

AN OVERVIEW OF PIRACY IN HORN OF AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

In this article it is intended to present the maritime security and piracy activities in the Horn of Africa and the Gulf of Aden strategic water passage. In the process of the study news outlets and other secondary works are used to produce a new insight about the piracy of the Horn of Africa and the Gulf region. The study identified that maritime piracy is an age old incident and existed as long as ships have gone to sea. Maritime hijacking or robbery become an increasing burning issue right through the world and the figure of pirate hijacking has been increasing since the early 1980's and late 1990s. Worldwide and all-inclusive pirate attack augmented dramatically from 2005 throughout 2008. During this period the share of pirate attack in the Horn of Africa was the largest in the entire globe. Pirates blocked ships to Somalia cost and hold the hijacked people to hostage using automatic machine guns.

Keywords: Piracy, Horn of Africa, Maritime, Ships, Gulf of Aden

ÖZET

Bu makalede, Afrika Boynuzu ve Aden Körfezi stratejik su geçişinde deniz güvenliği ve korsanlık faaliyetlerinin sunulması amaçlanmaktadır. Çalışma sürecinde, Afrika Boynuzu ve Körfez bölgesi korsanlığı hakkında yeni bir fikir üretmek için haber merkezleri ve diğer ikincil eserler kullanılmaktadır. Çalışma, deniz korsanlığının çok eski bir olay olduğunu ve gemilerin denize gittiği sürece var olduğunu tespit etti. Deniz kaçırma veya soygun dünya çapında giderek artan bir yanma konusu haline geldi ve korsan kaçırma rakamı 1980'lerin başından ve 1990'ların sonlarından bu yana artmaktadır. Dünya çapında ve her şey dahil korsan saldırısı, 2005'ten 2008'e kadar çarpıcı bir şekilde arttı. Bu dönemde Afrika Boynuzundaki korsan saldırısının payı tüm dünyadaki en büyük saldırı oldu. Korsanlar Somali'ye giden gemileri engelledi ve kaçırılan insanları otomatik makineli tüfekler kullanarak rehin tuttu.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Korsanlık, Afrika Boynuzu, Denizcilik, Gemiler, Aden Körfezi

1. INTRODUCTION

The Horn of Africa is one of those strategically important regions for its proximity to the oil rich Gulf countries. Commonly speaking states that categorized under the Horn of Africa includes countries such as Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia. The African Horn region covers just about 2,000,000km² (772, 200 square miles). The region of the Horn is inhabited by more than 120 million peoples. The maritime territory (domain) of the Horn of Africa stretches along the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden bordering on the narrow strait of Babel-Maneb and the important water passage, Red sea stretching northwards towards the important water ways of the Suez canal, which connect Asia and Europe through Red sea (Freedom Onuoha and G.E.Ezirim, 2010 :47). Particularly, the Gulf of Aden is a very important seagoing route, which a number of ships sail before passing through the strategic water way of the, Red sea and Suez Canal (Ploch Lauren, Blanchard Christopher M. and et al, 2009:10).

The waters of the African Horn are strategically an important water way for maritime transportation of the global commerce. Particularly its importance is increased because of the strategic layout and proximity of the zone to the oil rich Persian Gulf belt, which comprises almost half of the world's oil demand. Accordingly, around 12 percent of the petroleum for the international community conveyed through Gulf of Aden, which is found in the Horn of Africa (Freedom C. Onuoha, 2010:137). From countries of the Horn of Africa Somalia is very important in its strategic location with 3,025 kilometers stretches of costal line. Because the Northern costal line of Somalia is found to the Southern side of Gulf of Aden, which is a very important water way for ships conveying to and from the Red sea. For instance, in 2006, it was estimated that 3.3 million containers of oil conveyed between the, Gulf of Aden and Red Sea per day (Ibid:138). On the other hand, the Indian ocean south east shoreline of Somalia is also important strategic area for ships making long journey through the cape of Good Hope and for the trade activity between Asia

