



## Piracy Reports in 2005

July – September

By [Mark Bruyneel](#)

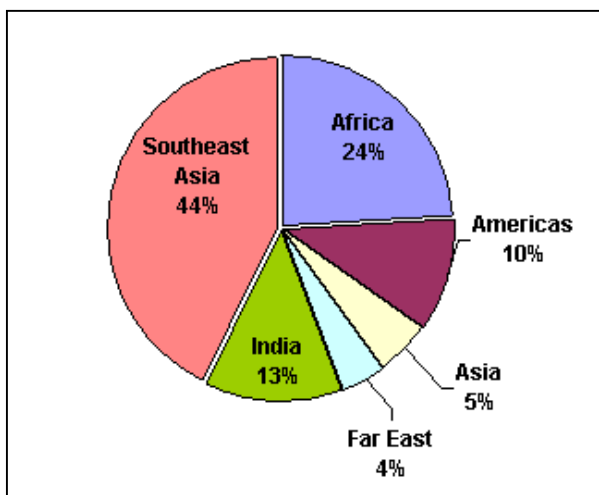
### Number of Attacks so far in 2005

For the first quarter of 2005 the first quarterly report of the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) has been published in April<sup>1</sup>. It contains details on 56 reported incidents and an analysis of this. On the first half of 2005 the second quarterly report of the IMB, published in July<sup>2</sup>, contains details on 127 incidents, an increase of 71. Eight reports have been published at the website of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) for January<sup>3</sup>, February<sup>4</sup>, March<sup>5</sup>, April<sup>6</sup>, May<sup>7</sup>, June<sup>8</sup>, July<sup>9</sup> and August<sup>10</sup>. Together these contain details on 166 reported incidents.

Next to the reports of the IMO the only official reports on piracy for the third quarter were the Weekly Piracy Reports in this year which are published at the Web site of the International Chamber of Commerce. The total reported incidents in the Weekly reports<sup>11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22,23,24</sup> for the third quarter is: 82.

If I make an estimate for the whole period the total number:  $[(82 / 82,70 * 100 = 99,154) + 127 = 226,154]$  **226**.

The graphic below shows the number of piracy attacks by region for 2005 as reported by the IMB for the first nine months:



After the tsunami, off the Indonesian coast, the number of piracy incidents in the Northern region of the Malacca Strait and near Indonesia temporarily decreased. The director of the IMB, Captain Mukundan, stated that he expected pirate attacks to increase again as soon as the most important problems have been dealt with and commerce resumes again in the region<sup>25</sup>. The number of incidents has indeed gone up again since the first quarter in Southeast Asia and may yet even be higher when the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarterly report appears:

Period	Southeast Asia	Far East
1 <sup>st</sup> quarter	25	5
2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter	36	3
3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter	29	1

Unfortunately not all incidents get reported to the IMO or IMB through official channels. I have collected 25 incidents which were reported in newspaper articles and/or other sources and send a list of these to the Piracy Reporting Centre. Maybe they will eventually be included if they are also reported by Coast Guard authorities or confirmed by shipowners. In the third quarter there were also 22 incidents which have not yet been reported by either the IMB or IMO. Many of these attacks are on fishing vessels and very often in or near Bangladesh waters.

The actual number of piracy incidents is, as in previous years, most probably higher than reported. The IMO report for April lists 2 incidents and the IMO report for May 1 incident which were not included in the second quarterly report of the IMB.

The last few years there have been increased attacks on smaller vessels and tugs in waters off Indonesia or in the Malacca Strait despite an overall decrease in piracy attacks from 445 to 325. The numbers below are based on an analysis of the 2003 and 2004 IMB annual reports<sup>27,28</sup>. The 2005 number is based on the reports of the IMO and IMB up to and including September for the Asian region. *The numbers in the table below for 2005 are different from last update because I made an error in the query.* For the first 9 months of the last 3 years the result is:

Ship type	2003	2004	2005
Tug	10	11	8
Fishing Vessels	8	10	1
Trawlers	2		
Offshore Supp. Ship		1	
Supply Ship			
Yacht		1	2

