

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

August 06 - 13

Brief Update: No 11-3/2026

Date: August 14, 2026

In references to:

- [THREAT / RISK SECURITY & SAFETY ASSESSMENT MONTHLY REPORT 11/2026, July 30.2026](#)
- [SEA GUARDIAN Threat / Risk Security Weekly Bulletin No 11-1, August 06, 2026](#)

INSIDE

➤ The changing political equations this week (Iraq-Kurdistan, Syria-Russia, Venezuela, Turkey-Libya, India-China) have added to the heightened risk of military operations in the Horn of Africa, Yemen, Libya, and Iraq. At the same time, all major choke points (Suez, Hormuz, Panama, and the Northern Sea Route) continue to be simultaneously under stress affecting safe passages. There have been no reports of piracy or cyber interference incidents. However, militia activities in Libya and icebreakers in the vicinity of Alaska by the Chinese continue to be monitored.

News finds this week (top three most important)

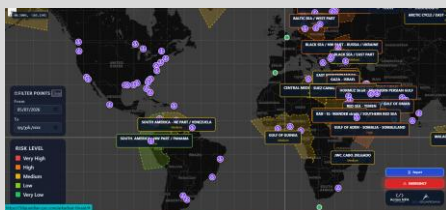
- **Yemen escalation risk** – Government strikes on Houthi positions, plus a UN warning of the highest conflict risk since the 2022 truce, raise the threat level for Red Sea/Gulf of Aden shipping.
- **Strait of Hormuz talks** - Oman-Iran talks reaching a "critical technical stage" mark the biggest potential shift this week — a real chance to de-escalate a top global chokepoint.
- **Libya oil infrastructure under threat** – Zawiya drone attacks (risking force majeure) plus the Benghazi assassination of a senior intelligence official raise risk to Libya's fragile stability and the Mediterranean energy shipping.

Corporate conclusions

- Volatility within the region through Yemen, Libya, and important straits is still a major contributor to risk at sea, although discussions about Hormuz provide an uncommon case for de-escalation.

The observer

- More turbulence is expected amid testing of the 2022 ceasefire because of tensions between Houthis and the Yemeni government, and as negotiations regarding the SoH are close to a decision point that may alter the balance of Bab el Mandeb and Ormuz chokepoints. Be on the lookout for potential follow-up on the AUSSOM pullback in Somalia, more Libyan oil infrastructure strikes, and any fallout from the Zawiya/Benghazi clashes extending to maritime trade in the Mediterranean. Red Sea/Suez ship traffic probably will be careful and contingent on the Houthi-Saudi situation.



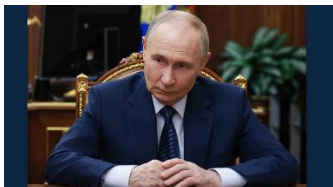
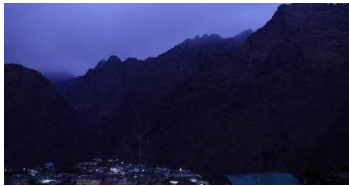
MARITIME SECURITY & NAVIGATIONAL SAFETY INCIDENTS

SOURCE / I.D	DATE	TYPE	SECURITY/SAFETY AREA
SG R&I REPORT 046-26 MV GULLUK (Güllük)	August 07, 2026	MILITARY ATTACK	BLACK SEA / NW PART Coordinates 44.861623, 37.055600
UKMTO WARNING 109-26 ADVISORY - MV VELA NOVA	August 11, 2026	MILITARY ATTACK	ARABIAN SEA / GULF OF ADEN Coordinates 23.950000, 61.850000
IMB/ICC 045-26 / ROBBERY	August 08, 2026	ROBBERY / VIOLENT	BAY OF BENGAL Coordinates 22.270333, 91.804667
UKMTO WARNING 108-26 / MSCIO ALERT 89-90/26	August 08, 2026	MILITARY ATTACK	HORMUZ STRAIT – OMAN's coast Coordinates 26.200000, 56.566667
UKMTO WARNING 110-26 ATTACK - MV TIHAMAH	August 11, 2026	MILITARY ATTACK / life losses	RED SEA / YEMEN Coordinates 21.689467, 38.802355

Week's new findings

Global issues (Geo-Policy/Strategy/Economy)

Chart 1



▲ On August 13, 2026 [India and China are trying to improve relations](#), but tensions remain along their disputed Himalayan border. Reports of recent patrol confrontations near Arunachal Pradesh have raised concerns, though India denies the reports are confirmed. Both countries say they will maintain military and diplomatic communication to preserve peace. The issue is especially sensitive ahead of the upcoming BRICS summit in New Delhi India (12-13 Sep 26), in which the Chinese President Xi Jinping is expected to attend. --->INFO SECTOR: POLITICAL

▲ On August 13, 2026 [Russian President Vladimir Putin said India, China and other countries are showing growing interest in cooperating on the Northern Sea Route](#), an Arctic shipping route that could provide a shorter link between Europe and Asia. Putin said Russia supports cooperation under international maritime law and warned of rising tensions in the Arctic. --->INFO SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES.

