

THREAT / RISK SECURITY & SAFETY WEEKLY BULLETIN (brief assessment)

July 14 to 21

Brief Update: No 10-4/2026

Date: July 21, 2026

In references to:

- [THREAT / RISK SECURITY & SAFETY ASSESSMENT MONTHLY REPORT 10-1/2026, June 29.2026](#)
- [THREAT / RISK SECURITY & SAFETY BULLETIN \(Brief Assessment\), 10-2, July 07, 2026](#)
- [THREAT / RISK SECURITY & SAFETY WEEKLY BULLETIN \(brief assessment\), 10-3, July 13, 2026](#)

INSIDE

➤ Outlooks regarding security in the Horn of Africa and Red Sea region remain ambivalent. Increasing involvement of Egypt in areas bordering Somalia and the Red Sea brings both the potential for deterrence as well as for escalation, whereas efforts by Somaliland to reach out and new transit links under development, contribute towards additional governance progress in important transit areas. Careful re-entry into the Suez route by Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd shows greater optimism in the use of the Red Sea route.

News finds this week (top three most important)

- **Escalating US–Iran clashes**, including strikes linked to the Jordan attack and Chabahar, sharply increase threat levels to Gulf energy sites, traffic through Hormuz and US military infrastructure in the Middle East.
- **Houthi attacks on Saudi targets** and drones on Black Sea oil export infrastructure heighten risks to key tanker routes and further tighten energy markets.
- **Cautious carrier returns to Suez**, alongside Arctic technology pressure and competition, are reshaping routing options but creating new geopolitical and technical chokepoints.

Corporate conclusions

- Threats to regional security and commerce are growing due to increased US-Iranian rivalry, attacks against key export channels for energy, and great power competition for critical shipping channels and technology.

The observer

- According to the observer, the coming week should see high and unstable risks in the vicinity of key Middle Eastern bottlenecks, with no safe routes possible via Hormuz and the Red Sea.
- The current confrontation among the US, Iran, and their allies makes it quite possible that there will be further missile and drone attacks, or even harassment of shipping by any of these parties.
- In addition, the Somali piracy potentially used as a political tool for further pressure to global commerce, will complicate matters further, creating another level of danger in the region.



Tuesday, July 21, 2026

MARITIME SECURITY & NAVIGATIONAL SAFETY INCIDENTS

SOURCE / I.D	DATE	TYPE	SECURITY/SAFETY AREA
SG R&I REPORT 013-26	July 14, 2026	Military Attack / Life losses	Black Sea / Odessa approaches
SG R&I REPORT 014-26	July 14, 2026	Military Attack / Life losses	Black Sea / Odessa approaches
UKMTO WARNING 89-26	July 15, 2026	Military Attack (assumed)	Northern Persian Gulf / IRAN
UKMTO WARNING 86&87-26 / MSCIO ALERT 76&77-26	July 16, 2026	Military Attack	Strait of Hormuz
UKMTO WARNING 88-26	July 16, 2026	Military Attack	Strait of Hormuz
UKMTO WARNING 91-26	July 16, 2026	Military Attack (assumed)	Arabian Sea (SE East of Oman) Coordinates: 19.643333N, 59.491944E
UKMTO WARNING 90-26 MSCIO ALERT 78-26 (CT ASANA)	July 17, 2026	Piracy / Hijacking	Gulf of Aden (center) Coordinates: 13.447500N, 49.164167E
SG R&I REPORT 015-26 (MT NORDIC ZENITH)	July 17, 2026	Military Attack	Black Sea / Novorossiysk CPC
SG R&I REPORT 016-26 (MV GOLDEN LEO)	July 19, 2026	Military Attack	Black Sea / Odessa port approaches
UKMTO WARNING 092-26	July 19, 2026	Military Attack	Strait of Hormuz

Week's new findings

ARCTIC CYCLE / BALTIC SEA

Chart 1



▲ On July 15, [Svalbard islands, a Norwegian Arctic territory](#), are drawing growing attention from China and Russia due to its strategic location and natural resources. While the islands remain an international hub for scientific research under a 1920 treaty, rising geopolitical competition and Norway's plans for Arctic seabed mining could increase their importance in global trade and security. (PROVIDE CHART) --->INFO SECTOR: ECONOMIC AND RESOURCES PERFORMANCE / RESTRAINS