According to Yoshihiko Yamada of the Maritime Affairs Department of the Nippon Foundation, the increase in attacks on smaller vessels, as well as kidnappings of crew, is the result of increased security and anti-piracy measures on bigger vessels. Smaller ships and fishing vessels can least afford (expensive) security measures<sup>29</sup>. Some of the bigger companies that operate fleets of smaller vessels like tugs and supply ships may consider hiring private security companies to provide added security but their use remains highly controversial. The sharp decline in reported attacks on fishing vessels is remarkable and may in part be explained by the fact that these types of attacks are reported generally later to the authorities or have been reported less often than in previous years. The number of attacks in ports or near African waters has increased in the second quarter. The number of attacks in or near Somalian waters has increased:

Period	Somalia
1 <sup>st</sup> quarter	4
2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter	5
3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter	14

There has also been a marked increase in pirate attacks in the port Umm Qsar or in Iraqi territorial waters:

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
0	2	0	0	1	7

If you look at the location of the incidents for the Asian region for the first nine months you get the following table:

Asian region:	2004	2005
Indonesia	70	60
China	2	2
Hong Kong		
Malacca Strait	27	10
Malaysia	8	3
Myanmar	1	
Philippines	3	
Singapore	8	7
South China Sea	6	4
Thailand	4	1
Viet Nam	3	10
Totaal	133	99

The numbers for the first 6 months are based on the quarterly reports of the IMB and the Weekly Piracy Reports for the three months afterwards. There are four important things immediately apparent:

- most of the attacks still take place in the same countries or their territorial waters

- the number of attacks in the Malacca Strait have gone down since the beginning of this year
- Attacks near Thailand or Malaysia and the Philippines have decreased markedly
- The attacks in Vietnamese ports or in territorial waters have more than doubled.

The Table below shows an overview for the 6 months of 2005 compared to 2004 for the piracy incidents in Asia by flag of the vessels as reported by the IMB.

Attacks in Asia by flags	2004	2005
Antigua & Barbuda		2
Bahamas	2	2
Brazil	1	
Cayman Islands	1	1
China	1	1
Cyprus	1	3
Denmark	1	
Georgia		1
Greece	2	
Honduras	1	
Hong Kong	1	4
India	2	1
Indonesia	10	2
Iran	2	
Italy	1	
Japan	1	2
Liberia	5	4
Malaysia	9	6
Maldives		2
Malta	3	
Marshall Islands	2	3
Myanmar	1	
North Korea	1	
Norway	2	1
Panama	25	14
Philippines	1	1
Saudi Arabia	1	
Singapore	15	10
Thailand	2	1
Turkey	2	
United Kingdom	2	2
USA		1
Unknown	1	
Viet Nam	2	3
Total:	101	67

Nothing much can be said about this result except that there is a remarkable decrease in attacks on vessels registered in Indonesia, Singapore and Panama. The highest increase is on vessels registered in Hong Kong, China.

Not too much relevance can be attributed to the statistics in the table above since they are heavily influenced by trade developments.

I have also tried to find out which companies own, operate, manage or charter the vessels that were attacked in the Asian region in the first 6 months. To do this I have used shipping registers, the Equasis database as well as sources on the internet like company websites, etc. While this is a difficult thing to do since shipping information changes often and is rapidly outdated I feel that despite this I can present a good estimation in the following table <sup>1</sup>:

<b>Countries</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
Brazil	1	
Brunei	1	
Cambodia		1
Chile	1	
China		1
Cyprus		1
Denmark	2	1
Germany	1	4
Greece	5	5
Hong Kong, China	3	4
India	2	1
Indonesia	6	2
Iran	2	
Italy	2	1
Japan	8	9
Malaysia	6	6
Maldives		2
Monaco	3	
Netherlands	2	
New Zealand	2	
North Korea	1	
Norway		3
Philippines	1	2
Saudi Arabia	1	
Singapore	25	11
Taiwan	1	
Thailand	1	1
Turkey	3	
Ukraine		1
United Arab Emirates	1	1
United Kingdom	4	1
United States	1	4