BRIEF ASSESSMENT / CONCLUSIONS

▲ This week, key developments include political/strategic signals on a global level that do not present imminent threats for shipping disruption; India-China tensions at the border have been contained before the BRICS summit, while Russia's efforts to develop the Arctic route are a long-term monitoring issue.

ARCTIC CYCLE / BALTIC SEA

Chart 2



▲ On August 7, 2026 was announced that [in the first weeks of August, Russia assembled a convoy of oil tankers unlike anything the Northern Sea Route](#) has carried before. More than a dozen Suezmax, Aframax, and Medium Range vessels gathered in the Kara Sea, some routed north of 81 degrees latitude waters closer to the North Pole than to the traditional shipping lane. --->INFO SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES.



▲ On August 8, 2026 [Canada and the U.S. closely monitored two Chinese](#) research icebreakers operating near Alaska's Arctic waters. Although China said the ships conducted peaceful scientific research, Canadian and U.S. officials expressed their concern about their advanced sonar and surveillance capabilities. The activity has increased calls for stronger Arctic monitoring, military resources, and protection of Canadian sovereignty. --->INFO SECTOR: ECONOMIC AND RESOURCES PERFORMANCE / RESTRAINS.

BRIEF ASSESSMENT / CONCLUSIONS

▲ Russia's exceptional tanker fleet sailing north of 81° N is an indicator of its aggressive move to establish the viability of the Northern Sea Route throughout the year before winter (Container News), whereas China's research icebreakers fitted with modern sonar are nearing Alaska, causing the United States and Canada to worry about their dual use (CBC). These incidents are indicators of maneuvering by major powers in the Arctic.

SOUTH AMERICA – NW AFRICA / LIBYA

Chart 2



▲ On August 11, 2026 [a senior military intelligence chief in eastern Libya](#) was assassinated in Benghazi, while drone attacks and militia clashes continued to threaten critical oil infrastructure in western Libya. The violence highlights Libya's ongoing political and security division, despite recent efforts to create a unified national army and government, while national elections have been postponed several times in the past. --->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS – TERRORISM.

▲ On August 12, 2026 [Panama Canal transit costs have reached record](#) levels because of falling water levels, worsened by El Niño, limiting ship traffic and cargo capacity. Auction prices have risen to about \$1.1 million, 16 times higher than last year. --->INFO SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES.

▲ On August 12, 2026 [Venezuela under Delcy Rodríguez is shifting from Maduro's ideological foreign policy](#) to a more pragmatic, flexible approach. President Rodriguez is improving ties with the U.S. and regional countries while keeping links with China and Russia. The goal is to reduce pressure, attract investment and strengthen the government without political liberalization. --->INFO SECTOR: POLITICAL.

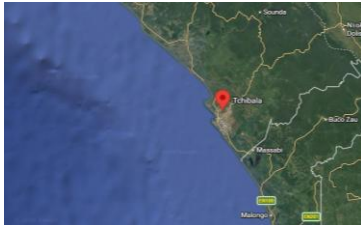
▲ On August 12, 2026 [repeated drone attacks on Libya's Zawiya oil complex threatened](#) refinery operations and oil exports. The Libyan National Oil Corporation warned that continued attacks could halt the 120,000-barrel-per-day refinery and trigger force majeure. The strikes have damaged fuel storage, pipelines, and power infrastructure, raising concerns about wider disruptions to Libya's oil industry and energy supplies through the Med. --->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS – TERRORISM.

▲ On August 12, 2026 [Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs pay a visit to eastern Libyan to meet with Commander Khalifa Haftar](#), trying to strengthen bilateral ties. The visit marks a major shift from Turkey's previous military support for Libya's Tripoli government against him. The visit reflects Ankara's "one Libya" strategy and its efforts to protect commercial and energy interests, while maintaining influence across the divided country. --->INFO SECTOR: POLITICAL.



