

OPRF MARINT Monthly Report

August 2008



CONTENTS

Major Events in August 2008

1. Information Digest

- 1.1 Security
- 1.2 Military
- 1.3 Diplomacy and International Relations
- 1.4 Shipping, Resources, Environment and Miscellaneous

2. Intelligence Assessment

- 2.1 Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships during the first half of 2008: Analysis from the ReCAAP Reports
- 2.2 The Significance of Deploying the Nuclear-Powered Carrier, USS *George Washington*, at Yokosuka

This monthly report is edited/ summarized by publisher and staff writers based on published news resources.

Each resource is referenced with bracket below each title and is displayed as link URL on the last page of this report.

Publisher: Masahiro Akiyama

Staff writers:

Kazumine Akimoto, Tsutomu Inuzuka, Takehisa Imaizumi,

Hideshi Ueno, Masahiro Kunimi, Tetsuo Kotani, Takehisa Tomomori

All rights reserved.

This report, or parts thereof, must not be produced in any form without permission in writing of the publisher.

Major Events in August 2008

Security: On August 6, Canadian Defense Minister Peter MacKay confirmed that Canada is sending a *Halifax*-based frigate to waters off Somalia to deal with piracy. According to MacKay, HMCS *Ville de Quebec* is already en route to Somalia, and the frigate is expected to remain in the area until the end of September to escort food shipments bound for Somalia under the World Food Program (WFP).

In the Somali waters, many actual and attempted piracy incidents were noted. In a month of August, seven vessels were hijacked. Therefore, following a month that has seen seven vessels hijacked in the region, the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) has issued a fresh piracy warning to all vessels sailing in the Gulf of Aden on August 21. The IMB has advised captains of the vessels to be ready for a piracy attack for 24 hours and especially to be on the alert against an approach of high-speed boats. On the other hand, on the 22nd, the Commander, U.S. Naval Central Command (NAVCENT) has directed the establishment of a Maritime Security Patrol Area (MSPA) in the Gulf of Aden. Commodore Bob Davidson (Canadian Navy), commander Combined Task Force 150, will command naval forces in the patrol area. The MSPA is being established in support of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) ongoing efforts. In addition, Intelligence sources revealed that there are now two suspicious trawlers in the Gulf of Aden believed to be pirate mother vessels looking to attack ships with the intent to hijack. We have carried two photographs in this monthly report.

In an article 2.1 in the Intelligence Assessment in this monthly report, we have taken up the ReCAAP's first Half Yearly Report in 2008.

Military: According to the report in the Indian daily newspaper, The Times of India, dated August 9, India is up and alert to information that senior Chinese naval officers recently visited Myanmar's Coco Islands to upgrade facilities there.

According to Iran's National Press, the Islamic Republic News Agency, on the 18th, India has sent four of its major warships to the Red Sea and the African coast on a deployment from late July to Mid-October. Regarding the aims of the deployment, Indian navy official says that the Indian ships will be present in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), doing some flag showing and also engaging in naval diplomacy with some port calls, and interaction with personnel from the navies of the countries in the IOR.

On August 19-26, Canada will conduct "Operation Nanook 08," joint army, air force and navy drills in the south Baffin area in the Arctic. The exercise aims to rehearse ship emergencies in the Arctic.

On August 20, three NATO warships from Spain, Germany and Poland entered the Black Sea. Later, with deployment of US frigate USS *Taylor*, they are to conduct three weeks of exercises and port visits to Romania and Bulgaria, whose naval vessels will also join the exercises.

On August 21, the US aircraft carrier USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) with her crew of

approximately 5,500 sailors departed San Diego, California, to begin her journey to Yokosuka. Regarding the significance of *GW*'s deployment to Yokosuka, we have carried it in an article 2.2 in the Intelligence Assessment in this monthly report.

The Indian Navy is awaiting the government's nod to provide escort to ships carrying life-saving assistance to Somalia under the aegis of the UN's World Food Program (WFP).

Diplomacy and International Relations: On August 7, a Philippine delegate to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), lawyer Estelito Mendoza who is also a former solicitor general, said that the Philippine government should not include the Kalayaan Group of Islands (KIG). Mendoza said the Philippines does not have the military or navy might to enforce its claims on the disputed islands but it also risks violating international law if it includes the Kalayaan Group within its baselines.

On August 12, Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) (also the defense minister) Najib Razak said Malaysia will safeguard its sovereignty over the Layang-Layang atoll located off Sabah because it does not want a repeat of its loss of the Pulau Batu Puteh rock off Johor.

To the contrary, on August 15, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China (Taiwan) made an announcement against the visit of Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister and also Defense Minister Najib Razak to the Layang-Layanf atoll and his claim of sovereignty over Layang-Layang atoll. Taiwan said the Spratly Islands, Paracel Islands, Macclesfield Islands, Pratas Islands and nearby waters are part of Taiwan's territory and territorial waters.

Shipping, Resources, Environment and Miscellaneous: Chinese Internet, SinoDefense. Com, August 1, 2008 reports on the present status of the Jiangnan Changxing Shipbuilding Base which China State Shipbuilding Corporation (CSSC) is building in Changxing Island off the coast of Shanghai.

BBC News dated August 5 reported scientists at Britain's Durham University International Boundaries Research Unit (IBRU) had drawn up the map outlining various countries' claims to the Arctic and areas of potential future border disputes.

According to an announcement from the US Department of State on August 11, the U.S. Extended Continental Shelf Task Force, chaired by the Department of State, plans two Arctic cruises by the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter USCG *Healy* this summer. In view of decreasing sea ice in summer and survey of the energy resources in the Arctic Circle, the US Coast Guard is expanding its activities to secure safety and search and rescue in the Arctic areas.

On August 12, the U.S. Navy (USN) agreed to limit the loud, low-frequency sonar used to detect submarines. It is in response to criticism by environmentalists that the sound negatively affects whales and other marine mammals.

The Joint Negotiating Group (JNG) of the International Bargaining Forum (IBF) has rejected a bid by the International Transport Federation (ITF) to classify the waters around Georgia as a war risk zone.

The Panama-registered merchant fleet continues to be the world's largest since 1993. Ship

numbers increased by 4.7 percent (%) in the first half of 2008, bringing the total fleet to 7, 965 vessels with aggregate gross tonnage (GT) of 177.09 million GT as of the end of June 2008.

On August 25, in a memo to three Cabinet secretaries, US President Bush asked for a plan that would protect parts of the Mariana Trench, the deepest place on the planet, as well as waters around Rose Atoll in American Samoa and various islands and reefs in the Central Pacific.

On August 26, while on a visit to the Arctic Circle, Canadian Prime Minister (PM) Stephen Harper announced that 100 million Canadian dollars (CAD) will be spent over five years to map potential resources in the Canadian Arctic.

1. Information Digest

1.1 Security

August 6 “Canada to sends frigate off Somalia” (The Chronicle Herald, August 6, 2008)

On August 6, Canadian Defense Minister Peter MacKay confirmed that Canada is sending a Halifax-based frigate to waters off Somalia to deal with piracy. In July, the Canadian navy has diverted HMCS *Ville de Quebec*, which left Halifax for a 5½-month NATO mission to the Mediterranean and Black seas. According to MacKay, HMCS *Ville de Quebec* is already en route to Somalia, and the frigate is expected to remain in the area until the end of September to escort food shipments bound for Somalia under the World Food Program (WFP). But that escort system ground to a halt in late June when the Dutch warship left. WFP has been appealing for any nation to send an escort ship.

【Related Story】

“Canadian frigate’s captain talks on escorting WFP shipments to Somalia” (The Chronicle Herald, August 20, 2008)

On August 19, Commander Chris Dickinson, captain of Canadian Navy frigate HMCS *Ville de Quebec*, said on his mission of escorting food shipments into Somalia under the United Nations (UN) World Food Program (WFP) in Mombasa, Kenya where the warship is docked, as follows.

- (1) Within the past five days, HMCS *Ville de Quebec* came within about 25 kilometers (km) of two small bulk carriers that had been seized by Somali pirates. On our radar we had two vessels that we knew had been taken by pirates. However, the Canadian warship is under orders to stay away from vessels that have already been seized by pirates. The crew’s lives are in danger, and ransoms (of millions of dollars) are being demanded from the companies who own them. Therefore, getting too close or attempting to contact the seized ships is dangerous. If they take it as if we threaten them, they may think that we’re the navy special force coming in to try to do a rescue, and the next thing we’ve got is dead hostages.
- (2) Over the next six weeks, HMCS *Ville de Quebec* will sail with food shipments under the UN WFP from Mombasa to Mogadishu. We’re going to then pick up a large ship coming from South Africa off the Kenyan coast and take it into Mogadishu and come back to Mombasa.