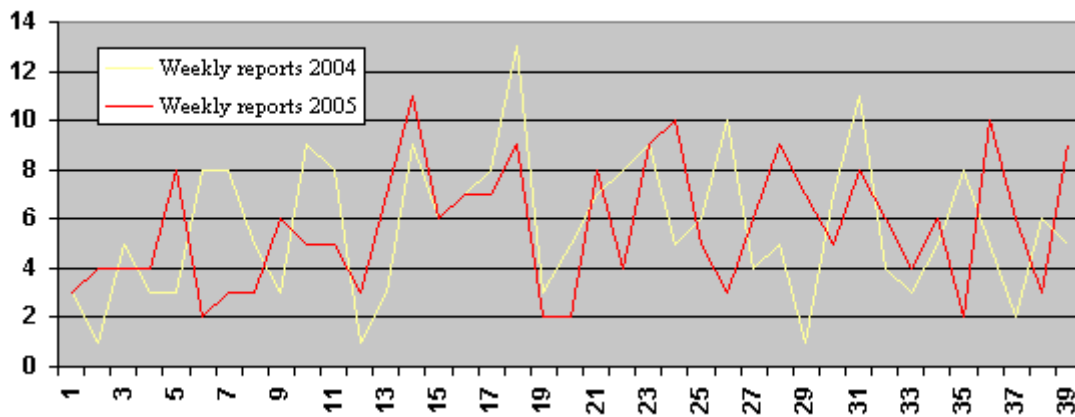
<sup>1</sup> I have determined which company is listed in the table based on what type they are in the following order: operator (1), manager (2), shipowner (3), agent (4) or the charterer (5) (I call it the OMSAC method). The company that operates the vessel is listed unless unknown and after which the other companies follow in order of numbers indicated. The country that is listed is that where the headquarters of the company was located. Most often the manager or operator is listed in the table: 90% - 95% of the ships attacked.

Unknown	15	3
Viet Nam		2
Total:	101	67

One thing is obvious from this table if you compare the totals of both years with the countries of the organisations that operate or manage (etc.) the ships attacked in Asia. The total number of Asian companies whose vessels have been attacked has increased: 52,48 % of the vessels attacked in 2004 (53 out of 101) were operated or managed by Asian companies compared to 58,21 % of the vessels attacked in 2005 (39 out of 67). This suggests that Asian operated/managed (local?) vessels are targeted more often in 2005 than in 2004. It is important to note, however, that vessels managed or operated from Singapore have been attacked less often: only 11 compared to 25 last year!

It is difficult to know the reasons why this has happened. It's probably a combination of luck, better knowledge about local trading routes and cargo transports, and changes in security arrangements on board Singapore vessels and/or vessels managed or operated by specific non-asian companies. Of course, there are probably also many reasons which have to do with normal shipping market developments and world trade shifts, etc.

The possibility of a link between piracy and terrorism was again discussed the past few months. In part this was because of the "War Risk"-rating given to the Malacca Strait by the Joint War Committee which caused insurance rates to go up on vessels sailing in the Strait. The rating was based on a report by Aegis Defence Services. In this report the threats of piracy, kidnapping for ransom and terrorism were lumped together. The International Maritime Bureau has stated that they have found no proof (so far) of any involvement of terrorists in piracy incidents since they started collecting data on piracy in 1992. Jeffrey Chen analysed the security threat and the possibility of piracy and terrorism links by looking at the three primary groups who have been involved in terrorism in Southeast Asia. He comes to the conclusion that there is no distinct or obvious danger from either of these groups regarding maritime terrorist activities and there are no proven link-ups with pirate groups to commit terrorist acts<sup>30,31</sup>. On 9 September the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs Hassan Wirajuda also rejected the idea that pirates and terrorists are linked since they have diverging aims which preclude their working together<sup>32</sup>.



Graphic: Weekly reports compared (x-axis =nr. of attacks, y-axis = weeknr.)



**Some of the more notable piracy incidents in the third quarter of 2005 are:**

1) On 3 July the tug Samudra Sindo VIII was towing the barge Aganda VII when they were attacked by a gang of 8 masked pirates. The tug and barge were awaiting a berth at the Tanjung Pengelih port (Malaysia) when they were attacked shortly after midnight. The master and crew were taken hostage and held below while the pirates towed the barge to the tanker Palm Chem in the South China Sea. The pirates were armed with guns and long knives. Of the 5,300mt of palm oil on board the barge, the pirates transferred about 3,500mt to the tanker. The tug and barge were released on 4 July at 18:00 LT when the pirates left. The master and crew raised the alarm as soon as possible after which the Malaysian police began to search for the vessel. The Johor Marine Police found the Palm Chem at Pengerang waters in Kota Tinggi on 8 July. 21 people, including the captain, were arrested. 3,000 metric tonnes of crude palm oil (CPO) was still found on board. The Palm Chem is an Indonesian-registered tanker that was chartered by a Singapore-based company, JBS Resources Pte Ltd. The Indonesian Navy Pursuit Team arrested five individuals, believed to have done the hijacking, in raids conducted in Tanjung Pinang, Riau Island 33,12,.