and East Africa (Theo Neethling, 2010 :95). However, this strategic water way gradually becomes the most dangerous area of pirate attack, particularly from 2005- 2009 piracy in the region rich at its high. And this makes this vital water way the world's most dangerous water root in terms of pirate attacks (Freedom Onuoha and G.E.Ezirim, 2010: 43). For instance, in 2008 alone around 293 incidents of piracy were registered all over the world from these 109 cases were in Africa out of these the share of the Horn of Africa region were 111, which makes the region the world's largest pirate incidence registered area. Moreover, in 2009 there were a total of 306 pirate attack that registered in the world within nine months, out of these 168 were on the water of the Horn of Africa, which means more than half of the attack were registered in this region (Freedom C.Onuoha, 2010 :138-139). The intensification of piracy in the Horn of Africa is mainly because of the anarchy in Somalia. In addition, the technological advancement, the process of globalization, and the illegal sophisticated weapons which the pirates get through Somalia violating the 1992 United Nations embargo on arms in to Somalia also add fuel for the sustained expansion of piracy in the region (United States National Security Council, 2008 :5).



Somali pirates : source: <http://somalianpirate.org/> retrieved 02/04/2020

Unlike pirate attacks in other areas like Malacca straits (area between Indonesia and Malaysia) the pirate assaults in the African Horn target large vessels, bulk shippers (often transport coal and Iron ore) and tanker ships (transport petroleum, chemical and crude oil) on international voyages are most targeted than smaller vessels on shorter journeys (Alexa K. Sullivan, 2010: 3-4).

In addition, pirates in the Horn of Africa are not engrossed in selling cargo on the ship or use the vessel or boat for further service. Rather they need ransom payment for the release of the ship, its cargo and crew (Sam Bateman, 2010: 16). As a result of the development of the process of globalization, there is growth in sea borne trade activity because globalization creates a variety of trans-boundary instruments for interactions that touch and contribute for the acceleration of economic, political, and security interconnection or tie-in among group that live in different corners of the world (Sean Key, 2004: 10).

The idea of globalization includes a bunch of correlated changes like economic, conceptual, moral, philosophical, ideological, technological, and cultural. In the economic area the change that stem because of globalization is the internationalization of production and great increment of mobility of capital and international corporations which lays the ground for the boosting, widening and intensification of economic interdependence among countries and peoples of the world. In addition, the economic manifestation of globalization include inter penetration of industries across countries, the spread of financial markets, intensification of similar goods across nations and mass mobility of population from one part of world to the other (Freedom C.Onuoha, 2010:134).

The ideological changes that are caused because of globalization include investment; money making, profit making and trade liberalization, trade privatization, and the implementation of liberal political democracy are the most common one. Regarding technological change globalization plays pivotal role in shrinking the world using communication technologies. On cultural changes globalization is pushing the world towards homogenization of culture in every parts of the globe (Ibid:135).

2. GLOBALIZATION AND THE OUTBREAK OF PIRACY IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

In the 21st century Sea piracy is one of serious and ongoing global problem which affect the interdependent and interconnected global community because if the world's oceans are not safe, harmless, and protected for maritime business the economic activity cannot easily function (United States National Security Council, 2008:4). In the world one of the most important water for global commerce is the water of the Horn of Africa. But this water way is growing dangerous since 2005 mainly because of the growing piracy in the region (Freedom Onuoha and G.E.Ezirim, 2010: 43).

The intensification of piracy in the region of the African is mainly related with the absence of government in Somalia since the abdication of Said Barye in 1991. This absence of strong and functional government in Somalia laid the ground to the emergence of armed chieftains and armed militias that actively involve on hijacking mother ships. These different faction groups in Somalia divided the cost line of the country under their spheres of influence and engross in piracy or make available information, protection, shelter, and support to illicit gangs on the international water (Freedom C.Onuoha, 2010:141). Pirate attacks in the African Horn is mainly launched from the port town of Caluula, Eyl, Hobyo, and Haradheers, which are found along the Indian ocean cost of Somalia and Punt land (United States National Security Council, 2008:5).

