Oceans of Crime
Maritime Piracy and Transnational Security in Southeast Asia and Bangladesh

Carolin Liss
Oceans of Crime
IIAS/ISEAS Series on Maritime Issues and Piracy in Asia

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The IIAS/ISEAS Series on Maritime Issues and Policy in Asia is an initiative to catalyse research on the topic of piracy and robbery in the Asian seas. Considerable attention in the popular media has been directed to maritime piracy in recent years reflecting the fact/perception that piracy is again a growing concern for coastal nations of the world. The epicentre of global pirate activity is the congested sea-lanes of Southeast Asia but attacks have been registered in wide-scattered regions of the world.

The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) is a post-doctoral research centre based in Leiden and Amsterdam, the Netherlands. IIAS' main objective is to encourage Asian studies in the humanities and social sciences — and their interaction with other sciences — by promoting national and international co-operation in these fields. IIAS publications reflect the broad scope of the Institute's interests.

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Carolin Liss
In memory of my father, Helmut Liss
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFP Armed Forces of the Philippines
ARF ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CSI Container Security Initiative
CTI Counter Terrorism International
EEZ Exclusive Economic Zone
EiS Eyes in the Sky
ETA Euskadi ta Askatasuna, Basque Homeland and Freedom
FAO Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FBI Federal Bureau of Investigation (USA)
FERIT Far East Regional Investigation Team
FOC Flag of Convenience
FPDA Five Power Defence Arrangements
GAM Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, Free Aceh Movement
GRT Gross Registered Tons/Tonnage
hp Horsepower
IACS International Association of Classification Societies
ILO International Labour Organization
IMB International Maritime Bureau
IMO International Maritime Organization
IPOA International Peace Operations Association
IRI International Registries Incorporated
ISPS Code International Ship and Port Facility Security Code
ITF International Transport Workers’ Federation
IUU fishing Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing
JI Jemaah Islamiyah
JWC Joint War Committee
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>LISCR</td>
<td>Liberian International Ship and Corporate Register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTTE</td>
<td>Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALSINDO</td>
<td>Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia agreement to conduct coordinated patrols in the Malacca Strait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MECC</td>
<td>Maritime Enforcement Coordination Centre (Malaysia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mgt</td>
<td>Million gross tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILF</td>
<td>Moro Islamic Liberation Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISC</td>
<td>Malaysian International Shipping Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMEA</td>
<td>Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MNLF</td>
<td>Moro National Liberation Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New PULO</td>
<td>New Pattani United Liberation Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO</td>
<td>Palestine Liberation Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMC</td>
<td>Private Military Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNG</td>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRC</td>
<td>Piracy Reporting Centre (IMB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>Private Security Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSI</td>
<td>Proliferation Security Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PULO</td>
<td>Pattani United Liberation Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ReCAAP</td>
<td>Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMN</td>
<td>Royal Malaysian Navy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMSI</td>
<td>Regional Maritime Security Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUF</td>
<td>Revolutionary United Front (Liberia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLOC</td>
<td>Sea Lanes of Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOLAS</td>
<td>Safety of Life at Sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
<td>Singapore Shipping Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUA</td>
<td>Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Marine Navigation Convention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNI</td>
<td>Tentara Nasional Indonesia, Indonesian Military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCTAD</td>
<td>United Nations Conference on Trade and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMD</td>
<td>Weapons of Mass Destruction</td>
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INTRODUCTION

Young Elizabeth: I think it’d be rather exciting to meet a pirate.
Norrington: Think again, Miss Swann. Vile and dissolute creatures, the lot of them.

Everybody knows what a pirate is. We all have mental images of bearded men with earrings, a peg leg, an eyepatch, and a parrot on the shoulder as epitomized by Robert Louis Stevenson’s Long John Silver. The activities of pirates also do not seem very mysterious: they attack vessels and steal whatever they can lay their hands on. However this popular, Western literary-historical notion of a pirate is far too simplistic. Indeed, “piracy” has been associated with a variety of economic and political activities and has carried different connotations over space and time. Hence, definitions of piracy have varied historically and culturally and are highly contested by individuals, groups, and nations. The label “pirate” is inevitably emotive, and linked to particular cultural-historical contexts and moments in global-regional time, especially in Southeast Asia, where the scourge of piracy and its eradication featured largely in the annals of colonial mercantile history. In the past, the categorization of individuals or ethnic groups as “pirates” was ascribed to local “marauders” by colonial powers, signifying a powerful value judgement which was invariably connected to political and territorial ambitions, world commerce, and economic growth. Given the long history of piracy in Southeast Asia, it is necessary to discuss briefly the historical background of sea robbery in the region before shifting the focus to contemporary piracy.

A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF PIRACY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Long before the arrival of the Europeans in the sixteenth century, insular Southeast Asia was inhabited by Muslim people of Malay origin, who