2) The general cargo ship Dubai Palm (1982, 3415 GRT) was boarded on 10 July at 0230

UTC. The ship was underway in position 29-36.4N 048-57.2E in the Arabian Gulf when the attack occurred. An unknown number of pirates held the crew at gunpoint and took money and personal effects before leaving. Source: ASAM Reference Number: 2005-218 . The attack has not yet been reported to the IMO or IMB because it has so far not been included in one of their reports.

3) The level of piracy and armed robbery in or near Bangladesh territorial waters is still very high. Recently, pirates attacked and hijacked 20 fishing trawlers along with valuables worth Tk 50 lakh. 20 fishermen were left injured in the river Meghna near Tojumuddin upazila on Friday night. The 'Bashar Bahini' gang is suspected to have swooped on them at night and looted valuables from the trawlers and later took away the boats after beating and stabbing the fishermen indiscriminately. The pirates demanded Tk 20,000 from each of the owners to get back their trawlers<sup>35</sup>. On July 17, the members of the Bachchu Gang looted cash and fishes worth Tk. two lakh from the fishing trawler Sayem in the bay of Bengal. Ten fishermen were thrown into the sea. Another trawler rescued nine fishermen. The same gang also attacked a fishing trawler in the bay at Shanachar area and looted fishes and nets worth Tk. ten lakh. On July 19, the members of the Anwar Gang abducted three fishermen- Russel (17), Ali Sharif (25) and Kamal (20) along with their fishing trawler for ransom. On July 21 members of the Badal Gang attacked three fishing trawlers Jalil, Rayenda and Bhai Bhai in the sea near Fairbody. The pirates beat up the fishermen, threw three of them into the sea and looted cash, fishes, nets and diesel. Many of these gangs operate from the Sunderbans<sup>36</sup>. Some of

the gangs supposedly have connections with local authorities in the region. The reason some of the fishermen do not report the attacks by pirates is that may avoid further trouble<sup>37</sup>.

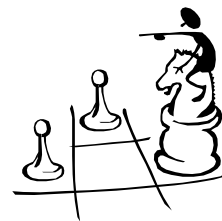
4) The oil tanker Agate, operated by the Singapore company World Tankers Management Pte. Ltd. and owned by Bestrank Pte Ltd., was attacked on 29 July at SPM terminal, Lawi-Lawi, Balikpapan in Indonesia. The pirates boarded while the ship was at anchor ship during cargo operations. Ship's property and equipment was stolen despite them being discovered by the crew<sup>15,9</sup>. This is the sixth time this ship was attacked during the last 3 years: 3 attacks in 2003, 1 attack in 2004, and 3 attacks in 2005 (so far). All six attacks took place in waters near Indonesia, in the Makassar Strait or in the port of Balikpapan (Indonesia). Either the pirates know very well when this vessel is in or near Indonesian waters and where, or the vessel is very unlucky.

5) On 12 August pirates attacked the bulk carrier Yuan Zhi (21392 gt, built 1983) at Chittagong outer anchorage. The Bangladesh Coast Guard managed to prevent the pirates from succeeding. The regular Coast Guard patrol boat appeared quickly on the scene and arrested the four pirates who were operating from an "engine boat". When the pirates were captured and arrested they confessed that they were trying to commit piracy on the said ship. The attack has so far not appeared in a report by either the IMO or the IMB. A short description of the incident appeared in the shipping newspaper Lloyd's List on 17 August<sup>38</sup>.

6) The IMB Weekly Piracy Report of 30 August reports the attack and hijacking of three deep sea Taiwanese fishing vessels 50 km southeast of the Somalian port of Kismayo<sup>19</sup>. Not much more information was known about the incident at the time. On 2 September Reuters<sup>39</sup> reported further details. The names of the vessels that have been hijacked are: Chung Yi 218, Cheng Ching Feng and Hsin Lien Fa 36. Each has a mixed crew of ± 20 people from Taiwan, China, Vietnam, the Philippines and Indonesia. A gang of six pirates has captured all three vessels and is now demanding a ransom of \$500,000 for the release of each vessel. Part of the cargo of the fishing vessels was reportedly offloaded. Much later it was reported that a disagreement between pirates and warlords has kept all three hijacked commercial fishing vessels in captivity<sup>40</sup>. The fishermen claim they had permission to fish in Somalia waters from the warlord who controls

the region. The pirates - a new faction who call themselves the National Volunteer Coast Guard - refuse to recognise the authority of the Warlord who supposedly gave permission.