August 8 “US amphibious ship thwarts pirate attack off Somalia” (Shiptalk, August 8, and Channel News Asia, August 8, 2008)

On August 8, US amphibious ship, USS *Peleliu* (LHA 5), and embarked 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) stopped a pirate attack of a civilian merchant vessel approximately 80 miles north of Somalia while conducting Maritime Security Operations (MSO). Under the direction of Combined Task Force 51 (CTF 51), USS *Peleliu* proceeded into the area, responding to

a call for help from the MV *Gem of Kilakarai* which reported it was under attack from armed pirates in two small boats with weapons and rifle-launched grenades. Operating approximately 10 miles away from the merchant vessel when the distress call was received, USS *Peleliu* altered her course to intercept the suspected pirate vessels and launched three helicopters. The two suspected pirate vessels then fled the scene. The merchant vessel was traveling towards the Suez Canal when the attack took place in the Gulf of Aden. No injuries were reported.

According to Noel Choong, head of the Kuala Lumpur-based International Maritime Bureau's (IMB) Piracy Reporting Center (PRC), a Singapore-flagged bulk carrier was attacked by pirate speedboats on 8 August in the eastern Gulf of Aden. Choong said that armed pirates aboard two speedboats fired a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) at the vessel, which landed on the ship but did not explode. Its master managed to request assistance on a distress line. When a warship of the coalition command center arrived, the pirates pulled back. Choong said the PRC issued a warning on August 7 after receiving military intelligence about two Russian-made stern trawlers believed to be acting as "mother vessels" for smaller pirate ships. These two trawlers are believed to be operating in the vicinity of the Gulf of Aden, looking for ships at the moment. Then on July 20 pirates seized the MV *Stella Maris*, a Japanese company controlled bulk carrier. The vessel has now been taken to the Somali coast, and the pirates have demanded a ransom from the Japanese owners, Choong said. (Captain and all 20 crew were Filipinos.) A Nigerian tug boat is also believed to have been seized on August 4 but the PRC is still seeking more details, Choong said.

US Navy's Office of Naval Intelligence said the tugboat had a crew of nine Nigerians. Pirates are reportedly demanding one million US Dollars.(US Navy, Office of Naval Intelligence, Civil Maritime Analysis Department, World Threat to Shipping Mariner Warning Information, August 20, 2008)

August 9 "Somali pirates release German hostages" (AFP, August, 9, 2008)

According to the Puntland authorities in Somalia, two Germans, who were kept in custody by pirates more than five weeks ago, have been released on August 9. They were hijacked by pirates on June 23 while sailing their yacht in the Gulf of Aden en route to Thailand. Two Germans were unharmed. The pirates had reportedly demanded one million US dollars for the pair, but district commissioner made no mention of any ransom being paid.

August 12 "Somali pirates hijack Thai ship" (CNN, August 14 and Shiptalk, August 15, 2008)

According to the Kenya Seafarers Association, a Thai cargo ship, the MV *Thor Star*, was hijacked in the Gulf of Aden off Somalia on August 12. With 28 Thai crew members on board, the ship is owned by Thor Star Shipping Company Limited. This is the second time for the *Thor Star* to be hijacked by sea robbers while under way at high sea. In 2003 a group of ten masked robbers in a speedboat, armed with guns knives, boarded the ship at starboard side quarter of the ship, using grapnel hooks tied to ropes, while she was underway in Indonesian waters near Bintan Island.

MV *Thor Star* (10,572GT)

http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_E-QOnTGFX_o/SKS77Vwr0JI/AAAAAAAAADp0/OBOT-zXbFtk/s1600-h/ThorStar1.jpg

August 15 “Solomon Islands Maritime Police Unit opens New Operations Center” (Pacific magazine, August 15, 2008)

On August 15, the Maritime Unit of the Solomon Islands Police Force (SIPF) has officially opened a new Operations Room (OR) to improve maritime surveillance targeting illegal fishing, transnational crime and search and rescue at sea. The new OR was built with funding from Defense Cooperation Program Assistance from the Australian Defense Force. Three Royal Australian Navy members are posted to the SIPF Maritime Unit to advise them on maritime surveillance and maintenance of patrol boats. The OR can provide live access to the Vessel Monitoring System, a satellite-based system to monitor the position, speed and direction of registered fishing vessels, from the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA). Director of Fisheries Operations commented: “Fishing is an important industry for the Solomon Islands so it needs the latest technology to control and survey what is happening at sea. Improved access to FFA's vessel monitoring system here in Honiara will help the region coordinate their efforts to combat illegal fishing.”

August 19 “Somali pirates hijack Malaysian oil tanker” (Bloomberg, August 20, 2008)

On August 19, a liquefied natural gas tanker, MV *Bunga Melati Dua* (22,254 DWT), of Malaysia International Shipping Corporation Berhad (MISC Bhd) was hijacked by Somali pirates in the Gulf of Aden. Loaded with palm oil, the tanker was heading toward Rotterdam (in the Netherlands) from Indonesia. The ship's crew includes 29 Malaysians and 10 Filipinos.

MV Bunga Melati Dua

<http://www.jtashipphoto.dk/JTA-Bunga%20Melati%20Dua.htm>

August 21 “IMB issues fresh warning to vessels sailing off Gulf of Aden” (The International Maritime Bureau, August 21, 2008)

Following a month that has seen seven vessels hijacked in the region, the ICC International Maritime Bureau (IMB) has issued a fresh piracy warning to all vessels sailing in the Gulf of Aden on 21 August. IMB Director Pottengal Mukundan stated: “The situation in this region is extremely serious. We have not seen such a surge in pirate activity in this area previously. These pirates are not afraid to use significant firepower in attempts to bring vessels under their control. Unless further action is taken, seafarers remain in serious danger while navigating the Gulf of Aden.” In all reported instances, vessels have been approached by speedboats containing men armed with machine guns and rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) launchers. In their attempts to slow down and board the vessels, the pirates have opened fire against the unarmed merchant ships.

On June 2, United Nations (UN) Security Council adopted Security Council Resolution 1816 (2008) that allows states cooperating with Somalia to enter its territorial waters in order to repress acts of piracy and armed robbery “by all necessary means.” Regarding the resolution, Mr Mukundan continued: “While the intervention of coalition navies has helped in isolated cases, it is by no means a long-term solution. It is clear that the threat or presence of coalition navies has done little to stem the tide of attacks in this region.” In 2008 it would appear that the pirate gangs are operating more off the northern coast in the Gulf of Aden where there is a greater proximity to shore of the Horn of Africa and quick access to the many vessels passing south through the Suez canal. The IMB advises that Masters maintain strict 24-hour piracy watches and be especially wary of any approaching smaller craft. The IMB urges the reporting of all actual or attempted attacks, as well as any suspicious vessel movements, to the IMB Piracy Reporting Center (PRC).

Intelligence sources revealed that there are now two suspicious trawlers in the Gulf of Aden

believed to be pirate mother vessels looking to attack ships with the intent to hijack. The description of the suspected trawlers - long white, Russian made stern trawlers with names “*BURUM OCEAN* or *ARENA* or *ATHENA*.” One of the trawlers is believed to be operating at approximately 60 NM NE of Bossasso, Somalia in the Gulf of Aden.

Suspected pirate “mother ship”

BURUM OCEAN

ARENA or *ATHENA*

Source: IMB, August 21, 2008. http://www.icc-ccs.org/main/piracy_al.php?newsid=20

Note: Regarding the UN Security Council Resolution, please refer to 2.1 Assessment in OPRF MARINT Monthly Report, June 2008.

