the shipping industry that are contracted to play a role in the aid delivery to Haiti, the safety and security of their crew and vessel as well as logistical variables to avoid time delays are key priorities.

Despite the considerable efforts of the US reconstruction and security teams, the ongoing nature of aid supply, the fragility of Port-au-Prince infrastructure, the dysfunctional state of the police force, and the potential for select Haitian gang involvement in the port area will threaten shippers who risk their vessels to deliver the much needed cargo. In the short to medium term, port security will rely on external military forces, however, in the long term, port security in the developing world will depend on the lessons that can be learned from Haiti and translated into future port security planning.

Timothy Martin:
Timothy Martin is a PhD Candidate at Deakin University, Australia. He specializes in maritime law enforcement cooperation frameworks in the Caribbean and South East Asia and specifically examines drug trafficking and counter piracy initiatives.
MaRisk Feature Analysis: Smuggling in Somalia- Weapons, Charcoal, and Toxic Waste
Dr. Stig Jarle Hansen, Senior Analyst, Risk Intelligence

Introduction:
In light of the total collapse of the central state, trade has found its own and often illegal methods to cover the needs of the Somali people. A key aspect of running the market in Somalia is maritime smuggling. It provides the daily necessities, but also floods the country with weapons and refuse from the developed world. On the return, valuable natural resources and more arms are smuggled out of the country.

Smugglers use marine transportation throughout the Gulf of Aden, connecting nations of the Arabian Peninsula with East Africa. They are taking advantage of the long coastline of northern Somalia and weakly developed police institutions. The Yemeni coast is in many regards also only marginally controlled by Yemeni authorities, and suffers from the same problems as the Somali coastline. Central Somalia is not the major entry point for smuggling in Somalia as most of the smuggling to and from Somalia goes through Puntland’s ports and shoreline. However smuggling does occur, with narcotics, weapons and charcoal as concrete examples. A very lucrative trade has been the re-smuggling of goods imported from Kenya, back to Kenya, taking advantage of Kenyan export subsidies. Sugar has also been smuggled to Kenya in this fashion. Southern Somalia has also functioned as a dumping ground for illegal medical supplies and food that has expired.

The smuggling activities in the south have decreased in importance over the last five years, mainly because of the Islamist takeover. Several of the old core transit points have collapsed and the weapons and charcoal trade now follow a very different pattern then it did at the turn of the millennium. Arms smuggling changed from being dominated by cartels to being controlled by foreign supporters of the various parties in the Somali conflict. Therefore, arms-smuggling networks have re-emerged. Drugs and charcoal smuggling was limited as Sharia Courts and Islamists gained power and banned such activities between 2004-06, but overall, the illegal activities never ceased to occur. It is likely that the Islamist expansion, both of Sharia Court forces affiliated with the new Somali president and the Harakat Al Shebab, will lead to even further decreases in smuggling.

Arms smuggling
Somalia remains under an arms embargo, according to Security Council resolution 733 (1992) as extended by resolution 1425 (2002). This means that all military arms support is smuggling, and that weapons procurement-assistance within Puntland and Somaliland is illegal. Nevertheless, both entities receive such support. The new alliance of the forces of the former Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the ARS-D is now recognised by the international community and thus does not need to smuggle arms as the government is exempt from the arms embargo. This might lead to a decline in the dependence on arms smugglers.

Arms trade along the Somaliland coast: Saanag
Arms carried by Yemeni dhows arrive regularly to the Somaliland coast, most in the Warsangeli clan-inhabited part of Saanag province. This is the part of the Somaliland coastline that is least controlled by the state and only recently witnessed the deployment of a small Somaliland garrison. Yemeni fishermen and dhow operators have established strong business relations with the elders of the Issaq and Warsangeli clans in control of the coastal areas around the ports of...
Heis (Isaq clan), Maidh (Isaq clan) and Las Qoray (Warsangeli).