On the top of this, globalization has also bequest a fertile ground to the continuation and fruitfulness of sea piracy in the Horn of Africa region in the following ways: First the increment of commercial maritime traffic, this day, it is estimated that over 80 percent of the global trade conducted on the international water using cargo and bulk carrier ships. And at any time, it is estimated that up to 15 million container ships are navigating on the international water. The growth of global commerce and the increment of ships forced ships to reduce its speed while passing through important "choke points" like Babel – Mandab and the Suez Canal mainly to avoid accidents. This reduction of speed exposed ships to mid –sea interception and attack by pirate (Freedom C.Onuoha, 2010:142).

The other is the advancement of technology like GPS, Internet and Satellite phone that enhanced globalization and have value to facilitate the rapid growth of global crime such as sea piracy. Besides, there is the globalization of arms. The globalization process which facilitate the movement of goods and peoples from place to place also contribute for easy circulation of arms, which have value for sea piracy and maritime terrorism (Alex K.Sullivan, 2010: 6). The zone of the African Horn is one of the areas in the sphere which illegal circulation and use of arms and weapons are common. Consequently the highest pirate attack in the world is mostly registered in this region (Freedom C.Onuoha, 2010:148).



Source:<https://www.voanews.com/africa/officials-somali-pirates-hijack-oil-tanker-indian-ocean> retrieved 03/03/2020

3. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TECHNOLOGY GLOBALIZATION AND PIRACY

Globalization means the closer integration, connection, acquaintance, and interdependence of countries and people all over the globe. It is the product and results of influences like reduced trade barriers, lesser transportation and communication costs, augmented movements of capital, knowledge, technology, culture and people across countries. Globalization is enhanced by several reasons; the most important among them is technology and technological advancement. The great advancement and application of technology plays significant role in changing people's way of live. The globalization of information and communication technology like internet, GPS and satellite phones also contribute for the intensification of piracy on the water of the Horn of African and other parts of the world (Ibid:142).

Currently technology and globalization are creating a mutually reinforcing cycle. Because technology lays the ground for the intensification of globalization as well globalization makes technology more profitable. This means, Technology is a means for the expansion of international trade, and the interdependence of the international community facilitates globalization, which is mainly fueled by technology and products of technology. But sometimes it is seen that technology is hindering international trade by contributing to piracy, and this affect the economic interdependence of the world through trade and this using of technology by pirate may led to de globalization of trade affecting the 80 percent trade activity on the international water. Thus the advancement of technology has created opportunities from the empowerment and intensification of piracy in the Horn of Africa and other corners of the world (Alex K.Sullivan, 2010: 6).

4. THE IMPACTS OF GROWING PIRACY ON AFRICAN HORN

Pirate assaults of the Horn of Africa have destructive impact on the economy, humanitarian, environmental, psychological, and security of the world in general. Pirate attack on the international water increase the burdens and operating costs of maritime industry to protect ships and its passenger from attacks. Some of the steps taken to save ships and its team from attack are rerouting ships by passing the Gulf of Aden, hiring private security guards, and paying higher insurance for insurance campaniles (Freedom C.Onuoha, 2010:148).

Pirate attacks on the international water of the Horn of Africa are a big danger to one of the most essential maritime courses in the globe. On the maritime route of the Horn of Africa monthly approximately between 1,700 and 2,000 ships pass through the Suzie canal. This means 60 ships every 24 hours and 7 percent of world's maritime transports pass through this vital maritime root (Laris Bangert, 2009:9).

On the top of this, pirate attacks of the Horn of Africa are also a threat and risk to the lives and well-being of citizens and sea farers of many nations. It is estimated virtually 12 percent of the world's petroleum transported through the maritime root of the African Horn mainly because of its proximity to the oil reach Persian Gulf. And a single pirate assault disturbs the interests of the ship owners, cargo owners, destination state, regional coastal states, and the flag stats of passengers on the ship taken hostage (United States National Security Council, 2008: 4).