August 21 “Somali pirates hijack three merchant ships a day” (various resources)

On August 21, Somali pirates seized three large merchant ships in a day. According to Noel Choong, Head of the International Maritime Bureau's (IMB's) Piracy Reporting Center (PRC) in Kuala Lumpur, following a hijack of the MISC-owned, Malaysian-flag chemical tanker *Bunga Melati Dua*, two more ships- a Japanese-controlled tanker MV *Irene* (7,373 GT) and an Iranian bulk-cargo vessel- were boarded, in one case at least after a large amount of gunfire. MV *Irene* has a crew of 20 Filipinos. This brings to six the number of ships held in Somali waters. At present, negotiations are underway in at least two of the earlier cases, including a Japanese

company –controlled cargo ship MV *Stella Maris* (52454 DWT, Panama-flagged) hijacked on July 20, with a view to securing their release. (Maritime Global Net, August 21, BBC News, August 21, and AP, August 21, 2008)

MV *Irene* (7,373GT)

<http://news.goo.ne.jp/picture/asahi/world/CO2008082101000663.html>

Noel Choong pointed out that the UN Security Council resolution adopted on June 2 was not providing sufficient deterrent to stop the piracy. Choong was worried the piracy could escalate further as more armed groups in Somalia realized they could make big money from hijacking ships. In the announcement on August 21, MISC MISC Bhd in Malaysia said there had been no communication with either a crew or a highjack-group, and they are closely cooperating with the agencies concerned. (Maritime Global Net, August 21, 2008)

Furthermore, according to Noel Choong, on the late 21st, in addition to two vessels mentioned earlier, a cargo vessel of German shipping company (flying the Antiqua and Barbuda flag) was hijacked in the same area. So far, details are unknown. The PRC received an information report that a German vessel was hijacked from the ship sailing in the vicinity. Saying three hijackings in a day “is unheard of,” Noel Choong urged that the United Nations and the international community to take serious action to stop this menace. (AP, August 21, 2008)

While mentioning the situation in the Gulf of Aden is “out of control,” IMB Director Pottengal Mukundan warned as follows: “It is unprecedented that four large merchant ships were hijacked within the space of 48 hours. Pirates will never hesitate to use heavy weapons to attack large merchant vessels. Over 260 seafarers have been taken hostage in Somalia this year. Unless further action is taken, seafarers remain in serious danger while navigating the Gulf of Aden.” (Maritime Global Net, August 22, 2008)

MISC Bhd in Malaysia told first communication with MV *Bunga Melati Dua* was established at 0905 (GMT) on August 21, 2008. MISC was informed that there has been a casualty onboard involving one of our Filipino crew members. The remaining crew members are safe. (Maritime Global Net, August 22, 2008)

As of August 22, the Philippine Foreign Affairs (DFA) Department confirms that at least 26 Filipino seamen have been taken hostage by the piracy incidents in the Gulf of Aden. Noel Choong, head of the PRC, said the four ships had a total of 96 crew members on board, including

nine on the German vessel. (Shiptalk, August 22, 2008)

According to Iran Press TV dated August 23, owner of the ship hijacked, Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL), is seeking to use diplomacy to secure the release of sailors from pirates. An Iranian executive said, "We are trying to use diplomatic means to release sailors of the hijacked Iranian ship which was carrying 40,000 tons of iron ore from China to the Netherlands." Director did not give details of those diplomatic efforts. The Iranian ship had 29 crews. (Shiptalk, August 23, 2008)

On the 29th, an official of Philippines' Department of Foreign Affairs confirmed that two Filipino seamen were onboard Iranian bulk carrier MV *Iran Deyanat*. (Shiptalk, September, 1, 2008)

【Related Story】

“Coalition frigate skipped intervention in hijacking of German cargo ship” (Die Welt, August 30, 2008)

According to the German daily newspaper Die Welt dated August 30, while the German cargo ship BBC *Trinidad* was hijacked by pirates on August 21, 71 other vessels were in a circle of 50 NM from the position of the cargo ship. A NATO Frigate was in 27 NM distance but it did not intervene. The cargo vessel is still under control of the pirates and at anchor in a secret location. Negotiations between the pirates and the ship-owner have started. The German ship-owner has called upon the German government to authorize its Navy to use force against pirates.

August 22 “Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command designates to establish patrol corridor in Arabian Sea” (U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs, Press Release, August 22, 2008)

On August 22, the Commander, U.S. Naval Central Command (NAVCENT) has directed the establishment of a Maritime Security Patrol Area (MSPA) in the Gulf of Aden. Commodore Bob Davidson (Canadian Navy), commander Combined Task Force 150, will command naval forces in the patrol area. The MSPA is being established in support of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) ongoing efforts. Coalition actions will give the IMO time to work international preventative efforts that will ultimately lead to a long-term solution.

At present, naval forces from the United States, France, Germany, Pakistan, Britain and Canada are operating in the Gulf region.

Speaking to Fairplay Daily News dated August 25, Davidson revealed that he will put some extra assets into the MSPA, although he withheld details for security reasons. NAVCENT has also suggested that shipping use a designated 'corridor' to transit the Gulf of Aden. Having pointed out shortcomings in the new security zone and corridor, Davidson himself refused to guarantee security for shipping in the corridor. Waypoints for the corridor are as follows: 12 15N 045E, 12 35N 045E, 13 35N 049E, 13 40N 049E, 14 10N 050E, 14 15N 050E, 14 35N 053E, 14 45N 053E. (Please refer to map) (Fairplay Daily News, August 25, 2008)

http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_E-QOnTGFX_o/SLqXrVq5NtI/AAAAAAAAADv0/4YZT6dpFrRU/s1600-h/GOA+TRack.jpg

August 22 “Thai Navy to start Malacca Strait patrol on 1 October” (The Bangkok Post, August 22, 2008)

According to The Bangkok Post dated August 22, the Royal Thai Navy will establish its Third Naval Fleet on the Andaman Sea to begin its patrol mission in the Malacca Strait on October 1. The shoreline radar network will be installed to support the maritime patrol activities. The next project, pending budget approval, is to build a shipyard in Phangnga facing the Andaman Sea near Phuket. According to the Thai Navy, Phuket and the Andaman Sea are peaceful. However, the only problem is illegal immigrants, mostly minority race of Rohingya Muslims, from Burma.

August 23 “Pirates attempt to hijack ships off Gulf of Aden” (AP, August 23, 2008)

According to Noel Choong, head of the Piracy Reporting Center (PRC) in Kuala Lumpur, two attempted hijacking incidents were noted on August 23 off the Gulf of Aden. Choong said the armed pirates in two speedboats approached the Japanese-operated ship (with a crew of 20) and fired on it. However, the ship managed to outrun the pirates and sped away from the pirates, taking evasive maneuvers. A mother ship was believed to be near by. None of its crew was injured. The ship was heading to the Middle East from Singapore. A Liberian cargo ship in the area was attacked about three hours later in the same manner. The ship's captain called the PRC, which alerted a naval patrol force in the area and a military aircraft sent to the scene managed to scare off the pirates. Noel Choong said the pirates in both attacks were believed to be part of the same group, but declined to give details about the patrol aircraft used. Choong said a warship from an international naval force has been deployed to track three vessels that were hijacked by the pirates.

August 23 “Pirates attempted to attack Italian ship off Gulf of Aden” (Mareeg Online, August 24, 2008)

The MV *Mare di Venezia* (30,000 GT), with a cargo of oil products, owned by Gestioni Generali in Italy, was attacked by pirates off the Gulf of Aden on August 23, but it succeeded in getting away. First a small motorized vessel appeared, so as to “test” the behavior of the Italian ship, and then others appeared. They are habitually supported by a mother-ship which takes up position in the vicinity. The captain of MV *Mare di Venezia* dispatched an alert signal, and began his escape maneuver. The ship succeeded in taking photographs of the pirates' vessels, and the material might be useful to identify the mother-ship.

The chairman of Gestioni Generali as well as of the association of ship-owners said, “Everything turned out well, but what will happen next time? The problem is that the Italian Navy ship which for the last year or so had been escorting Italian shipping in the waters of the Gulf has been called back to Italy. For three months now we have been without an escort service.” The chairman said that the request is that patrols be resumed also by forming agreements with other Navies.

August 28 “Indian Navy awaiting government’s nod to escort ships to Somalia” (Thaindian News, August 28, 2008)

The Indian Navy is awaiting the government’s nod to provide escort to ships carrying life-saving assistance to Somalia under the aegis of the UN’s World Food Program (WFP). On August 28, a senior naval official said, “The Indian Navy is ready and keen to send the ships as it will enhance our credentials as a professional navy in the region.” “We cannot claim to be a power with global impact if we do not take up responsibilities. We are ready to protect the ships passing through the Mozambique Channel which is plagued by piracy,” the official added. To the north of Madagascar lies Somalia, whose coastline has been identified by the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) as the area with the highest piracy risk in the world. For India, monitoring the waters off Africa’s east coast is an essential part of security of energy supplies through the Indian Ocean.

August 28 “Somali pirates free Omani fishing vessel” (BBC News, August 28, 2008)

On August 28, Somali pirates released an Omani fishing vessel which had been held for almost eight months near Eyl port in the semi-autonomous Puntland region. Except one Indonesian engineer who had died while in captivity, six other crew members were freed, without a ransom being paid.