Weapons trading from Yemeni dhows through remote natural ports is a part of the wider general trade (including fuel, plastic ware, cement, food), which intends to avoid customs duties. It is common for several weapons traders to pool their resources and share boats. At times, local clans are paid for fishing rights with arms and fuel.

There are smuggling routes from the Saanag coast into Ethiopia, and weapons smugglers likely feed arms to Somali-Ethiopian insurgency groups, such as the Ogadeen National Liberation Front. Weapons are also transported through the Sool province and then through central Somalia into Mogadishu.

The UN Arms Embargo monitoring group claims that Somaliland gets weapons from Ethiopia, which is highly likely given the fact that the Ethiopians have extensive training programmes for Somaliland officers and enlisted soldiers. The monitoring group has also received information that the Somaliland National Security Agency receives support in intelligence and security matters from Great Britain.

Arms trade along the Puntland coast: Bosasso
The port of Bosasso, and its close surroundings remains one of the most important hubs for the smuggling of illegal arms. The port is used by numerous businessmen involved in the arms trade that are independent of any allegiance to the government. Private trans-shipments are regularly intercepted by the Puntland authorities, such as on 10 October 2007, when the Puntland police impounded a truck heading to Mogadishu with 148 pieces of explosives at the Armo checkpoint 90 km south of Bosasso. The links with Yemen are quite strong, and it is illustrative that when Yemen attempted to curb the domestic arms market in the summer of 2008, it led to a price increase in Puntland and throughout Somalia. Increased patrol activities by the Yemeni Coastguard west of Mukalla also drove the smuggling routes east of that city.

It is highly likely that several of the smugglers have contacts with or are pirates themselves. The United Nations arms embargo group suggests that a direct link exists between a Bari-based pirate group and arms smugglers. The arms smugglers also have contacts with the major insurgency groups further south in Somalia.

Arms trade: Hobyo and Haradhere
The year 2007 led to the collapse of the largest Somali arms market, the Bakara Market in Mogadishu. Nevertheless, arms trading continues in Central and Southern Somalia, which is also used as a transit point for arms to Ethiopian insurgency groups and for Kenyan crime cartels and nomads. The main entry ports for arms smuggling continue to be along the Puntland coast.

However, several “rough ports” (natural harbours without official landing facilities and infrastructure) in central Somalia have an old tradition for smuggling. Notably, rough ports in the Haradhere and Hobyo area have been heavily used in arms smuggling. Pirates of the Haradhere cluster have been linked to trafficking of arms from Yemen to Haradhere and Hobyo, which have long been two of the main points of entry for arms shipments destined for armed opposition groups in both Somalia and Ethiopia. Before 2006, numerous reports received by the United Nations Monitoring Group linked Yusuf Mohamed Siyaad “Indhaddde”, military chief of the ARS-A faction, to arms imports through Hobyo and Haradhere. However, Indhaddde now holds little power in the area, and his current faction, the so called Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (Asmara group) is losing power. The Harakat Al Shebab has also received arms from the ports, but the units receiving these
Arms are directly on the fringes of the organisation. Weapons have also been exported to Mogadishu and sold to clans and businessmen.

There are several known examples of smuggling from Haradhere. For example, on or around 28 July 2007, two dhows arrived, allegedly from Yemen and Eritrea, carrying weapons that were transported onwards to insurgents based in El Bur. This example is from the period before the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia, as the Djibouti group (ARS-D), conquered the area in December 2008. It is however notable that the group and their allies in the new government only maintain a limited control over several rough ports, such as Raage Eele (approximately 40 kilometres north of El-Ma'an).

Arms trade: Mogadishu
The major port in Mogadishu remains firmly in the hands of the aforementioned alliance. There have been several previous incidents where arms have been smuggled in through this port, despite the presence of TFG authorities and the forces of the African Union. The port authorities might be reformed due to the power-sharing agreement between TFG and ARS-D.