▲ On July 17, [Russia has increased military activity near NATO's eastern borders](#), with repeated aircraft interceptions over the Baltic Sea prompting concerns among European leaders. NATO members are strengthening defenses and warning of potential Russian provocations, sabotage, and hybrid attacks across the region. --->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS – TERRORISM

▲ On July 17, [China has reportedly withheld critical marine technology needed](#) for Russia's Arctic-class vessels, disrupting Russia's Northern Sea Route expansion and effectively aligning with Western sanctions. The shortage of key ship components has delayed Russia's Arctic shipping ambitions, forcing the government to lower its cargo targets while highlighting growing economic and strategic tensions between Moscow and Beijing. --->INFO SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES

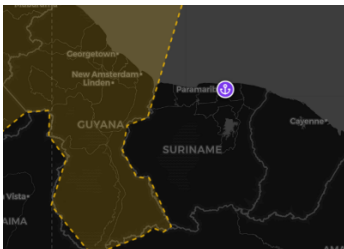
▲ On July 18, [a new poll shows that, for the first time since 2014](#), a majority of Poles oppose accepting Ukrainian refugees, with 52% against and 42% in favor. The survey also found growing support for limiting benefits for Ukrainian refugees. --->INFO SECTOR: POLITICAL

BRIEF ASSESSMENT / CONCLUSIONS

▲ The Arctic cycle east sector / up North Sea route is an area where, at most, Europe, Russia, and China will compete and race for its control. This combination creates a scenario of a gradual increase in the risk environment of the Arctic-Baltic-EU region: Politics of natural resources of the Svalbard islands, Russian air pressure over the Baltic, Chinese technological pressure over Russia in the Arctic, and Polish tiredness from Ukrainian refugees, increase tensions in their respective sectors without creating a major immediate security shock.

SOUTH AMERICA – NW AFRICA / LIBYA

Chart 2



▲ On July 14, [the Trump administration is promoting a power-sharing agreement between Libya's rival leaders](#), Khalifa Haftar and Abdul Hamid al-Dbeibah, to reunify the country and restore stability. Critics warn the plan could weaken the UN-backed electoral process, entrench existing elites, and increase the risk of renewed political and security tensions despite potential gains in governance and energy investment. --->INFO SECTOR: POLITICAL

▲ On July 17, [Guyana declared nearly 240,000 ounces of gold output in the first half of 2026](#), meeting its mid-year target for the first time in nine years. The increase was driven by stricter anti-smuggling measures and mining sector reforms, supporting government revenues and reinforcing gold's key role in the country's non-oil economy. --->INFO SECTOR: ECONOMIC AND RESOURCES PERFORMANCE / RESTRAINS

▲ On July 18, [Lawyers reported technical glitches, alleged voter disenfranchisement, and low turnout in the 2026 Nigerian Bar Association-NBA elections](#) (Nigeria's foremost and oldest professional membership organization and Africa's most influential network of legal practitioners), after a cyberattack delayed voting. While some experienced smooth voting later, the NBA Electoral Committee apologized and said the election remains secure and credible. --->INFO SECTOR: POLITICAL

▲ On July 19, 2026 [Libya and China have agreed to connect Libyan commercial banks](#) to China's Cross-Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS), enabling faster yuan-denominated payments and easier trade. The agreement also supports direct money transfers, letters of credit through Chinese banks, and closer banking cooperation to boost trade and modernize Libya's financial system. --->INFO SECTOR: ECONOMIC AND RESOURCES PERFORMANCE / RESTRAINS

▲ On July 20, 2026 [at least 930 people have died in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's Ebola outbreak](#), with 2,344 confirmed cases. The outbreak is the fastest-growing on record, and there is currently no approved vaccine or treatment for the Bundibugyo virus. --->INFO SECTOR: NAVIGATIONAL SAFETY / ENVIRONMENTAL

BRIEF ASSESSMENT / CONCLUSIONS

▲ Libya's political engineering, Guyana's gold-driven fiscal gains, cyber-affected elections, Libya-China financial integration, and the severe DRC Ebola outbreak together indicate a mixed picture of short-term stability efforts and economic progress overshadowed by governance fragilities and escalating health risks, that could quickly translate into wider regional and operational / safety disruptions.