7) The pirates, who captured the UN-chartered vessel Semlow in June, on 25 September captured another vessel: the Ibnu Batuta (or Ibn Batouta). The vessel is a Cement Carrier carrying cement from Egypt when it was attacked leaving the port El Maan (Somalia). According to a report in the Deutsche Presse-Agentur the vessel was attacked by the pirates in retaliation of an attempt to arrest their colleagues by the authorities in the El Maan port. Whatever the case, after 2 days the pirates released the vessel again, together with the Semlow<sup>41,42,43,44</sup>. The Semlow was originally captured on 26 June and was held for a total of 98 days. At the time of the release of both vessels, the Semlow had run out of fuel and was being towed by the Ibnu Batuta. It is not known whether the owners or others paid any ransom money for their release. It could also be that the pirates decided that the risk of holding on to both vessels was becoming to great.



#### 🌐 Measures taken/proposed:

1) Singapore intends to increase port security by fitting out small boats and private yachts with tracking devices. Approximately 3000 vessels will have to be fitted out and it will take 3.5 million Singapore dollars<sup>45</sup>. The Harbour Craft Transponder System (HARTS) for tracking the smaller vessels was developed by Singapore in addition to current IMO security measures mandated for ports and vessels (of 500 GRT and greater) as part of the International Ship and Port Facility Security code. The system includes a button to warn authorities of a security threat<sup>46</sup>. Although the measure will definitely make it easier to follow the comings and goings of local vessels I am unsure whether the measure will be effective. If a smaller vessel does not have such a tracking device, how will it be discovered then? And how big is the threat really to the port of Singapore compared to the cost of maintaining such high security measures? Very few pirate attacks have taken

place in the territorial waters of Singapore although recent attacks have happened in the Singapore Straits. Also, no real evidence has been given concerning the possibility of a pirate-terrorist linkup which Singapore is worried about.

**2)** A new security measure has been introduced at the main port of Bangladesh, Chittagong. The new surveillance system monitors movements of vessels within a radius of 30 square km of the port. The system makes use of the Automated Identification System which have been introduced for 500+ GRT vessels as part of the ISPS code<sup>47,48</sup>. All vessels are now required to identify themselves with the port authorities. If combined with a rapid response naval security force this measure may be able to increase security for the larger merchant vessels.

In addition to this measure the government is now buying helicopters, hovercraft and high-speed boats from the United States of America. The new equipment will be used by the coastguard as part of a planned upgrade to increase the existing security measures. Recently, three naval boats have been handed over to the coastguard for policing the many rivers and seas which are rife with smugglers and pirates preying on the local fishermen and cargo ships. The new ships are Fast Attack Craft Gun Ships that are equipped with eight cannon. The Bangladesh's far-ranging plans to increase security include: recruiting 2000+ personnel, setting up 3 new bases, and 15 new stations<sup>49</sup>. To implement these plans the government has asked the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOVC) and the United States government for financial aid. The JOVC is a non-government organisation<sup>50</sup>.

**3)** At a meeting of the The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) a resolution was passed with regard to piracy and maritime terrorism. In this resolution countries were urged to intensify the efforts to prevent and suppress piracy and terrorism. All 55 members were asked to offer technical expertise and military aid to coastal states along major maritime trade routes. More co-operation between countries to increase security is necessary. The resolution was put on the table by Dutch minister Ineke Dezentjé Hamming-Bleumink of the right-wing party VVD<sup>51,52</sup>.

**4)** Indonesia and Thailand are again discussing ways to increase co-operation and information exchange on piracy. Both countries want to find ways not only to increase co-operation at sea but also in finding

the pirate bases<sup>53</sup>. Part of the wish to participate in the security arrangements is Thailand's concern that crime may increase in its waters as a result of the other countries' efforts. If Thailand should, for instance, join the Malsindo scheme it will set up a control post at Phuket. The current other control posts under the Malsindo scheme are: Batam, Lumut and Changi<sup>54</sup>. On September 3 it was reported that Thailand agreed to sign the [Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia \(ReCAAP\)](#) at a two-day meeting in Chiang Mai, Thailand<sup>55</sup>. Among other measures Thailand will donate 2 aircraft to join the coordinated patrols. This was reported on 8 September<sup>56</sup>.