Other traditional arms smuggling hubs include Kismayo and Merka. After the Harakat Al Shebab’s takeover in 2008, little is known about smuggling in these cities. It is nevertheless very likely that arms smuggling has increased in the area, as Kismayo port is the largest port available to the Harakat Al Shebab and thus has a strategic importance for the factions because it is the easiest port to use for arms purchases.

Arms can also be smuggled over land. For example, the UN Arms Embargo Committee claims that on or around 2 January 2008, an arms shipment originating from Eritrea arrived in Mogadishu. The shipment was transported by road via the Eritrean-Djiboutian border into Zone 5 (Ethiopia) and crossed the Somali border near Beletweyne (Hiraan region), before reaching Mogadishu through Buulo Burto (Hiraan region). The arms shipment was hidden under a transport of potatoes and bags of coffee. Ethiopian forces have claimed that major smuggling routes go through Menelik Tarara, Shilalo, and El Berde.

Arms export from Somalia
Arms are smuggled out of Somalia to Kenya and Ethiopia, but also back into these countries. The Somali Arms Market at Elasha, Afooye, seems to have a key role in the Kenyan-Somalian arms trade. This market is supplied by arms from different Somali trading markets in Mogadishu, such as Arjantin, Karan and Medina. The Elasha traders have been involved in exporting arms through the Gedo region and into Kenya. Such arms transfers are often handled by nomads and Somalis with Kenyan citizenship who can more safely traverse the border. Arms have also been sold to the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) and Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF).

A notable number of traders involved in what might be described as a triangular trade between Ethiopia-Kenya and Somalia are Somalis with triple citizenship in all three countries. Some of the
smugglers will also have UNHCR refugee status, enabling them to move more freely. It is important to underline that arms are also smuggled from Kenya to Somalia, and from Ethiopia to Somalia, depending on the Somali demand. Arms from Kenya have also been smuggled by sea from Mombasa.

What further complicates the arms trade is that numerous countries are allegedly involved in the trafficking. Some of the arms smuggled into Somalia might be smuggled by aircraft from companies registered in Eritrea. At least two such companies have been identified by the Arms Embargo Commission. It nevertheless appears that Eritrea increasingly bases its support on cash rather than arms transfers.

Charcoal
Charcoal production is rapidly removing the forest from central Somalia. Charcoal is exported through ports in Puntland, but the volumes have been drastically lowered recently and are much lower compared with the ports of central Somalia. Exports take place from the rough ports outside Bosasso and the trade is often run by the groups which also handle human trafficking.

In 2005, charcoal production of Somalia as a whole was estimated to be 150,000 metric tons. Approximately 80% of this charcoal is destined for stoves in the Gulf States while only 20% is for domestic consumption. Of the 80% going to the Gulf, Saudi Arabia uses an estimated 80%.

Somalia's interim president banned the export of charcoal by a decree in February 2007. Similarly the Islamic Courts banned the practice. In 2000, Puntland prohibited the export of charcoal through the port of Bosasso and along the Red Sea coast. The police force is involved in trying to curb excessive deforestation for charcoal production, but infrequent pay has hampered these efforts and corruption is high. Somaliland has also banned the export of charcoal within its territory.

Charcoal: Puntland and Somaliland
Somaliland has curbed large scale smuggling, although smuggling of some quantities to Djibouti and recently to Puntland is reported. In the early 1990s, areas in eastern Saanag and Sool were subjected to severe deforestation. This resulted in the clearance of thousands of hectares of prime forestland for charcoal production, which was subsequently exported to the Gulf States. Coincidently, the recent drought condition that has impacted the communities of the Saanag and Sool plateau was most severe in those areas where trees were burned in large scale for charcoal. The largest quantity of Somaliland charcoal is exported through the capital of Puntland, Garowe, and then to Bosasso. It is highly likely that some of the charcoal smuggled through this route originates within the Somali Regional State of Ethiopia. This is because there are more forests remaining in this region and charcoal from the region has been reported in the markets in Somaliland's capital Hargeisa. In 2004, about 30 truckloads of charcoal crossed from Ethiopia to Somaliland each month. Ethiopian authorities have attempted to halt the charcoal consignments crossing the border by confiscating the trucks transporting it. Nevertheless, charcoal consignments are still pouring into Hargeisa.