August 29 “Somali pirates hijack 2nd Malaysian tanker” (AP, August 30, 2008)

On August 29, Somali pirates hijacked a Malaysian tanker MT *Bunga Melati Lima* (22,254 DWT) owned by MISC Berhard off Gulf of Aden. It was the second tanker owned by MISC Berhard to be hijacked in the gulf in the last 10 days, following her sister ship MT *Bunga Melati Dua* hijacked on August 19. MT *Bunga Melati Lima*, laden with 30,000 metric tons of

petrochemicals, was heading to Singapore from Yanbu in Saudi Arabia when it was attacked. The ship, which has 36 Malaysian and five Filipino crew members, was sailing within a security corridor patrolled by a multinational force when it was seized. “The vessel attempted evasive maneuvering before being overpowered by the hijackers. The coalition forces within the vicinity were alerted but were unable to prevent the hijacking as safety of the crew onboard is of priority,” MISC said in a statement. No further details were immediately available.

1.2 Military

August 4 “Indian submarine completes refit in Russia” (RIA Novosti, August 6, 2008)

On August 4, India’s *Kilo* class submarine, the INS *Sindhuvijay* diesel-electric submarine, departed for India after completing an overhaul in Russia. The submarine is expected to sail for three months until it reaches India. Built in October 1990, the *Sindhuvijay* was handed over to the Indian navy in March 1991. Since June 3, 2005, the submarine has been docked in Russia for repairs and upgrades. The overhaul was delayed for six months due to unacceptable performance of its new SS-N-27 Club-S cruise missiles.

August 9 “China may be strengthening base in Myanmar’s Coco Islands” (The Times of India, August 9, 2008)

According to the report in the Indian newspaper, *The Times of India*, dated August 9, India is up and alert to information that senior Chinese naval officers recently visited Myanmar’s Coco Islands to “upgrade” facilities there. Below is the gist of the report. (The Coco Island is, together with India’s Andaman Islands and Nicobar Islands stretching south, strategically situated to control the entrance of the Straits of Malacca.)

- (1) According to reports reaching India, on June 25, in an unpublicized visit, a Chinese naval delegation, accompanied a Burmese delegation headed by commander of Ayeyarwaddy (Irrawaddy) naval headquarters, which controls the island, went into the Coco Islands. According to sources monitoring developments, China decided to help Myanmar upgrade systems in the island. Myanmar would increase its naval troop strength on the island, while China would help in building two more helipads and storage systems for arms.
- (2) What was of greater interest to India was that China reportedly agreed to upgrade communication facilities on the island. The Coco Islands have always been part myth, but there have never been a stop to reports of China building a listening post in the Great Coco Island. India managed to get Myanmar to take Indian representatives to Coco Islands in 2006 to see the island for themselves as well as a couple of other islands of concern to India like Hangyii and Kyakpu. However, Indian representatives did not find much.
- (3) Regarding the recent visit of the Chinese naval delegation, India's assessment says the

possibility of more helipads on Coco Islands might indicate a Chinese interest in air surveillance of Indian aircraft, ships or facilities. For the moment, India remains in a watch and wait mode, particularly since its own relations with China are very complex at the present moment.

August 11 “Australia, Malaysia commence joint naval exercises” (Australian Ministry of Defence, Defence Media Release, August 11, 2008)

On August 11, the Royal Australian Navy commenced Mastex, a combined maritime warfare exercise with the Royal Malaysian Navy in waters north of Darwin. Taking part in the week long exercise are *Adelaide* Class Frigate HMAS *Melbourne* with an embarked Seahawk helicopter and *Armidale* Class Patrol Boat HMAS *Maryborough*, alongside Royal Malaysian Navy ship KD *Jebat* with a Super Lynx helicopter. The Royal Australian Air Force will also participate in the exercise. The Mastex exercise aims to progress interoperability in areas common to both Navies and will be comprised of a wide range of security and warfare exercises and evolutions.

August 12 “Singapore, Australia sign defense pact” (Xinhua, August 12, 2008)

While on a visit to Singapore on August 12, Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd signed a new defense pact with the city-state. Under the terms of the new deal, Canberra and Singapore will expand their cooperation in defense R&D, exercises, operations, and humanitarian and disaster relief missions. The deal also called for the establishment of annual meetings between the Australian Department of Defense and the Singapore Ministry of Defense.

August 14 “Malaysia, Vietnam sign military cooperation” (Xinhua, August 14, 2008)

On August 14, Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Najib Tun Razak signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of mutual cooperation with Vietnamese Defense Minister Gen Phung Quang Thanh who was visiting Malaysia. In particular, the MoU addressed the possibility of joint training, officer-level military exchanges, and legal procedures dealing with foreign fisherman caught in territorial waters.

August 14 “Russia-NATO joint naval exercise in SOJ cancelled” (RIA Novosti, August 14, 2008)

A Russia-NATO naval exercise in the Sea of Japan (SOJ) has been cancelled, a spokesman for Russia's Pacific fleet said on August 14. Russian, French, British and US ships were to take part in the exercise, codenamed FRUKUS 2008, in the SOJ from August 15 to 23. A Pentagon official earlier said the US would stay away from the drill over the South Ossetia-Georgia conflict. Launched in 1988 as a vehicle for dialogue between the Soviet Union, Britain and the US, the exercises involve training scenarios both at sea and ashore. France formally joined the group in 2003, and FRUKUS-2007 was held in the North Atlantic.

August 18 “India deploys four major warships to the Red Sea and east coast of Africa” (Islamic Republic News Agency, August 18, 2008)

According to Iran’s National Press, the Islamic Republic News Agency, on the 18th, India has sent four of its major warships to the Red Sea and the African coast on a deployment from late July to Mid-October. It reports the Indian warships are INS *Delhi*, INS *Talwar*, INS *Godavari* and INS *Aditya* from Indian Western Naval Command. *Delhi* and *Talwar* have already completed their visit to Safaga port in Egypt in Red Sea between August 5 to 8 while *Godavari* and *Aditya* sailed to Refaat Al-Assad in Syria. Later, the four ships would be sailing Mombasa in Kenya, Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, and a couple of ports in Madagascar Island and Mauritius. Regarding the aims of the deployment, Indian navy official says that the Indian ships will be present in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), doing some flag showing and also engaging in naval diplomacy with some port calls, and interaction with personnel from the navies of the countries in the IOR. In February 2008, India had hosted the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, where the participants from 28 navies in the IOR discussed to enhance cooperation and increasing the Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA). Indian Navy official has stressed that these engagements of sending naval ships lead to an enhancement of the MDA.

August 18 “Korea-U.S. joint exercise starts” (Chosun Ilbo, August 18, 2008)

On August 22, an annual joint South Korea-US exercise, Ulchi Freedom Guardian, began, and it will run until 22 August. For the first time, South Korean forces will be commanded by chairman of the Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff, in preparation for Seoul to assume command of its forces in April 2012. The computer-simulated command post exercise will involve 56,000 South Korean and 10,000 American troops stationed overseas and in South Korea.

August 19 -26 “Canada to conduct military rehearsal in Arctic” (Globe & Mail, August 18, 2008)

On August 19-26, Canada will conduct “Operation Nanook 08,” joint army, air force and navy drills in the south Baffin area in the Arctic. The exercise, which will be observed by Defense Minister and Chief of Defense Staff, will involve two frigates, surveillance planes, 120 soldiers, 70 Canadian Rangers, and representatives from the Border Services Agency and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. The exercise aims to rehearse ship emergencies in the Arctic. Although drifting ice has been thick this year and prevented the passage of cruise ships to some areas, a record high of 26 commercial cruises are planned for the Canadian Arctic this season, and eight private ships are believed to be in the Northwest Passage area.

August 20 “NATO ships enter the Black Sea” (International Herald Tribune, August 21, 2008)

On August 20, three NATO warships from Spain, Germany and Poland entered the Black Sea. The NATO flotilla includes Spain's SPS *Adm. Juan de Bourbon*, Germany's FGS *Luebeck* and the Polish ship ORP *General K Pulaski*. Later, with deployment of US frigate USS *Taylor*, they are to

conduct three weeks of exercises and port visits to Romania and Bulgaria, whose naval vessels will also join the exercises. According to the NATO headquarters, the exercises, having been planned a year ago, are not directly linked to tensions in Georgia, which is 900 kilometers from the Romanian coast.

August 21 “USN aircraft carrier *GW* departs San Diego for Yokosuka” (Navy News Stand, August 21, 2008)

On August 21, the US aircraft carrier USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) with her crew of approximately 5,500 sailors departed San Diego, to begin her journey to Yokosuka, Japan to replace USS *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) as the United States' first forward-deployed nuclear-powered aircraft carrier out of the US mainland.