**5)** Indonesia on 12 July began a three-month security operation in the Malacca Strait to combat piracy. The operation will also be expanded to waters near Aceh and the Singapore Strait. The operation is called Gurita (Octopus) and will involve 20 warships, 7 motor boats, 4 planes and 2 helicopters. The personnel involved will be from several relevant Indonesian security branches: marine and infantry battalions, navy frogmen, amphibious scouts and intelligence teams<sup>57,58,59</sup>. Antara - The Indonesian National News Agency, reported on 18 July that a new Indonesian maritime police unit will be established<sup>60</sup>. The unit is specifically intended to help fight pirates and kidnappers in the Malacca Straits. Similar units are announced for Sabah and Sarawak. Some of these units or other non-military agencies may be getting new patrol vessels at the end of the year. Japan has agreed to donate four vessels to increase security in the Malacca Strait on the condition that the vessels be used for non-military purposes in the Straits: to fight crime like piracy, illegal immigration, smuggling etc<sup>61</sup>.

Indonesia also reviewed the implementation of the Malsindo scheme operating since last year. Malsindo is the name for the co-ordinated patrol scheme between Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia to secure the Malacca Strait. Crime has apparently gone down in the Strait but a number of possible improvements have been identified which need to be addressed. The Malsindo scheme is also less successful than it could have been since the vessels in trouble usually first report problems to the ships companies instead of a Malsindo post. According to Col. Surya Wiranto this causes a significant delay in the response of the patrols. Also, the fact that there is no single command but three separate commands causes the patrols to work less effectively than they could<sup>62</sup>. According to the Antara News the

Indonesian Navy is going to install radars at nine locations along the Strait. This measure is intended strengthen security since the nine locations will also serve as security posts / reporting centres. Ship captains can report incidents or accidents easily this way and reports can be acted upon more quickly<sup>63</sup>.

**6)** The Times of India reports on joint exercises by the Indian Navy with Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia<sup>64</sup>. The first exercises started on July 18 with the Singapore Navy. Exercises with the Royal Malaysian Navy and the Indonesian Navy are next. The main aim is to improve interaction and co-operation between them in the fight against piracy. Also, better information exchange may increase chances to combat pirates and other criminals active in the region of the Malacca Strait and close to the Nicobar Islands, and Andaman Sea. In the Hindustan Times<sup>65</sup> it was reported on 30 September that India finished it's naval exercises with Indonesia and Thailand near the end of the Malacca Strait.

**7)** The Royal Malaysia Police has set up a marine police tactical unit according to the New Straits Times of July 16<sup>66</sup>. This unit currently consists of 30 officers. They have been trained to take action in the event of any attack on water regardless of whether the attackers are pirates or terrorists. The unit 15 patrol boats at it's disposal to get quickly to the crime scene. As soon as the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency is up and running the patrols boats will be transferred to this agency. Malaysia and the Philippines held a two-week exercise in Philippine waters starting on July 27. The joint exercise was called Malphi Laut 8/2005 and was intended to enhance co-operation and understanding between both nations and to boost their capacity to fight piracy, smuggling and other crimes<sup>67</sup>.

**8)** In a newspaper article in the Malaysia General News on 2 August<sup>68</sup> it is announced for the first time that the three littoral states are discussing ways to increase security in the Malacca Strait by using maritime patrol aircraft. The aircrafts will be used to complement the coordinated patrols currently used by all three states under the Malsindo agreement and is being called the "Eye in the Sky". Thailand also took part in the informal discussions on the "Eye in the Sky" plan. On the second day of the meeting the four countries agreed on setting up the coordinated air patrols which will begin in September<sup>69</sup>. It was also agreed that more reporting stations should be set up for vessels using the Strait. To