Charcoal: Central Somalia
The rough port of El Ma'an was traditionally the hub of coal export from Southern Somalia. During June and October 2005, 22,872 metric tons of charcoal passed through the port on its way to foreign markets. A significant portion of the revenues accrued from taxes levied on the export of charcoal revert to a businessman who has in past investigations been identified by the United Nations Monitoring Group as being involved in arms embargo violations. However, when the Sharia Courts of Mogadishu re-opened Mogadishu port, the charcoal trade out of El Ma'an stopped completely because it was closed down. In 2008 the El Ma'an port was reopened, partly motivated by the corruption in Mogadishu port. Since it is the same businessman that previously ran the port, it seems fair to expect that the charcoal trade will grow again. Large numbers of Sharia Court fighters are involved in the new alliance between the TFG and ARS-D, and this alliance controls El Ma'an.

The Sharia Courts managed to close the charcoal
trade for several months, but their policies were then relaxed. It is unknown if the new allies forming the government will manage to control the charcoal trade around Mogadishu, but it is important that several of the alliance's main financial backers have been involved in the trade. Kismayo was another capital of the charcoal trade, and is close to the production areas around the Juba valley. Revenues obtained from the illegal charcoal exports and port revenues in Kismayo were considerable. For example, during October 2004, 13,133 metric tons of charcoal was reportedly exported from Kismayo to businesses in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. Conservative estimates indicate that the average price per ton is USD 240. Revenues generated out of this single operation were as much as USD 3,151,920, and 99% of the income from the port was from the charcoal trade.

The reduction in export and revenues may be due to a number of factors: there has been an active campaign by Islamic scholars whilst several Gulf countries have now declared charcoal from Somalia as *haram* (banned according to Islam). Moreover, according to local sources, the Harakat Al Shebab completely stopped the export of charcoal. However, the question remains if Al Shebab can decline the revenues from charcoal trading if the tactical situation turns against them. In June 2009 the Indian dhow VISHYAKALYAN was hijacked with a cargo of charcoal from Brava. The Yemeni fishing dhow SHAXAR hijacked in October 2009 was also carrying charcoal. Both incidents reveal that the trade is still active in the region.

**Toxic waste**
The Basel Convention on the Control of Trans-Boundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal as well as Article 39 of the Lomé Convention clearly prohibits the export of waste to Africa as well as the Caribbean and the Pacific. Nevertheless, the smuggling and dumping of toxic waste into Somalia was proven to have occurred. According the to the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), the practice has old roots as it likely began in the early 1980s. The activities are alleged to have strong connections with the Italian mafia. Human rights organisations claim that the in-depth investigation by Italian journalist Ilariya Alpi of the toxic waste-mafia connection in 1994 led to her death. Factious waste disposal firms have been involved in organised crime. These firms handle waste from Europe and the United States. In 1998, *Famiglia Cristiana*, an Italian weekly magazine, claimed that although most of the waste-dumping took place after the start of the civil war, UNEP suggested that two companies were particularly active in the early 1990s including the Swiss firm, Achair Partners, and an Italian firm named Progresso.

UNEP claims that Somalia was a cheap alternative for the dumping of industrial waste, with a cost of $2.50 per ton for the disposal of nuclear waste off the Horn of Africa, compared to a cost of up to $1000 when disposing it properly in Europe. A rudimentary fact-finding mission led by the UNEP failed to discover any examples when searching in Puntland, whilst an official and comprehensive investigation has yet to be launched. Substances such as radioactive, industrial, hospital, and chemical waste and heavy metals like lead, cadmium and mercury are smuggled into the country and dumped inland and offshore. The containers are often washed ashore and cause mouth and abdominal bleeding, skin infections and other ailments in villagers along the coast. The dumping of toxic waste is the second most common reason cited for conducting piracy against "suspect ships", with illegal fishing being the first.