▲ On August 13, 2026 [Nigeria is discussing a partnership with Chinese](#) firm Zhenjiang Risesun Science and Technology Co. Ltd to develop technology in power, mining, food security, and security systems. The partnership aims to promote technology transfer, joint research, investment, and training for Nigerian scientists and engineers. --->INFO SECTOR: ECONOMIC AND RESOURCES PERFORMANCE / RESTRAINS.

▲ On August 13, 2026 [VAALCO Energy successfully drilled and started production from the ETBNM-3](#) gas well offshore Gabon, finding better-than-expected reserves and reducing diesel costs. The company has also begun drilling the ETSEM-3PH (North Tchibala) well to evaluate additional oil and gas potential, planning a horizontal development well afterward. --->INFO SECTOR: ECONOMIC AND RESOURCES PERFORMANCE / RESTRAINS.



BRIEF ASSESSMENT / CONCLUSIONS

▲ Libya's escalating drone strikes and militia violence on oil infrastructure (Zawiya refinery, Benghazi assassination) pose the clearest near-term risk — potential force majeure and disrupted energy supply chains in the Med. Panama Canal transit costs hitting record highs from El Niño-driven low water levels compound global shipping cost pressure. The Venezuela, Nigeria-China, and Gabon items create economic/political background noise with no direct maritime security impact this week.

BLACK SEA – EAST MEDITERRANEAN

Chart 3



▲ On August 8, 2026 [Ukraine agreed not to target non-Russian vessels](#) and CPC infrastructure carrying Kazakh oil through Novorossiysk. The agreement aims to protect commercial shipping and restore Kazakh oil exports, which have been disrupted by drone attacks and safety concerns. --->INFO SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES.

▲ On August 9, 2026 [Iraq and the Kurdistan Region are strengthening](#) security and political cooperation. Erbil supports Baghdad's plan to place weapons under state control and is helping improve Iraq-Syria relations. Kurdish officials also said the region has faced over 1,000 rocket and drone attacks and deny a US military presence at Harir Air Base. --->INFO SECTOR: POLITICAL.



▲ On August 9, 2026 [Syria and Russia agreed on the future of Russian](#) bases at Tartus and Khmeimim after 18 months of talks. Syria will take control of civilian facilities, while military sites will be converted into joint training centers. The transition is expected to be completed within three months. --->INFO SECTOR: POLITICAL.



▲ On August 9, 2026 [Israel has approved infrastructure work in eastern Rafah](#) for a proposed housing area for Palestinians outside Hamas control. The project includes preparing land and installing water, electricity and sewage systems. Israel says it is part of broader post-war plans and preparations for a multinational force in Gaza, though some details have been disputed by Netanyahu's office. --->INFO SECTOR: POLITICAL.



▲ On August 10, 2026 [CMA CGM introduced a Rate Restoration Initiative \(RRI\)](#) starting from September 1, 2026, affecting cargo rates from East Mediterranean and nearby regions, including Türkiye, Greece, the Black Sea, Adriatic Sea, Lebanon, Malta, Syria, Tunisia, Libya and Algeria. --->INFO SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES.



▲ On August 11, 2026 [Lebanon announced that is preparing to receive Iraqi oil for transit](#), storage and re-export. Officials are assessing roads, border crossings and safety measures, while exploring the rehabilitation of the old Kirkuk-Tripoli pipeline as a long-term alternative oil route. --->INFO SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES.

▲ On August 11, 2026 [the USDA's FAS cut its forecast for Ukraine's 2026/27 grain exports](#) due to the worsening of Black Sea security situation. Maize exports were reduced to 14 million tons and wheat to 10.8 million tons, while barley exports slightly increased. Russian attacks on ports and merchant vessels are disrupting shipping and reducing available transport capacity. --->INFO SECTOR: ECONOMIC AND RESOURCES PERFORMANCE / RESTRAINS



BRIEF ASSESSMENT / CONCLUSIONS

▲ Ukraine promised, through a signed agreement backed by the US, that non-attack on CPC/Novorossiysk shipments would be a welcome de-escalatory step. On the other hand, Russian attacks on ports and ships will have practical implications and limit Ukrainian 2026/27 grain export potential – real navigational/commercial effect. CMA CGM's East Mediterranean rate increase could reflect a changing regional logistics picture. The Lebanese oil pipeline project from Iraq, as well as the Syria-Russia base agreement, will not have a direct effect on shipping routes so far.