Moreover, pirate attack affect the international sea line of communication, undermine the interests of Horn countries and Egypt; cause a rise in maritime insurance and protection rates; cause a escalation of cargo costs; upturn the risk of environmental damage; seafarers killed, injured or taken hostage for ransom payment and the yield and vintage from piracy in turn enable the different factions in Somalia to sustain (Laris Bangert, 2009: 9). Besides, the criminal act of pirate on the water of the Horn of Africa affect the coming of humanitarian aid to the region and other parts of the world which might lead to the rise of food and expansion of disease because of male nutrition (Freedom C.Onuoha, 2010:146).

Pirate attacks of the Horn of Africa might force ship-owners to avoid navigating through the Gulf of Aden and Suzie canal and use the root via the Cape of Good Hope. But seafaring through the southern tip of Africa means; a more extended and longer transport time and cost that increased prices on consumers; increased pressure on the environment (Theo Neethling, 2010: 96). For instance, transporting a tanker from Saudi Arabia to United States of America via the southern tip of Africa adds nearly 2,700 miles to the journey and this increment of distance in turn affect the cost of commodity, and the time for the trip. On the other hand, navigating through the Gulf of Aden causes additional cost for better security of the ships against attack and payment of high insurance for insurance companies (Freedom C.Onuoha, 2010:144).

5. EFFORTS AGAINST THE PIRATES OF THE HORN OF AFRICA

In an era of globalization economic interaction and interdependence become possible largely by maritime shipping and sea transportation, which serves as a “pillar” of world trade. But this vital means of communication and transportation face problem of piracy in the Horn of Africa in particular and the world too. To reverse the complication of piracy in the region the coordinated efforts and actions of states, international organization, and industry are needed (United States National Security Council, 2008: 7).

Waters of the Horn of Africa are strategic for the commerce of the international community. But because of the growing piracy in the region this vital water way becomes dangerous for merchant ship transportation in the region. As a result states that their interests are undermined by the intensification of piracy in the region has deployed their navies to enhance the maritime security of the region (Freedom Onuoha and G.E.Ezirim, 2010: 43).

The deployment and setting out of foreign navies to watch the area is attempted to guarantee the safety of merchant ship navigating along the waters of the Horn of Africa (Ibid: 50). For instance, warships from EU, NATO, Russia, India, China, USA and other countries are now patrolling the waters of the Horn of Africa to fight against the piracy in the region. The involvements of foreign powers warships reflects that the pirates operations have become an international or global phenomenon and how serious the problem of piracy in the region (Laris Bangert, 2009: 10). In addition to the patrol using warships from different countries and international organization, there are other counter measures against the piracy of the Horn of Africa. These include rerouting, increasing insurance coverage and arming ships with security teams (Alex K.Sullivan, 2010: 7).

On the other hand, deploying warships to counter piracy of the African Horn may also serve as an opportunity to attain the foreign policy objective of countries. The Horn of Africa is also politically unstable but strategically important this all are mainly because of its proximity to the oil rich Persian Gulf. Therefore, many countries in particular those great powers need to establish their permanent base in the region under the banner of fighting sea piracy mainly to use the strategic significance of the region (Sam Bateman, 2010: 20). France and United States of America already have naval basis in the Horn of Africa and after the intensification of piracy in the region since 2005 the Chain’s government has been working to establish a permanent and stable security base in the Gulf of Aden under the banner of supporting anti – piracy operations in the region (Ibid).

6. CONCLUSION

The piracy of the Horn of Africa, which is operated mainly from the well-equipped, well empowered, well-fortified and well- armed bases of the Indian Ocean coast affect the sea trade activity on one of the world’s most strategic water way of the Gulf of Aden. The pirate attack in the waters of the Horn of Africa is one of the largest in the world mainly because of the existence of the lawless Somalia state along the Indian Ocean coast; the proximity of the area to the oil rich Persian Gulf; and the intensification of sophisticated technology and weapons because of globalization. Furthermore, a situation of conflict in Somalia created a conducive environment for violence in the maritime context of the region. On the other hand, since the water of the Horn of Africa is one of the most important and vital for the global commerce of the international community, countries like China, India, USA, France, Russia and the like have been working in anti-piracy operation.

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