**Drugs**
Several warlords including strongman of the Hizb Islamiya faction, Yusuf Mohamed Siyaad “Indoh’adde,” was likely to have grown narcotics in Somalia, but their farms were shut down between 1999-2005. There have been no reports of drug smuggling except qat (also spelled *khat*) in or out of Somalia since 2005.

**Sugar and other commodities**
Sugar smuggling to Kenya is an ongoing problem. The sugar is imported to Somalia from South Africa, and is then smuggled to Kenya. An
apparent increase of smuggled sugar in Kenya has been witnessed since the government was granted a one-year extension (2003) on the right to levy duties on sugar by the Common Market for Southern and Eastern Africa (COMESA). This was intended to fend off massive inflows of cheap imports from other members of the trading bloc. Sugar was smuggled through the Kenyan border with Somalia and sold at very low prices. The Kenyan customs authorities have acknowledged seizures of sugar, allegedly smuggled from Somalia.

Kenyan export subsidies and laws also make it profitable for Somalis to import cigarettes and other general commodities produced in Kenya - and then smuggle them back to Kenya. Such strategies are also used towards other countries within the Horn of Africa, such as Uganda (even though it does not have borders adjacent to Somalia). Very often fake documentation is involved in such smuggling schemes, as well as trans-East African cartels. Aircraft delivering qat (a mild narcotic, that is allowed in Somalia, Kenya, and Ethiopia) have also been involved in bringing illegal commodities back to Kenya after transporting qat into Somalia.

**Conclusion**
Smuggling is an important part of Somali everyday life, business and warfare. Due to the country's long coastlines, maritime transport is vital for smuggling the various contraband. However, much of the smuggling takes place on local dhows trading with nearby countries and thus is often “under the radar” of international naval forces in the area. Furthermore, items such as expired food, sugar and charcoal are seldom thought of as smuggled commodities by boarding-teams from coalition warships conducting inspections, but these items are nonetheless fuelling an illegal economy inside and outside Somalia adding to the overall insecurity within the Horn of Africa.

**Dr. Stig Jarle Hansen**
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An evaluation of ReCAAP  
Karsten von Hoesslin, Senior Analyst, Risk Intelligence

ReCAAP deserves a nightcap:  
In the editorial of Strategic Insights No.5 December 2006, this author assessed the utility of the newly formed government-to-government body, the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP). The over-all synopsis was that the organization, relatively different from the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), has great expectations to fill but could become an equal and/or complimentary organization in piracy reporting and analysis as well as in building transparency in the region.

What role within the counter-piracy realm has the agency played in the past three and a half years since its inception and how effective has its contribution been to Asia-pacific maritime security? As the organization was formed, many questioned the extent to which ReCAAP can contribute to the commercial industry in a way different than the IMB. In many respects however, ReCAAP’s greatest success is twofold: First, it significantly enhances regional government-level cooperation to unprecedented levels at the benefit of both the governments themselves and shipowners. Second, ReCAAP’s performance has prompted the IMB to remarket itself and bolster its research and analysis, making the organization more effective. ReCAAP therefore is an extremely valuable asset to not only regional counter-piracy initiatives, but has also significantly contributed to the quality of analysis in better understanding piracy as a global phenomenon overall.

Putting ReCAAP in perspective: 
Despite its relatively infant age of a mere 40 months, the concept of ReCAAP has existed for over a decade. It was the former Japanese Prime minister, Keizo Obuchi, who envisioned the formation of such an initiative back in 1999 at the Association for South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) plus one Summit in Manila. Within the last decade, the region’s littoral states have embraced Obuchi’s idea. As any staff member of ReCAAP will explain, the organization’s spirit is far older than its official age and the organization’s current status is a result of over a decade of visualization. The ReCAAP agreement was finalized on 11 November in 2004 and came into force on 4 September 2006.