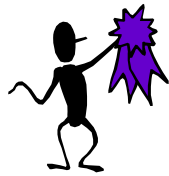
this end the Strait is divided into sectors. Each time a vessel sails from one sector into the next it has to report to the next reporting station<sup>70</sup>. Further discussions on the Malsindo scheme as well as the coordinated air patrols also concern the standard operating procedures and include discussions on the Exclusive Economic Zone and territorial boundaries between Indonesia and Malaysia. The disputes on maritime borders are important because they have been used in the past, by pirates, to attack ships and prevent capture. The use of aerial surveillance to combat and capture piracy was criticized by shipowner Alan Chan and Researcher Gerard Ong in a recent article in the Chirstian Science Monitor. If pirates use small vessels they will not be detected by high-flying planes and pirates attacking at night will also not be easy to detect by planes. The available equipment to effectively implement the patrols, is also insufficient<sup>71</sup>. I must say that I agree with their assessment but the future will show how effective the aerial patrols will be. On 8 September it was reported that the four nations (Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand) participating in the air patrols, will each donate 2 aircraft. The air patrols are to begin on 13 September. One representative of each of the four nations will be on board one of the vessels<sup>56</sup> on all flights that starts on this date.

To increase the effectiveness of the marine patrols Malaysia and Indonesia are reported to have reached an agreement concerning the right of hot pursuit and subsequent arrest of pirates. Both countries agreed that patrols vessels may pursue and arrest pirates up to 5 nautical miles (nm) into eachothers' waters. Between Singapore and Indonesia there currently exists only the right of pursuit (since 12 years) but no right of arrest<sup>72</sup>.

**9)** At the end of August the Royal Brunei Marine Police and the Royal Brunei Air Force held a joint exercise against piracy and armed robbery together with the Japan Coast Guard. This is the second time both Brunei and Japan hold an exercise together. It is intended to enhance co-operation between countries which both consider necessary to combat piracy and armed robbery in the area<sup>73</sup>. The Japan patrol ship Shikishima pretended to be the Juliet which was hijacked by pirates. Brunei patrol boats together with the Japan Coast Guard pursued the vessel and apprehended the pirates<sup>74</sup>.

**10)** At the end of the two-day meeting on security in the Malacca Strait and Singapore Strait it was announced that the Maritime

Electronic Highway Development (MEHD) project will be set up between 2005 and 2009. Financed by the World Bank, the project will be under the control of the littoral states Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. The project is aimed at increasing navigational safety, security and environmental protection of the straits. Officials of Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore all signed a Memorandum of Understanding with regard to the MEHD at the meeting. Using MEHD it will be easier to get real-time information on vessels in the Straits. The central base of operation will be Batam Island<sup>75,76,77</sup>.



### **Success against pirates:**

**1)** On 3 July the Indonesian tug Samudra Sindo VIII was towing the barge Aganda VII laden with 5,300mt of palm oil and was underway towards Pasir Gudang, Johor, when they were attacked by a gang of pirates. The gang of eight was armed with guns and parangs (= long knives) and attacked shortly after midnight. The barge was towed towards the South China Sea to the waiting tanker Palm Chem into which 3,000 tonnes of crude palm oil (CPO) was transferred. The tug and barge were let go on 4 July at 18:00 LT. The pirates left and Indonesian tanker Palm Chem disappeared. The Master and crew went to the authorities in Johor, Malaysia and reported the hijacking and theft of the cargo. The Royal Malaysian Police and the Indonesian Navy upon receiving the report immediately went in search of the Palm Chem. The tanker was discovered in Indonesian waters anchored 2.3 nautical miles off Tanjung Setapa in Pengerang at about 11.45 pm on 8 July. The Indonesian Navy held up the tanker and arrested the 21 Indonesian crew members aged from 21 to 48, including the captain and detained them at the Pengerang police station. Further investigations revealed that the the tanker was laden with 3,000 metric tonnes of CPO which were believed to have been siphoned from the barge. The Indonesian Navy Pursuit Team also arrested five individuals believed to have done the hijacking in raids conducted in Tanjung Pinang, Riau.<sup>33,12</sup>

**2)** On 9 August it was reported that the tug Care Play-14 or Fair Play was attacked at 8:00 am local time, while sailing off Kutubdia Island (Bangladesh) and towing the product tanker

Radwan which was to be scrapped. The pirates, armed with guns, boarded both vessels and started stealing ship's stores and other goods from both vessels. The crew of the tug managed to inform the Coast Guard about the attack through a wireless message. The coast guard immediately responded by sending the CGS Tauhid to the scene. The coast guard arrested the 41 pirates on board both vessels and later also captured the five fishing trawlers used by the pirate gang as well as the 10 pirates on board. The looted goods recovered, were: huge ropes, one refrigerator, and a rubber boat. The 51 pirates have been put on trial at a local court<sup>78,79,80,10</sup>.

**Date: 31 October 2005**

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