August 22 “Singapore Navy completes deployment program of new frigates” (Defense News, August 26, 2008)

On August 22, the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) christened its sixth and final *Formidable*-class frigate (3,200 ton), the RSS *Supreme*, completing its six-ship deployment program. Commissioning of the RSS *Supreme* is tentatively scheduled for 2009. The first unit of the *Formidable*-class frigates was constructed in France, with the remaining five constructed in Singapore under the French license. “The RSN now has a genuine ‘blue water’ capability that will enable it to participate fully in joint naval operations with Singapore’s friends and allies for purposes such as sea lines of communication(SLOC) protection and naval peacekeeping,” said Sam Bateman, senior fellow at the Institute of Defense and Strategic Studies, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore. “As we have seen with the RIMPAC exercise in 2008 off Hawaii and an earlier Malabar exercise hosted by the Indian Navy in the Bay of Bengal in 2007, these vessels now allow the RSN to play in the big league of blue water navies,” said Bateman.

The *Formidable*-class frigate RSS *Tenacious* participated in the joint SINGSIAM exercise conducted with the Royal Thai Navy (RTN) from August 17 to 25. Also, RSS *Steadfast* is making a port call at Shanghai from August 25 to 29, following another port call to Yokosuka, Japan, on August 15-20.

August 23-26 “Indian Navy, JMSDF ships to conduct joint naval exercise” (Ministry of Defense, India, Press Releases, August 20, 2008)

On August 23-26, Indian Navy is preparing to conduct joint naval exercise with three ships of the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Forces (JMSDF) that are visiting Mumbai. The three JMSDF ships are *Kashima* (Training Ship), *Asagiri* and *Umigiri* (both are Destroyers). On 26th, they will be participating in the Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with Indian Fleet Ships comprising Delhi class and Corvette. The PASSEX would involve OOW Maneuvers, Flying Exercise, Cross Deck Flying, Photo Exercise, Underway Replenishment, Jackstay and Steam Past among others.

1.3 Diplomacy and International Relations

August 7 “Philippine expert: Don't include Kalayaan Group of Islands in Baselines Bill” (Philippine Daily Inquirer, August 7, 2008)

On August 7, a Philippine delegate to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), lawyer Estelito Mendoza who is also a former solicitor general, said that the Philippine government should not include the Kalayaan Group of Islands (KIG), the “Spratly Islands” in Tagalog, within the country’s baselines. Appearing at the Senate committee hearing on the bill that seeks to define the country’s territories, lawyer Estelito Mendoza said it is “simply absurd to put great risk on drawing base points in islands occupied by other countries.” Mendoza said the Philippines does not have the “military or navy might” to enforce its claims on the disputed islands but it also risks violating international law if it includes the Kalayaan Group within its baselines. “The question is whether the Kalayaan group of islands is part of the Philippine archipelago. We will have extreme difficulty establishing that point because we have never, during the centuries of the island's existence, regarded the Kalayaan as part of the Philippine archipelago,” Mendoza said. Based on this, the solution, said Mendoza, is to establish maritime limits first within the country to officially establish it as an archipelago. Under UNCLOS, it does not acquire the status of an archipelago unless it draws baselines,” he said.

According to Senator Miriam Santiago, the Commission on Maritime and Ocean Affairs (CMOA) of the Office of the President would be drafting the bill on Philippine territory, in which the Scarborough Shoals and the Kalayaan Group of Islands are excluded, but they are included as a regime of islands (Article 121 in UNCLOS) to be treated outside the baselines. “We will not lose our claim over these islands whether we enclose them inside the baselines or treat them outside the baselines as a regime of islands,” Senator Santiago said. House Bill No. 3216, which is in virtual limbo after being passed by the House of Representatives on second reading in December 2007, proposes that islands be included within Philippine territory.

Note: Below is a CMOA’s briefing slide which includes the Scarborough Shoals and the Kalayaan Group of Islands as a regime of islands.

http://www.ellentordesillas.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/03/map3_cmoa_option.JPG

August 12 “Malaysian DPM: Malaysia to safeguard sovereignty over Layang-Layang Atoll off Sabah” (Bernama, August 12, 2008)

On August 12, Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) (also the defense minister) Najib Razak said Malaysia will safeguard its sovereignty over the Layang-Layang atoll (English name: Swallow Reef) located off Sabah because it does not want a repeat of its “loss” of the Pulau Batu Puteh (Pedra Branca in Singapore)* rock off Johor. Together with senior media editors, DPM Razak visited Pulau Layang-Layang located in the South China Sea about 300 km northwest of Kota Kinabalu. Najib said the visit was necessary to help create awareness in the people on the sovereignty of the nation. He also said that the stationing of strategic assets such as combat aircraft and warships as well as a Royal Malaysian Navy base to protect the island were a form of assurance for the country. The atoll is home to thousands of migratory birds and has developed into a bird watchers' haven as well as a divers' paradise (see map).

Note*:Regarding Pulau Batsu Puteh, please refer to “Hot topic” in 1. 3 Diplomacy & International relations in the OPRF MARINT Monthly Report, May 2006.

Source: MASLAYSIA HP; <http://www.malaysiasite.nl/layangeng.htm>

【Related Story】

“Foreign Ministry of the Republic of China (Taiwan) rebuffed Malaysia’s sovereignty over Layang-Layang atoll” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic Of China (Taiwan), August 15, 2008)

On August 15, the government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) made an announcement against the visit of Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister and also Defense Minister Najib Razak to the Layang-Layanf atoll and his claim of sovereignty over Layang-Layang atoll. The following is the gist of the statement.

- (1) The Spratly Islands, including the Swallow Reef (Layang-Layang atoll), are located in Taiwan’s territorial waters. From either a historical, geographical or international legal perspective, the Spratly Islands, Paracel Islands, Macclesfield Islands, Pratas Islands and nearby waters are part of Taiwan’s territory and territorial waters.
- (2) The government of Taiwan calls on neighboring countries in the South China Sea to shelve sovereignty disputes and jointly explore resources based on the principle and spirit of the UN Charter, the UN Convention on the Law of Sea (UNCLOS) and the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. Our government is willing to peacefully resolve disputes in the South China Sea through negotiation and dialogue.
- (3) Our government proposed a Spratly Initiative* in February 2008, taking the position that the future of the South China Sea depends on substituting the sovereignty issue with environmental protection, and resource exploitation with ecological preservation. South China Sea states need to concern themselves with the threat that global warming and rising sea levels pose to the sustainable management of island reefs, and give priority to listing the South China Sea as a marine ecological sanctuary that is regularly open to international ecology experts and environmental protection groups for research and field observation.

Note*: Regarding the “Spratly Initiative,” please refer to 1.3 Diplomacy & International Relations in OPRF MARINT Monthly Report, February 2008.

1.4 Shipping, Resources, Environment, and Miscellaneous

August 1“Present status of Jiangnan Changxing Shipbuilding Base (SinoDefence.com, August 1, 2008)

Chinese Internet, SinoDefence.com, August 1, 2008 reports on the present status of the Jiangnan Changxing Shipbuilding Base which China State Shipbuilding Corporation (CSSC) is building in Changxing Island off the coast of Shanghai.

The gist of the report is as follows.

- (1) In 2003, China State Shipbuilding Corporation (CSSC) signed an agreement with the Shanghai City Council to relocate its subordinated shipyards from their current locations near city center to Changxing Island off the coast of Shanghai. The purpose of the project was to provide valuable land spaces for Shanghai's urban development, as well as to utilize the deep-water coast of Changxing Island for construction of larger vessels. Construction of the new Changxing Shipbuilding Base began in June 2005. In the first phase of the 3.6-billion US dollar project, four large dry docks, nine outfitting piers, and two cargo piers have been built along a 3.8-kilometer (km) coastline. The facility became the new home for the CSSC Jiangnan Shipyard (Group) Corporation. The Jiangnan Shipyard will expand its shipbuilding capacity from the current 800,000 deadweight tons (DWTs) a year to 4.5 million DWTs by 2010. The relocation has been completed by mid-2008 and the first vessel built by the facility is expected to be delivered by 2009.
- (2) In the second phase of development, the other CSSC two subsidiaries, Hudong-Zhonghua Shipbuilding (Group) Corporation and Waigaoqiao Shipbuilding Corporation, will add more shipyards along Changxing Island's 8km coastline. By 2015, CSSC is expected to have an annual capacity of 8 million DWTs, half of China's current production capacity.
- (3) The Changxing Shipbuilding Base also offers the capability to build large naval vessels including aircraft carriers. The largest dockyard in the facility is 580m in length and 120m in width, enough to build a Varyag-size carrier. In fact, a scaled mock up of the Cahngxing Shipbuilding Base displayed by CSSC has revealed an aircraft carrier in one of the facility's dry docks (see photograph). At present, the carrier Varyag has been docked at the Dalian Shipyard, and little activities have been noted since late 2006. Some sources suggested that the PRC is planning to build 1-2 medium-size (50,000-60,000t displacement) carriers at the Changxing facility, possibly based on the design of the Varyag. If this turns out to be true, the first Chinese indigenously-built aircraft carrier could be expected to join the PLA Navy service by 2015.