ReCAAP’s contribution to counter piracy and armed sea robbery has namely been under the guise of increasing transparency. Despite a few shortfalls that many claimed would forever burden the organization, ReCAAP’s reporting and particularly qualitative post-incident analysis and assessment has had a considerable impact on the study of piracy in the region.

The “ReCAAP model” or the ‘ReCAAP Initiative?’
Some experts often tote the “ReCAAP Model” for other piracy-prone areas such as the Horn of Africa. Although ReCAAP is a successful tool in the South East Asian counter-piracy agenda, it has in no way put an end to the illegal maritime act. Therefore, caution should be maintained when prescribing a regional organization such as ReCAAP as a “model” to combat piracy elsewhere. This is because ReCAAP has experienced an extremely complex evolutionary process and should be classified as an initiative. As an organization with international status, it faces the bureaucratic hurdles of officialdom and as a regional information-gathering machine, it faces the occasional transparency hurdle. Over
all, however, the ReCAAP membership and the Asia Pacific were ready and committed to the positive function of such an organization. Most importantly, the signing parties of ReCAAP were prepared to take on the initiative independently of foreign (extra-regional) involvement.

Piracy prone areas such as the Horn of Africa or Gulf of Guinea are not at a similar level of commitment and independence. Most importantly, the ReCAAP membership views the purpose of the organization as self-fulfilling whereas regions in Africa may still view such an initiative as fulfilling the interests of western shipping nations and those that are capable of connecting the non-existent nexus of piracy and terrorism.

Therefore to claim that ReCAAP is a generic model that can be rubber-stamped and applied anywhere in the world is inaccurate. ReCAAP is an evolving initiative that continues to gain significance and momentum as the barriers to transparency are lifted within the Asia-Pacific. In this sense ReCAAP is truly a product of its region: created and maintained through the lens of Asia-Pacific nations and most importantly, applied analysis and research methodologies unique to the local maritime environment and the threat from piracy at hand.

Given its successes in the first 40 months of its existence, it is understandable why many wish to export the notion to Africa's piracy prone waters, however the success of the organization is also a reflection of the regional governments’ willingness occurring under the piracy umbrella.

Minor hiccups:
ReCAAP suffers from a few operational challenges, however, they have not yet been too difficult for the organization to handle. The predominant shortcomings of ReCAAP are the absence of two key coastal states, the occasional lack of cooperation in reporting incidents by members, and the analytical limitations posed on ReCAAP because of its organizational status.

Many regarded Indonesia and Malaysia’s lack of enthusiasm in joining ReCAAP as the organization’s eventual downfall. After all, what is the point in having a regional counter-piracy organization without the attendance of the littoral states whose waters host the largest number of armed robbery incidents? Although Vietnamese, Indian, Philippine, and Bangladeshi waters are also prone to armed robbery against ships, the obvious elephant in the room was Indonesia and Malaysia due to their littoral and archipelagic coastlines bordering the Malacca Strait and other major shipping routes. More importantly, the Malacca Straits had dominated the piracy headlines two years prior to ReCAAP’s formation due to the Joint War Committee listing the area a war risk zone. But as critics failed to examine the wider picture, they were unable to see that both Indonesia and particularly Malaysia were increasing their capabilities. No other country has improved its maritime capabilities within the last five years such as Malaysia. Its navy and most importantly Malaysian Maritime Enforcement...
Agency (MMEA) has become a renowned maritime police service that has dramatically bolstered the security of Malaysia’s maritime domain to counter activities ranging from armed robbery to smuggling. Whether the increased patrol presence in the Tioman Island group to counter robberies against tugs or vigilant patrols in the Sulu Sea to deter smuggling activities, the MMEA coupled with Malaysia’s commitment to securing its seas is a reason why critics have been wrong to give ReCAAP an expiration date.