RED SEA – YEMEN / GULF of ADEN

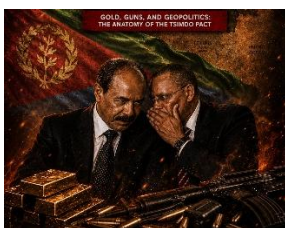
Chart 4



▲ On August 8, 2026 [Yemeni government forces attacked Houthi positions](#) in response to recent Houthi missile and drone strikes in Marib and Hadramawt. The UN envoy warned that Yemen faces its highest risk of renewed large-scale conflict since the 2022 truce. --->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS – TERRORISM.



▲ On August 8, 2026 [Somalia's intelligence agency arrested nine people](#) suspected of links to al-Shabab during security operations in Mogadishu and nearby areas. The suspects were allegedly planning attacks against civilians and security targets. The arrests are part of ongoing efforts to disrupt al-Shabab networks around the capital. --->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS – TERRORISM.



▲ On August 9, 2026 [renewed military contacts between Eritrea and TPLF-linked actors could undermine the fragile peace in Tigray](#) and risk triggering a wider regional conflict. It highlights concerns over foreign military involvement, proxy alliances and renewed recruitment, while stressing that Tigray's population—especially its youth—has already suffered greatly from the previous war. The text calls for preserving the Pretoria peace agreement, avoiding further militarization, and prioritizing dialogue, reconstruction and stability. --->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS – TERRORISM.



▲ On August 10, 2026 [Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd are expanding their return](#) to the Red Sea and Suez Canal by adding Jeddah to their Asia-Mediterranean service. The move comes despite renewed Houthi-Saudi fighting and threats to Saudi-linked shipping. The carriers say operations remain dependent on security conditions and could be rerouted if risks increase. --->INFO SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES



▲ On August 10, 2026 [Ethiopian troops under AUSSOM have withdrawn from Burhakaba](#) (NW Somalia) after nearly 12 years, handing security responsibility to Somali forces. The move raises concerns because the town is surrounded by Al-Shabaab and Somali forces may not be ready to defend it alone. Further withdrawals are possible amid AUSSOM's severe funding crisis and uncertainty over its future beyond December 2026. --->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS – TERRORISM.

BRIEF ASSESSMENT / CONCLUSIONS

▲ New hostilities between the Houthis and the Yemeni government, along with new battles between the Houthis and Saudi Arabia, could threaten the fragile state of peace established in 2022. As Maersk/Hapag-Lloyd tentatively resumes operations in Jeddah – a reversal that can be stopped rather than an established trend. Elsewhere, AUSSOM's withdrawal from Somalia (removal of Ethiopian troops from Burhakaba) and Tigray-Eritrea troubles in the Horn of Africa region/Gulf of Aden area increase instability prospects without any ship problems reported yet this week.

PERSIAN GULF – ARABIC SEA

Chart 5



▲ On August 12, 2026 [Qatar said Oman-Iran negotiations on reopening](#) the Strait of Hormuz have reached a critical technical stage, with positive signals from both sides. Qatar is urging a quick agreement to restore maritime navigation and support regional stability. It also welcomed regional security cooperation and called for progress on the Gaza ceasefire's second phase. --->INFO SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND RESOURCES.



▲ On August 13, 2026 [an oil tanker, Caroline Bezengi, that ran aground off Oman has leaked oil into the sea](#), with pollution now reaching parts of the coastline. The spill covers about 390 km² and threatens sensitive marine habitats, including areas around the Hallaniyat Islands and Masirah Island. Strong monsoon winds are delaying containment and salvage efforts. --->INFO SECTOR: NAVIGATIONAL SAFETY / ENVIRONMENTAL.



▲ On August 13, 2026 was announced the [the U.S. plans to completely withdraw its military forces from Iraq by September 30](#), ending its military presence that began after the 2003 invasion. Most troops have already left, while remaining forces are being withdrawn amid ongoing security concerns and attacks by Iran-linked militias. --->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS – TERRORISM.

BRIEF ASSESSMENT / CONCLUSIONS

▲ Hormuz negotiations between Oman and Iran are said to be on the verge of success – good news indeed if that is the case, but as of now, they remain unofficial. The actual event that occurred this week is the grounding of the Caroline Bezengi near Oman, resulting in a 390 km² oil spill near the Hallaniyat/Masirah regions, while monsoons are affecting cleanup efforts. SEA GUARDIAN assesses that the situation is going to be more complicated with the involvement of several countries and entities, even Pakistan postponed the time for an agreement to the far future.

EAST ASIA – MALACCA STRAIT / TAIWAN

Chart 6



▲ On August 10, 2026 [Taiwan, the US, and Japan met to strengthen cooperation to be prepared](#) for crises such as natural disasters or a conflict in the Taiwan Strait. Experts emphasized better coordination among governments, navies, coast guards, and emergency services. The three sides also discussed energy security, supply chains, cyberwarfare, and information warfare, with the goal of improving Taiwan's resilience and ensuring faster international support during a crisis. --->INFO SECTOR: POLITICAL.