A scaled model of the Jiangnan Changxing Shipbuilding Base showing an aircraft carrier in a dry dock
(Source: Chinese Internet)

Source: SinoDefence.com, August 1, 2008

<http://www.sinodefence.com/research/new-facility-carrier-building/default.asp>

August 3 “China has 4th largest merchant fleet in the world” (Shiptalk, August 3, 2008)

According to water transport department of the Chinese ministry of transport, China's water transport industry has made remarkable achievements in 30 years. In 2007, waterborne cargo transportation realized a capacity of 2.8 billion tons and container throughputs reached 6.4 billion tones, breaking 100 million TEUs for the first time. In 2007, China's overall shipping capacity was 118 million DWTs (dead weight tons), with a maritime fleet ranking fourth in the world. Its five ports are listed among the top ten in the world for largest throughput with Shanghai becoming the largest port in the world. The China Ocean Shipping (Group) Company (COSCO) and China Shipping Container Lines Company (CSCL) both are listed among the world's top ten liner companies.

August 4 “Brazil, China sign agreement on building VLOC” (Xinhua, August 5, 2008)

The world's biggest iron ore supplier, Brazilian Companhia Vale do Rio Doce (Vale) signed a 1.6 billion US dollars agreement with China's third-largest shipbuilder, Jiangsu Rongsheng Heavy Industries Co. Ltd to build 12 very large ore carriers (VLOC), Vale announced on August 4. The ships, each with a 400,000 deadweight tons capacity, are the largest ore carriers to be built in the world. The 12 VLOC will have an estimated capacity to carry 30.2 million metric tons of iron ore per year, which represents 31 percent of Vale's shipments to China in 2007, Vale said. The first of the carriers is due to be ready in early 2010. All 12 carriers should be ready by 2012. The fleet will be part of Vale's Brazil-Asia shuttle service, which currently has six large ore carriers.

August 5 “British scientist draws up map outlining various countries' claims to the Arctic Circle” (BBC News, August 5, 2008)

BBC News dated August 5 reported scientists at Britain's Durham University International Boundaries Research Unit (IBRU) had drawn up the map outlining various countries' claims to the Arctic and areas of potential future border disputes. The scientists took into account the fact that some countries might be able to extend their outer limits of the continental shelf to 350 nautical miles. Currently, Canada, the US, Russia, Denmark and Norway have competing claims to the Arctic.

Note: The map can be accessed from the URL as follows:

<http://www.dur.ac.uk/ibru/resources/arctic/>

August 11 “US Coast Guard cutter to conduct survey of Arctic seafloor” (U.S. Department of State, Media Note, August 11, 2008)

According to an announcement from the US Department of State on August 11, the U.S. Extended Continental Shelf Task Force, chaired by the Department of State, plans two Arctic cruises by the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter USCG *Healy* this summer, one of which will be conducted in collaboration with the Government of Canada.

The first cruise, August 14 to September 5 from Barrow, Alaska, will employ a sophisticated echo sounder that will collect data to create a three-dimensional map of the Arctic seafloor in an area known as the Chukchi Cap. The second cruise, September 6 to October 1, also from Barrow, will be conducted in cooperation with Canada. The *Healy* will map the seafloor and it will also create a straight and open path through the ice with the Canadian icebreaker, *Louis S. St. Laurent*. This collaboration will assist both countries in defining the continental shelf in the Arctic Ocean.

This will be the fourth summer that the U.S. has collected data in the Arctic in support of defining the limits of its extended continental shelf. In addition to the U.S. Department of State acting as chair, participants in the Extended Continental Shelf Task Force include: the Executive Office of the President, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Coast Guard, the National Science Foundation, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the U.S. Navy, the Department of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Minerals Management Service, and the Arctic Research Commission.

【Related Story】**“US Coast Guard intensifies Arctic operations” (Fairplay Daily News, August 22, 2008)**

The US Coast Guard is significantly increasing its security and rescue operations in Arctic waters in light of retreating ice and the promise of energy resources. The cutter *Hamilton* will lead an effort to expand operations from the Bering Sea into the Chukchi Sea, Beaufort Sea and Arctic Ocean. The rationale behind an expansion of the Arctic mission is two-fold: extending the US security reach and improving response to polar maritime casualties. The USCGC *Hamilton*

will conduct a search and rescue exercise. The problem is, as Rear Admiral Gene Brooks, commander of the Coast Guard's Alaska district, has admitted, that Coast Guard capabilities in the nation's northernmost waters are extremely limited. While Coast Guard Arctic missions in the next five to 10 years are poised to grow, Allen said, "Maintaining the status quo will be insufficient to protect the interests of our nation."

Daily Arctic sea ice extent for August 10, 2008, was 6.54 million square kilometers (2.52 million square miles). The orange line shows the 1979 to 2000 average extent for that day. The black cross indicates the geographic North Pole.

Source: U.S. National Snow and Ice Data Center, Arctic Sea Ice News & Analysis
http://nsidc.org/data/seaice_index/images/daily_images/N_daily_extent_hires.png

August 12 "CNOOC discovers new oil, gas field in Bohai Bay" (Xihua, August 12, 2008)

On August 12, China National Offshore Oil Co., Ltd. (CNOOC Ltd.) announced it had discovered oil and natural gas in its wildcat well, drilled in the Yellow River Mouth Sag of east China's Bohai Bay. According to the Beijing-based oil giant, test flows were about 1,500 barrels of oil and 220,000 cubic feet of gas per day. Since 2006, the company had made six discoveries in the same area.

August 12 “US Navy agrees to limit use of low-frequency sonar” (International Herald Tribune, August 13, 2008)

On August 12, the U.S. Navy (USN) agreed to limit the loud, low-frequency sonar used to detect submarines. It is in response to criticism by environmentalists that the sound negatively affects whales and other marine mammals. The settlement in federal court restricts the Navy's use of low-frequency sonar to specific military training areas near Hawaii and in the western Pacific Ocean. Under the current settlement, the USN has agreed to only employ the low-frequency sonar beyond 50 miles from the coast, and will not use it near Hawaii's Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary and the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. On the other hand, the Navy is asking the U.S. Supreme Court to reconsider a federal appeals court ruling limiting the more widely used mid-frequency sonar in training exercises off Southern California's coast. The Navy argues that the decision threatens the readiness of sailors and Marines while providing limited environmental benefit.

August 14 “IBF rejects bid to classify waters off Georgia as war risk zone” (Maritime Global Net, August 14, 2008)

The Joint Negotiating Group (JNG) of the International Bargaining Forum (IBF) has rejected a bid by the International Transport Federation (ITF) to classify the waters around Georgia as a war risk zone. The JNG accepted the claim of the International Maritime Employers' Committee (IMEC) of the shipping owners that now a ceasefire is in place and there is no risk to merchant ships. In fact, no attacks on merchant ships were reported although the port of Poti was badly damaged by the Russian bombing raids and 10 longshoremen were killed.

August 19, “Panama-flag fleet still growing” (Maritime Global Net, August 19, 2008)

The Panama-registered merchant fleet continues to be the world's largest since 1993. Ship numbers increased by 4.7 percent (%) in the first half of 2008, bringing the total fleet to 7,965 vessels with aggregate gross tonnage (GT) of 177.09 million GT as of the end of June 2008. According to Panama Maritime Authority (PMA), registration of new-buildings constituted 50% of the six month increase. In Panama, the new maritime laws have come into law in August 2008, granting incentives for new registration, depending of gross tonnage and type of ships. Those registering 5-15 ships will receive 20% discount in registration fees; 16-50 vessels qualify for 35% and for 51 vessels and above, a discount of 60% will be granted.

August 25 “US President moves to protect Pacific monuments” (Los Angeles Times, August 26, 2008)

On August 25, President Bush signaled his intention to protect some of the Pacific Ocean's most remote and unspoiled islands, atolls and coral reefs from fishing and deep sea mining. In a memo to three Cabinet secretaries, the president asked for a plan that would protect parts of the Mariana Trench, the deepest place on the planet, as well as waters around Rose Atoll in American Samoa and various islands and reefs in the Central Pacific. The proposal, expected to be finalized

before Bush leaves office (on January 20, 2009), could establish marine sanctuaries or national monuments extending as far as 200 miles from each island or emergent reef.