Simultaneously, ReCAAP smartly ignored the media myth of the elephant in the room and conducted its operations as business as usual reminding everyone that there are other piracy prone areas in the region and that the organization is not solely about the Malacca Strait. It sought to strategically ignore concerns by focusing on the many other areas of South and South East Asia where armed robbery is an issue while allowing for other ways to cooperate with Malaysia and Indonesia. This surprisingly came much more naturally replacing the need to have them as members. For example, ReCAAP benefits from the coordinated Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia (MALSINDO) patrols and the tri-state’s intelligence sharing infrastructure. Furthermore, the relationship between ReCAAP and the MMEA is very positive and even Indonesia has reported incidents of armed robbery to ReCAAP’s central nervous system, the Information Sharing Centre (ISC) in Singapore.

The shortcoming of Malaysia and Indonesia’s official membership appears to have subdued itself where the primary goal of both the littoral states and the organization are to counter piracy and armed robbery against ships in the region. Furthermore, ReCAAP reminded the critics that its goals reflected the region as a whole and not just the Malacca Strait.

The second concern is the suspicion that not all member states equally share and report incidents in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). In 2007, a list was obtained belonging to the Philippine Coast Guard, which is equally the ReCAAP focal point, and it detailed the approximate number of illegal maritime activities for the calendar year. Activities included incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships, illegal poaching, illegal logging, illegal fishing, and the illegal possession of firearms. Within the list, there were a reported 78 incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships. The Philippine Coast Guard reported a total of six incidents to ReCAAP. It is likely that a number of the 78 incidents found within the internal document involve inter-clan and family rivalries over fishing and other disputes (and not merchant shipping), however, they should also be reported as incidents given that the organization follows the UNCLOS definition for piracy and armed robbery against ships, which involves every class of vessel.

Another example of ongoing robbery against ships, which also includes cases of kidnap and ransom, is in the Sundarbans region of Bangladesh. Although these incidents do not affect merchant or port operations, fishing vessels and tour operators are continuously attacked during the fishing season that lasts from October to April. The Bangladeshi focal point does not report these incidents although Risk Intelligence has recorded eight incidents in MaRisk since September 2009. Despite Bangladesh increasing its transparency in reporting in the Chittagong port area, the focal point should also be detailing all incidents occurring within the Sundarbans as in accordance with the UNCLOS definition.

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of many, ReCAAP is not only a reporting mechanism, but also a post-incident analysis instrument. Behind the sea of detailed reports and colour charts and graphs are a team of analysts that are capable of qualitatively assessing piracy in the region far more then the formalities of an official organization allow. Although they may be limited in stating so, ReCAAP analysts have a very good idea as to who is behind the bulk of the robberies (syndicate-wise), where they come from, and their trends and modus operandi. It is unfortunate that ReCAAP’s staff cannot express this in public.

**The Asia-Pacific focal point:**
ReCAAP has become the focal point itself for capacity building within the Asia-Pacific region. Whether it be a technical workshop or the annual Piracy & Armed Robbery Conference it hosts, ReCAAP engages with other organizations such as the IMB, governments, and the private sector to foster good relations and contribute to the understanding of piracy and armed robbery against ships.

Unlike the approach taken on behalf of other organizations, ReCAAP uses a unique formula to classify both the severity of incidents but also the rationale behind their occurrence. The “V” (Violence) and “E” (Economic) factors have become helpful indicators to incidents as they occur and chart over all trends. This form of analysis assists with the qualitative examination of an incident over merely marking it as a dot on a map. This approach can help researchers, and particularly journalists that are in need of additional information in order to more accurately qualify statistical information on piracy and armed robbery at sea. The same can be said for the three-level categorization in order to assess the severity of an incident. The benefit in such is that it helps differentiate the stealing of mooring lines or ship’s paint versus an incident where a crewmember is assaulted or extensive damage occurs to the ship’s superstructure. Whether an amateur journalist or an experienced Master, the ability to qualitatively assess incidents and determine where they fit both within the interim and long-term trends is an important tool that ReCAAP can provide.