▲ On August 11, 2026 [Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore held a three-day maritime security exercise](#) to strengthen cooperation and safety in shared waters. The drill focused on information sharing, joint operations, and combating maritime threats in areas including the Malacca and Singapore Straits and Natuna Sea. --->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS-TERRORISM.

▲ On August 12, 2026 [Taiwan condemned a planned China-Indonesia naval exercise east of Taiwan](#), calling it a military provocation and an attempt by Beijing to imply jurisdiction over the area. Indonesia said the exercise was a routine naval tradition, not combat-related. The move comes amid growing Chinese military and maritime activity around Taiwan and heightened tensions over control of nearby waters. --->INFO SECTOR: MILITARY / PARAMILITARY ACTIONS – TERRORISM.

BRIEF ASSESSMENT / CONCLUSIONS

▲ The Indo-Pacific situation is going to be escalated by a trilateral Taiwan-US-Japan coordinated response to the crisis and the Malacca/Natuna security exercise, which displays defensive maneuvering. The joint Chinese-Indonesian exercise near Taiwan appears to be an attempt by China to capitalize on its jurisdiction, despite being termed regularly by Indonesia. No accidents at sea, but exercises near the straits should be monitored.

SEA GUARDIAN overall conclusions

▲ **Political** – The collaboration between Erbil and Baghdad on weapons control, the negotiated Syrian drawdown of exclusive Russian military bases in Tartus and Khmeimim, and practical caution on the part of Venezuela, Turkey (regarding Haftar), and the Taiwan-US-Japan resilience path exemplify regional realignments, while India-China tensions in the Himalayas continue amid BRICS.

▲ **Performance/Constraints on Economic & Resource Development** – The reduction of Ukraine's 2026/27 forecast for grain exports due to deteriorating Black Sea security, China's icebreakers off the coast of Alaska, the discovery of gas in Gabon by VAALCO and technology cooperation between Nigeria and China indicate economic/resource positives amid negative developments elsewhere.

▲ **Military/Paramilitary Operations – Terrorism** – The Ethiopian withdrawal from Burhakaba in AUSSOM, re-establishment of contacts between Eritrea and TPLF, fighting between Yemeni Government forces and the Houthis, strikes in Libya including Zawiya drone attacks and Benghazi official's assassination, as well as the planned US withdrawal from Iraq by September 30th, indicate expanding security voids in the Horn of Africa, Yemen, Iraq and Libya.



⚡ **Piracy/Organized Crime/Boarding Conditions** – Even if there aren't significant incidents of piracy and organized crime this week, pirates capabilities are still there; mitigation of risks is appropriate while clashes in western and eastern Libya continue with no sufficient signs, even if the attackers are connected or not, so far.

⚡ **Transportation Routes and Resources** - Shipping companies are experimenting with normalization of the Red Sea-Suez route (Maersk/Hapag-Lloyd, CMA CGM rate stabilization), while Russia promotes its Northern Sea Route as an Arctic option. At the same time unprecedentedly high costs for crossing Panama Canal and the optimistic Hormuz negotiations are adding to the chokepoint stress.

⚡ **Navigational Safety/Environment** – The grounding of the Caroline Bezege vessel off Oman resulted a 390 km² oil spill in a protected coastal area due to monsoon winds, threatening the wider region.

SEA GUARDIAN major observations

⚡ **Political risks** – The presence of several shifting alliances (Iraq & Kurdistan, Syria & Russia, Venezuela, Turkey & Haftar, India & China) creates cross-regional uncertainty.

⚡ **Military threats** – Horn of Africa, Yemen, Libya, and Iraq flashpoints create near-term escalation risks around shipping routes.

⚡ **International trade** – Increased strain on Black Sea grain shipments and higher Panama/CMA CGM freight/insurance costs.

⚡ **Maritime routes** – Simultaneous pressure on all major chokepoints (Suez, Hormuz, Panama, Northern Sea Route), with no clear alternative.

⚡ **Organized crime** – No reported piracy/hijacking; militia-related violence in Libya poses spill-over risks to oil terminals.

⚡ **Cyber vulnerability** – No reported GNSS/AIS disruptions; activities of Chinese icebreakers off Alaska continue to be a latent watch item.

⚡ **Important trends** – Normalization of Hormuz and Red Sea/Suez is continuing but remains reversible and dependent on cease-fire holding.