BLACK SEA – EAST MEDITERRANEAN

Chart 3



▲ On July 14, [Türkiye sent a naval delegation to Syria's Port of Latakia](#) to strengthen naval cooperation, support the restructuring of the Syrian Armed Forces, and deepen bilateral military coordination, highlighting expanding defense ties between the two countries. --->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS - TERRORISM



▲ On July 15, [the United States have committed to easing export restrictions on Syria](#) following the start of the process to remove it from the list of state sponsors of terrorism. The move is expected to allow U.S. companies to resume exports and investments in Syria, potentially accelerating economic recovery and strengthening bilateral economic relations, once congressional review is completed. --->INFO SECTOR: ECONOMIC AND RESOURCES PERFORMANCE / RESTRAINS



▲ On July 17, [Defense Minister Israel Katz said Israel will keep its forces](#) in the security zones in Lebanon, Syria, and Gaza, despite reports that US President Donald Trump urged Israel to withdraw from Syria and Lebanon. - -->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS - TERRORISM



▲ On July 17, [Turkmenistan is in talks to build a dedicated cargo terminal on Georgia's Black Sea coast](#) to strengthen transport and trade links. The announcement came during President Serdar Berdimuhamedov's visit to Georgia, where both countries discussed expanding economic & investment cooperation. --->INFO SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES



▲ On July 18, [Lebanese President Joseph Aoun traveled to Washington, D.C.](#), for talks with U.S. President Donald Trump on strengthening the Israel-Lebanon ceasefire, securing Israel's withdrawal from occupied Lebanese territory, and expanding state authority. The visit follows recent U.S.-mediated negotiations between Lebanon and Israel. --->INFO SECTOR: POLITICAL



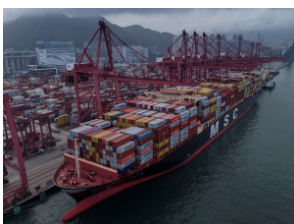
▲ On July 20, [Russia launched major missile and drone attacks across Ukraine](#), killing at least eight people, while Ukraine said a strike on a civilian cargo ship killed five crew members. Ukraine responded by targeting Russian oil and fuel facilities. --->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS - TERRORISM

BRIEF ASSESSMENT / CONCLUSIONS

▲ There is an incremental tension amid regional dynamics in managed diplomacy, where involvement of the United States with Syria and Lebanon, Turkey's naval collaboration with Syria, and transit routes between Turkmenistan and Georgia, attempts to stabilize and rewire the region's economic and security connections. From the other hand Israel's insistence on maintaining its security zones and ongoing high-intensity Russian attacks against Ukraine continue to maintain volatility within the region.

RED SEA – GULF OF ADEN

Chart 4



▲ On July 15, [Global container freight rates continue to rise due](#) to geopolitical instability, strong seasonal demand, and capacity constraints, with the Middle East, Red Sea, and Suez Canal remaining key sources of disruption. While a gradual return to normal transit through the Suez Canal could reduce transit times, a rapid normalization risks creating severe port congestion, supply chain disruptions, and volatile freight rates through the second half of 2026. --->INFO SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES



▲ On July 15, [the UN has warned that Sudan's commodities trade, including gum Arabic, gold, and livestock](#), is helping finance the ongoing conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the RSF. The organization called for stronger oversight of supply chains and trade routes to prevent revenues from fueling the war and worsening the country's humanitarian crisis. --->INFO SECTOR: ECONOMIC AND RESOURCES PERFORMANCE / RESTRAINS

▲ On July 14, [Egypt has expanded maritime and security cooperation with Somalia, Eritrea, and Djibouti](#), strengthening its influence over key Red Sea trade routes linked to Ethiopia. The strategy is widely viewed as increasing geopolitical pressure on Ethiopia by enhancing Egypt's regional presence and influence over critical maritime corridors. --->INFO SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES

▲ On July 16, [renewed Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia have increased regional tensions and placed Pakistan](#) in a difficult position due to its close security ties with Riyadh and its efforts to maintain diplomatic engagement with Iran. The escalation raises the risk of Islamabad being drawn into a broader regional conflict. --->INFO SECTOR: POLITICAL