**Benefit to shipping industry:**
ReCAAP’s usefulness is twofold: it has gained enough momentum within its 40 months of operation to be a driving force for further cooperation between governments. Secondly, its reports and analysis are readily available to the shipping industry.

ReCAAP cooperates within a partnership program with the Asian Shipowners Forum, the Norwegian Shipowners’ Association, and the Singapore Shipowners’ Association. On 14 January, the organization co-hosted a maritime forum with the Singapore Maritime Port Authority (MPA) to showcase trend assessments throughout 2009. In addition to the IMB reports and the live piracy map, the private sector should also utilize the individual, monthly, quarterly and annual reports from ReCAAP. The continued capacity building framework of ReCAAP at the government level should continue to generate confidence for the shipping industry. Despite a continued skepticism toward incident reporting in Indonesia, the private sector seems to look positively on the increasing transparency elsewhere in the region.

**Charting the future of ReCAAP:**
Of the 15 members of ReCAAP, one may be surprised to see the Kingdom of Norway on the list amongst Asia Pacific nations. The European country was admitted as a full member in the second half of 2009 marking a significant change in the organization’s geographical disposition of members. The reason for Norway’s interest involves its large percentage of flagged vessels operating in Asia Pacific region. Simultaneously, Norway benefits by having access to ReCAAP’s

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Significance of Incident</th>
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<tr>
<td>CAT 1</td>
<td>Very Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAT 2</td>
<td>Moderately Significant</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAT 3</td>
<td>Less Significant</td>
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*Listing of the three categories in which to classify the severity of an incident (ReCAAP)*

![Photo of what the author suspects to be Kamilli’s Gang after an incident in the Singapore Strait in June 2009. (ReCAAP)](image-url)

*The ISC has the ability to investigate in the post-incident phase.*
information sharing network and intelligence sharing. The Netherlands has also begun the process of becoming a member and is currently completed the first of two phases for admission. Denmark has also expressed an interest in the initiative, however, has yet to formally apply for membership.

Piracy in South East Asia and namely in prone areas such as the Philippines, Bangladesh, and the Malacca Strait and the Indonesian archipelago are likely to continue for the foreseeable future. As the 2009 Annual Report reveals, there was a five percent increase in incidents compared to 2008. Although marginal, it undoubtedly reaffirms that robberies in the Asia Pacific, despite being completely different tactically then piracy off the Horn of Africa, is going to continue.

The organization is not intended to prevent piracy, however, act as an initiative that can continue to evolve to encourage member-governments to report incidents and assist them with quality research and post-incident analysis.

Within the first 40 months, ReCAAP’s performance has been well received and should be viewed as a success. Despite a few marginal shortcomings, the organization continues to play a key role in capacity building, transparency development, and providing quality analysis. The organization should continue on its path with respect to the absence of Malaysia and Indonesia as formal members as it has yet to inhibit ReCAAP’s success given that levels of cooperation and semi-transparency have been established. Currently the door remains propped open to allow the two littoral states to join and in the meantime, both Indonesia and especially Malaysia are maintaining a positive relationship with the organization. Furthermore, ReCAAP should continue to focus on other areas within its mandate as evidenced by the successful Chittagong case study in 2007 and ongoing Anambas Islands investigation as of 2009.

Looking ahead, it should however, be a priority for the organization to further encourage all of its member focal points to report every act of piracy and armed robbery in accordance with the UNCLOS definition. Although this likely applies to a number of members, both the Philippines and Bangladesh are notable examples where ISC/Focal Point cooperation must be improved.

If the past is any indication of ReCAAP’s future, the organization is likely to grow with considerable success and play a key role in understanding the nature of piracy and armed robbery in the Asia Pacific. Piracy is dynamic after all, and similar to the fluidity of the criminal syndicates that target vessels and maritime infrastructure, the ReCAAP initiative can also remain fluid and continue to evolve and adapt to the changing maritime environment within the region.

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