August 26 “Canada to map Arctic mineral sites” (Toronto Star, August 27 and Globe & Mail, August 27, 2008)

On August 26, while on a visit to the Arctic Circle, Canadian Prime Minister (PM) Stephen Harper announced that 100 million Canadian dollars (CAD) will be spent over five years to map potential resources in the Canadian Arctic. Simultaneously, PM Harper has declared that his government will also extend to 200 nautical miles the distance from the coast line inside which shipping will be regulated by Canadian law, which legally falls within the UN mandated Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) limit. However, Canada currently lacks the resources to patrol these larger waters.

August 26 “Norway continuing to guard Russia’s illegal fishery operations” (Barents Observer, August 26, 2008)

Although Russia sent two Northern Fleet vessels, the *Severomorsk* and the *Marshal Ustinov*, in July to the waters around Spitsbergen near Norwegian territory, the Norwegian Coast Guard (NCG) said it will continue to arrest Russian fishermen found to be fishing illegally. Two more Russian fishing trawlers were arrested by the NCG this week. In 1977, Norway unilaterally established a 200-mile fishery protection zone around its northern archipelago - Spitsbergen (Svalbard), though Russia has never recognized Oslo's claims. (Regarding the dispatch of Russian warships, see 1. 2 Military in OPRF MARINT Monthly Report, July 2008.)

2. Intelligence Assessment

2.1 Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships during the first half of 2008: Analysis from the ReCAAP Reports

At the end of July 2008, the Information Sharing Center (ISC) established in the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) released to the public a report on the incidents of piracy and armed robbery against the ships noted in the Asian areas during the first half of 2008 (1 January–30 June 2008). While the similar report of the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) covers world-wide areas, the ReCAAP covers the regional areas stretching from the Arabian Sea to northeast Asia via southern rim of the Eurasian continent. In addition, while the IMB makes use of reports from non-government vessels and shipping owners as its main sources of information, ReCAAP makes use information from maritime security agencies and navies primarily of its member-countries in producing its reports. Where necessary, the ISC leverages on other secondary sources of information, including those from the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and IMB among others. (Fourteen member-nations are India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Brunei, Philippines, China, Republic of Korea and Japan. Malaysia and Indonesia are non-members.)

The following are the patterns and trends of the incidents of piracy and armed robbery against the ships viewed from the ReCAAP report noted in the Asian region during the first half of 2008 (1 January–30 June 2008) (hereafter the Report).

1. Definition of piracy and armed robbery

Regarding the definition of Piracy and Armed Robbery, the ISC in ReCAAP accepts the “definition of piracy” in Article 101 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). As for the armed robbery against the vessels, the ISC accepts the definition of the “Code of practice for the Investigation of the Crimes of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships” which was adopted by the IMO in November 2001.

2. Characteristics viewed from numbers and locations of actual and attempted attacks

According to the Report, a total of 45 incidents (attacks/cases) of piracy and armed robberies against ships were reported during the first half of 2008. Of these, 36 were actual attacks, and nine were the attempted cases. Looking at the incidents every three months, in the first quarter (January – March) of the year, 20 attacks (including five attempted cases) were noted; in the second quarter (April – June), 25 attacks (including four attempted cases) were noted. In particular, 13 attacks in April (including two attempted cases) were remarkable. In this connection, seven attacks (including two cases) in May and five attacks (with no attempted cases)

in June were noted, indicating there has been a decline in the number of the incidents reported.

The number of attacks in the ReCAAP's responsible areas during each first half (hereafter during the same period when compared with other annual years) of the past three years (2008, 2007 and 2006) is shown in the Table 1. Over all, according to the data, there has been a decline in the number of the incidents reported during the same period in the past three years. The Report is pointing out that the decline was most apparent in areas around the Gelasa Strait (between Pulau Bangka off Palembang in Sumatra and Pulau Belitung), Tanjung Priok (Kakarta) and the Makassar Strait in Indonesia, and the ports and waters off Sarawak and Sabah in East Malaysia. However, the Report is paying attention to an increase in the number of incidents noted in Bangladesh, India and Philippines.

Table 1: Total number of incidents reported (January-June 2008, 2007 and 2006)

	January-June 2008		January-June 2007		January-June 2006	
	Actual	Attempted	Actual	Attempted	Actual	Attempted
East Asia						
China					1	
South Asia						
Bangladesh	6	2	5		16	8
India	7	1	5		1	
Arabian Sea				3		
South-east Asia						
Indonesia	11	1	19	5	23	9
Malaysia	3		5	1	9	
Vietnam	3		3		2	
South China Sea	2	1			2	
Straits of Malacca and Singapore	1	3		1	3	2
Philippines	3	1		1	2	
Thailand			1		1	
Sub-total	36	9	38	11	60	19
Overall Total	45		49		79	

Sources : Made from data in ReCAAP Half Yearly Report (1 January 2008 – 30 June 2008), p.11, Table 8

3. Evaluation on significance of incidents viewed in the ReCAAP report

The most distinctive characteristic of the ReCAAP report is that the ISO evaluates significance of each incident in terms of two factors – violence factor and economic factor and classifies each case into three categories.

In evaluation of the violent factor the report uses as criteria: (1) types of weapons used (violence is the most forceful when more highly efficient weapons than knives and others are

used; (2) treatment of the crew (violence is the most intensive if the crew are killed or kidnapped; and (3) numbers of the pirates /robbers who engaged in an attack (in this case, the more the numbers are, the greater the violence develops, and the organized crime will possibly increase.)

In assessment of the economic factors the report uses a criterion of evaluating financial values of damaged vessels. In this case, the seriousness is the greatest when the ship was hijacked with the cargoes. Based on the above criteria, the report classifies each category as follows.

Category	Significance of Incident
CAT 1	Very Significant
CAT 2	Moderately Significant
CAT 3	Less Significant

Table 2 classifies the actual incidents noted during the same period of past three years into one of three categories. According to these data, the past two years observed a decrease in the number of incidents of category 2. On the other hand, the number of incidents of category 1 remained fairly consistent during the same period of the past three years.

Table 2: Number of actual incidents by categories in first half of every three years (January-June 2008, 2007, 2006)

	January-June 2008	January-June 2007	January-June 2006
CAT 1	4	2	2
CAT 2	6	6	22
CAT 3	26	30	36

Sources: Made from data in ReCAAP Half Yearly Report (1 January 2008 – 30 June 2008), p.15, Chart 1 and p. 19, Chart 6.

Note : Between Chart 1 and Chart 6, the number of incidents of Category 1 and Category 2 in half of 2008 does not concur. (There are three cases of Category 1 and seven cases of Category 2 in Chart 1 while there are four cases of Category 1 and six cases of Category 2 in Chart 6.) However, judging from the way of an explanation of the content, we have adopted the number in Chart 6.

According to the Report, as for an evaluation of violence factor, looking from the type of weapons used, of 36 actual incidents in the first half of 2008, seven incidents involving the use of guns and knives, 12 incidents involving the use of knives, and 17 incidents, where weapons used are either not stated or unidentified, were noted. Of 38 actual incidents during the same period in 2007, four incidents involving the use of guns and knives, 14 incidents involving the use of knives, one incident involving the use of other weapons, and 19 incidents, where weapons used are either not stated or unidentified, were noted. Of 60 actual incidents during the same period in 2006, 10 incidents involving the use of guns and knives, 24 incidents involving the use of knives, two incidents involving the use of other weapons, and 24 incidents, where weapons used are

either not stated or unidentified, were noted. Regarding the fact that the large number of incidents where weapons used are either not stated or unidentified, the Report is encouraging captains of the ships to report the type of weapons carried by the pirates/robbers during the attack while pointing out that it has hampered analysis in this area.

Regarding the treatment of crew, in the first half of 2008, there were two incidents in which members of the crew were killed. Both were category 1 incidents. In the first half of 2008, there were one incident where crew were abandoned, five incidents where crew were held hostage and assaulted, one incident where crew were threatened, and 27 incidents where crew were not injured or details were not reported. Of 38 actual incidents during the same period in 2007, one incident where crew were seriously injured, one incident where crew were abandoned, five incidents where crew were held hostage and assaulted, three incidents where crew were threatened, and 28 incidents, where crew were not injured or details were not reported, were noted. Of 60 actual incidents during the same period in 2006, one incident where crew were seriously injured, 18 incidents where crew were held hostage and assaulted, seven incidents where crew were threatened, and one incident where crew were killed and missing, and 33 incidents, where crew were not injured or details were not reported, were noted.