▲ On July 16, [Somaliland has intensified its lobbying efforts in Washington](#), promoting itself as a stable and democratic security partner despite lacking international recognition. The campaign highlights the strategic value of Berbera Port and seeks deeper U.S. security, economic, and diplomatic cooperation, potentially strengthening maritime security and U.S. influence in the Horn of Africa. --->INFO SECTOR: POLITICAL

▲ On July 17, [Jordan condemned Iran's attacks on the Kingdom and Gulf states](#), reaffirming that US forces in Jordan are present under a defense agreement focused on counterterrorism. It also called for diplomacy and respect for sovereignty to ease regional tensions. --->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS – TERRORISM

BRIEF ASSESSMENT / CONCLUSIONS

▲ The general picture depicts a continued vulnerability within critical transport corridors. This fact creates high and unpredictable prices for container vessels and disruptions in Red Sea and Suez passages. Funding wars through Sudanese raw materials and Egypt's efforts for stronger control over the Red Sea passages, contribute to increased geopolitical pressure on chokepoints. In contrast, local attacks and lobbying (Houthis–Saudi Arabia, Iran–Jordan, Somaliland–United States) create an unpredictable security landscape, that it will take time for a balance of powers.

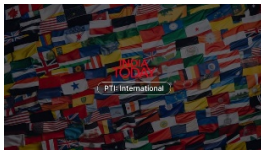
PERSIAN GULF – ARABIC SEA

Chart 5



▲ On July 17, [shipping through the Strait of Hormuz fell to its lowest level since May](#), with only three commodity vessels crossing, as strikes between the U.S. and Iran intensified. The disruption has raised concerns over global energy supplies and pushed oil prices higher amid threats to key shipping routes. --->INFO SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES

▲ On July 17, [the US said it destroyed an Iranian naval observation tower at Chabahar port](#), saying it was used by the Revolutionary Guard to monitor shipping and coordinate attacks in Hormuz Straights. Strikes are part of the ongoing US operations to protect freedom of navigation amid escalating tensions with Iran. (provide chart) --->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS - TERRORISM



- ▲ On July 19, [the US launched fresh airstrikes on Iran after an Iranian attack on a US base in Jordan](#) killing three American militaries and injuring four others. The strikes targeted military sites, while Iran suspended its commitments under a recent interim agreement as both sides continued exchanging attacks, escalating tensions across the Middle East. --->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS – TERRORISM



BRIEF ASSESSMENT / CONCLUSIONS

- ▲ Escalation between the US and Iran is already having an impact on Hormuz trade, with threats against the surveillance systems and retaliatory air strikes demonstrating a return to overt conflict in which global shipping and oil markets remain vulnerable to disruption.
- ▲ To sum up, the war on this current stage creates losses to maritime society, crews, and ships, as in practice two forces are competing for control by implementing different rules for passage through the Hormuz Straits, while Iran's reactions are at most attacks on merchant vessels by ballistic missiles. It seems that the situation is worse compared to the situation before the latest "ceasefire/truce," which has been broken. But the most dangerous situation could ensue from the active involvement of other Persian Gulf states in the war, rather than the simple defense actions to resist Iran's ballistic missile hits amid the new escalation between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis, with Iranian officers having already positioned themselves in Yemen with no clear information about their mission.

EAST ASIA – MALACCA STRAIT / TAIWAN

Chart 6



- ▲ On July 16, [Indonesia and Saudi Arabia agreed to expand transport cooperation covering aviation](#), maritime, rail, logistics, and workforce development. The deal aims to improve connectivity, increase flight links, support infrastructure investment, and strengthen strategic ties between Southeast Asia and the Gulf. --->INFO SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES



- ▲ On July 16, [Taiwanese drone makers signed three cooperation agreements with Japanese](#) partners to develop aerial logistics, advanced air mobility, and training systems. The partnership aims to strengthen the non-China drone supply chain, accelerate commercial deployment, and deepen Taiwan-Japan technology cooperation. --->INFO SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES



- ▲ On July 17, [Papua New Guinea announced it will close Taiwan's representative office to strengthen ties with China](#), though Taiwan said its office will continue operating while it seeks clarification. The move highlights ongoing diplomatic competition between China and Taiwan in the Pacific region. --->INFO SECTOR: POLITICAL

BRIEF ASSESSMENT / CONCLUSIONS

- ▲ The cooperation between Indonesia and Saudi Arabia on matters relating to transportation and that of Taiwan and Japan on drones shows an evolving strengthening and diversification of connectivity and technology chains that do not depend on China. The fact that China refused to provide Russia with vital Arctic-class marine technology and that Papua New Guinea is now tilting towards Beijing from Taiwan, shows an evolving redistribution of power in sea-lane politics.



SEA GUARDIAN overall conclusions

- ▲ **POLITICAL:** Power balances are fluid, with elite deals, recognition contests, and shifting public attitudes making alliance patterns and guarantees less predictable in several regions. The world is turning from a monopolar rules based international order established in 1990-91, to a multipolar bilateral based world around the three major Nation States, USA, China and Russia.
- ▲ **ECONOMIC AND RESOURCES PERFORMANCE/RESTRAINTS:** Re-opening of sanctioned economies, reliance on extractives, and new Arctic projects widen supply options but keep fiscal and regulatory risks high.
- ▲ **MILITARY/PARAMILITARY OPERATIONS – TERRORISM:** Escalating US–Iran, Houthi–Saudi, and Russia–NATO moves, plus new deployments in the Levant and Horn, raise the likelihood of limited strikes on infrastructure. At the same time competition in the Pacific and around Taiwan is rising steadily.
- ▲ **PIRACY/ORGANIZED CRIME/BOARDING CONDITIONS:** No new major piracy incidents reported, but conflict-adjacent waters and stressed ports remain structurally vulnerable to opportunistic boarding and intimidation.
- ▲ **HIJACKING/KIDNAPPING & SMALL ARMS FIRING:** Kidnapping and small-arms risks persist in parts of Africa and the Middle East, particularly around conflict zones and insecure overland approaches to ports.
- ▲ **TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES:** Suez and Malacca are stabilizing, but Hormuz, the Red Sea, Black Sea, and Arctic lanes face heightened disruption risks from conflict, drones, and technology constraints. At the same time investments in port infrastructure and hydrocarbons facilities on the Libyan coastline are accelerating to cover the deficit of hydrocarbons coming from the Persian Gulf.
- ▲ **SMUGGLING - CARGO THEFTS / STOWAWAYS / PORT CRIMES:** No specific new cases, yet congestion, sanctions-evasion networks, and contested hubs sustain elevated exposure to smuggling and port-side crime.
- ▲ **GNSS / ECDIS / AIS ELECTRONIC JAMMING - CYBER WARS:** Cyber and electronic interference remain a latent tool for states and non-state actors, threatening situational awareness, trade flows, and election or financial system trust.
- ▲ **NAVIGATION SAFETY / ENVIRONMENTAL:** No major new accidents, but ongoing strikes on energy infrastructure and military activity near chokepoints keep mine, UAV/USV, and spill risks high, warranting robust contingency planning.

SEA GUARDIAN major observations

- ▲ **Political risks:** Volatile alignments and elite bargains make access, guarantees, and regulatory signals less predictable in key coastal states.
- ▲ **Military threats:** Normalized use of limited strikes, drones, and forward deployments near chokepoints raises the baseline risk to ports and maritime infrastructure.
- ▲ **International trade:** Concentration of flows through a few chokepoints keeps global supply chains highly exposed to even short-lived regional disruptions.
- ▲ **Maritime routes:** Suez and Malacca are relatively stabilizing, while Hormuz, the Red Sea, Black Sea, and Arctic lanes remain fragile and route-planning intensive.
- ▲ **Organized crime:** Conflict-adjacent ports and sanctions-evasion corridors sustain elevated opportunities for smuggling, diversion of resources, and hybrid criminal–terrorist activity.
- ▲ **Cyber vulnerability:** Growing dependence on digital navigation and port systems leaves GNSS, ECDIS, AIS, and terminal OT (Open Trapdoor), as key attack surfaces for both state and non-state actors.