



International Chamber of Commerce

*The world business organization*



INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## **Media release: Piracy nearly double in first six months of 2009**

Kuala Lumpur, 15 July 2009 – Piracy attacks around the world more than doubled to 240 from 114 during the first six months of the year compared with the same period in 2008, the ICC International Maritime Bureau's Piracy Reporting Centre (IMB) said today.

"As in the last quarterly report, the rise in overall numbers is due almost entirely to increased Somali pirate activity off the Gulf of Aden and east coast of Somalia, with 86 and 44 incidents reported respectively," the report said.

The year's second quarter saw 136 reports of piracy compared with 104 in the first three months of 2009, an increase of almost a third.

A total of 78 vessels were boarded worldwide, 75 vessels fired upon and 31 vessels hijacked with some 561 crew taken hostage, 19 injured, seven kidnapped, six killed and eight missing. The attackers were heavily armed with guns and knives in the majority of incidents. "Violence against crew members continues to increase," the report concluded.

Nevertheless, the presence of navies in the Gulf of Aden from several countries have made it difficult for pirates to hijack vessels and has led them to seek new areas of operation such as the southern Red Sea and the east coast of Oman, where Somali pirates are believed to be responsible for a spate of recent attacks.

The report said that attacks off the eastern coast of Somalia had decreased in recent months after peaking in March and April, with no attacks reported in June. But the Piracy Reporting Centre attributed the decline to heavy weather associated with the monsoons that are expected to continue into August. The centre said vigilance should nevertheless remain high during this period.

Nigeria continues to be a high risk area, with 13 incidents reported in the second quarter to the IMB and at least 24 other attacks which have not been directly reported.

"The majority of attacks are against vessels supporting the oil industry," remarked IMB Director Pottengal Mukundan. "There is a need for every incident to be reported and brought to the attention of the Nigerian authorities. This is the only way in which the true risk associated to the area can be determined and accurate advice be given to shipmasters, owners and traders."

Attacks in Southeast Asia and the Far East increased 100%, from 10 in the first quarter to 21 in the second quarter, confirming a similar trend seen in 2008, with the difference being that the attacks in the first quarter were against vessels at anchor, while during the second quarter they were against vessels at sea.

"This is a clear indication that piracy and robbery in Southeast and East Asia has the potential to escalate and shipmasters should remain alert and be aware of the risks involved in the seaway and ports transited during the voyage," Captain Mukundan said.

Two incidents have been recorded for the Malacca Straits in 2009, although none were reported for the second quarter. In Indonesia the second quarter saw only two incidents compared with six in the corresponding period last year. "The continued efforts of Indonesian authorities should be noted for bringing piracy and armed robbery down in their waters," the report said.

### **International Chamber of Commerce**

38 Cours Albert 1er, 75008 Paris, France

Tel +33 (0)1 49 53 28 28 Fax +33 (0)1 49 53 29 42

E-mail [icc@iccwbo.org](mailto:icc@iccwbo.org) Website [www.iccwbo.org](http://www.iccwbo.org)

“Regardless of the location, enhanced reporting to independent organizations such as the IMB is the key to identifying the piracy hotspots worldwide,” Captain Mukundan said. “Awareness can be raised and by providing meaningful reports to governments and law enforcement agencies, the necessary resources devoted to effectively deal with the problem.”

To request a PDF version of the report by email, please visit the following link where the 2009 attacks may also be viewed on the IMB Live Piracy Map

[http://www.icc-ccs.org.uk/prc/piracy\\_rep\\_app.php](http://www.icc-ccs.org.uk/prc/piracy_rep_app.php)

The IMB is part of ICC Commercial Crime Services, which is a specialized division of the International Chamber of Commerce, the world business organization.

For further information, please contact:

**Captain Pottengal Mukundan**

**IMB Director**

Tel: +44 20 7423 6960

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A world network of national committees keeps the ICC International Secretariat in Paris informed about national and regional business priorities. More than 2,000 experts drawn from ICC’s member companies feed their knowledge and experience into crafting the ICC stance on specific business issues.

The United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and many other intergovernmental bodies, both international and regional, are kept in touch with the views of international business through ICC.

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