As to the number of robbers and pirates, of 36 actual incidents in the first half of 2008, 29 incidents involving a group of 1-6 robbers, two incidents involving groups of 7-9, and five incidents involving groups of more than nine robbers were noted. During the same period in 2007, of 38 actual incidents, 33 incidents involving groups of 1-6 robbers, two incidents involving groups of 7-9, and three incidents involving groups of more than nine robbers were noted. During the same period in 2006, of 60 actual incidents, 45 incidents involving a groups of 1-6 robbers, six incidents involving groups of 7-9, and nine incidents involving groups of more than nine robbers were noted.

According to the Report, during the first half of 2008, groups of more than nine robbers were involved in five incidents. These incidents involved ships while under way off Pulau Mangkai, Anambas Islands of Indonesia in South China Sea; en route from Jolo, Sulu to Laminusa Island of Philippines; in the Mkassar Strait and south of Pulau Tioman off the west coast of Malaysia. The others incidents occurred when the ship was at anchor at the port of Chittagong, Bangladesh.

With regard to analysis of economic factor (losses), of 36 actual incidents in the first half of 2008, two incidents where cargo was discarded and ships were hijacked, seven incidents where cash and property were robbed, 13 incidents where stores/engine spare parts were stolen, six incidents where other items were stolen, and six incidents which were not reported or unidentified were noted. During the same period in 2007, of 38 actual incidents, three incidents where cargo was discarded and ships were hijacked, two incidents where cash and property were robbed, 20 incidents where stores/engine spare parts were stolen, five incidents where other items were stolen, and eight incidents which were not reported or unidentified were noted. During the same period in 2006, of 60 actual incidents, five incidents where cargo was discarded and ships were hijacked, 11 incidents where cash and property were robbed, 26 incidents where stores/engine spare parts were stolen, four incidents where other items were stolen, and 14

incidents which were not reported or unidentified were noted.

Looking at the trends in the past three years, majority of the incidents during the three reporting periods involved the theft of crew's properties, stores and engine spare parts of ships among others, which is an overall trend of the incidents of piracy in the responsible areas of the ReCAAP. The ratio of incidents of robbing cargo and hijacking ships is small in the overall ratio. It contrasts with piracy incidents off Somalia and Aden.

4. Features viewed from type

Regarding the actual incidents in the first half of the past three years, the status where the ships were attacked is shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Status of ships during the actual incidents (January-June 2008, 2007, 2006)

	Berthed	Anchored	Steaming
January-June 2008	6	15	15
January-June 2007	2	29	7
January-June 2006	5	32	23

Sources: Made from data in ReCAAP Half Yearly Report (1 January 2008-30 June 2008), p.18, Chart 5.

According to the Report, looking at the status of the ships at the time of the actual incidents, majority of them were Category 3 incidents, in which the ships were attacked at anchor/at berth. Robbers board the ship, preparing to flee empty-handed when detected by the crew. Of 21 actual incidents involving ships that were anchored or berthed during the first half of 2008, 20 were Category 3 incidents and one was a Category 2 incident. On this matter, this status is assessed to reflect the overall significance of the piracy incidents in the ReCAAP targeting areas. The ReCAAP ISC recommends that ship masters and crew strengthen watch keeping when their ships were anchored or berthed in areas where attacks have been reported.

On the other hand, incidents involving ships that were underway were generally Category 1 or Category 2 incidents.

Looking at the ships involved in actual incidents in the first half in 2008 by type, nine (two in the first quarter and seven in the second quarter of the year) container ships appeared to be more commonly targeted than the other ships.

After them, other types of vessels were noted as follows: eight chemical tankers (four in the first quarter and in the second quarter of the year respectively), seven general cargo ships (four in the first quarter and three in the second quarter of the year), five bulk carriers (four in the first quarter and one in the second quarter of the year), five tugboats (two in the first quarter and three in the second quarter of the year), four crude oil tankers (three in the first quarter and one in the second quarter of the year), and two passenger craft (one in the first quarter and in the second quarter of the year respectively). Additionally, other ships involved in the incidents were one product tanker (in the second quarter of the year), one LPG tanker (in the second quarter of the year), one tanker whose type is unknown (in the second quarter of the year), one fishing vessel

(in the second quarter of the year), and one survey vessel (in the second quarter of the year). According to the Report, based upon these data, various types of tankers appeared to be more commonly targeted than other vessels. Of these tankers, four were attacked in Indonesia. Two were attacked at the anchorage of Belawan and other two were attacked while steaming—one in the Makassar Strait and one near Pulau Jemaja, Anambas islands. Elsewhere incidents involving various types of tankers occurred at the ports of India at Kandla, Kochi and Kakinada (east coast), and in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore.

5. Characteristics in the first half of 2008

Compared to the incidents in the first half of the past three years, the Report is pointing out on the characteristics during the same period in 2008 as follows:

- (1) There has been a decrease in the number of Category 2 and Category 3. Particularly, the greatest decrease occurred in the Category 2 incidents. The number of Category 1 incidents has remained relatively constant during three reporting periods.
- (2) The drop in the number of reported incidents is more apparent in the areas around the Gelasa Strait, Tanjung Priok and Makassar Strait, Indonesia, and ports and waters off Sarawak and Sabah, East Malaysia.
- (3) Tankers appeared to have been targeted more frequently than other type of ships.
- (4) A large proportion of incidents reported in the past three years occurred while ships were at anchor and at berth, and during hours of darkness.
- (5) Robbers were most commonly armed with knives in incidents in the past three years.
- (6) More than half of all reported incidents involved robbers operating in group sizes of one to six.
- (7) The number of incidents involving crew being abandoned, held for hostage and assaulted during the first half of 2008 was fairly consistent with the same period in 2007.

2.2 The Significance of Deploying the Nuclear-Powered Carrier, USS *George Washington*, at Yokosuka

The nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, USS *George Washington* (CVN 73), left the Naval Base in San Diego, California for Yokosuka on August 21. *GW* is scheduled to be deployed at Yokosuka in September. Yokosuka has been the only overseas base that the U.S. Navy deployed, but *GW* is the first nuclear-powered carrier to be deployed there. What is the implication of the deployment of *GW* at Yokosuka?

1. The background of *GW* deployment at Yokosuka

The U.S. Navy deployed one of its carriers at Yokosuka for the first time in October 1973. U.S. carriers had visited Yokosuka before, but the families of carrier crew members moved to Yokosuka

then and Yokosuka became the virtual homeport of the USS *Midway*.

The carrier overseas deployment envisioned the effective and efficient use of carriers as the core of power projection capability. Under the Nixon Doctrine, Washington reduced the number of troops and bases overseas, while maintaining the forward-deployed forces. The Congressional pressure to cut the military budget, as well as inflation and the decision to have an all-volunteer army, accelerated the reduction. Given the military budget cut, the number of carriers was to be reduced from 18 to 12, although it was estimated that a force of 15 carriers was necessary to maintain U.S. overseas commitments when the Soviet Navy was growing rapidly. The reduction of manpower resulted in the extension of lengths of deployment and the prolonged family separation discouraged (re)enlistment. Thus, there was no other way but to deploy some carriers overseas to reduce the lengths and costs of deployment and bolster the morale. Among the U.S. overseas bases, Yokosuka was found most desirable due to its housing condition, support facilities and the nearby airfields.

The carrier deployment at Yokosuka, as a matter of course, strengthened U.S. forward-deployed forces. The Soviet Union became to possess approximately 100 surface ships and 140 submarines based at Vladivostok throughout the 1980s and, couples with the Tu-22M “Backfire” bombers, attempted to make the Sea of Okhotsk its “sanctuary”. In response, the United States called for its owe military buildup and the unity of the Western countries. The U.S. Maritime Strategy, made public in 1986, envisioned, in case of war fighting, a massive naval offensive against Soviet forces around the periphery of the Soviet Union to reduce the threat against the NATO ground forces in the center front line in Europe. Carriers were instrumental to this second front strategy. The carrier battle group at Yokosuka was augmented by the anti-submarine, air-defense and coastal defense capabilities of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force. This U.S.-Japan cooperation in sea lane defense in the Western Pacific augmented the Western naval superiority vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and contributed to ending the Cold War.

On the other hand, carriers are used as a measure to show political commitments and as a symbol of military presence. After the 1960s, Chinese nuclear armament and subsequent U.S. pursuit of a nonproliferation regime undermined the credibility of US extended deterrence. U.S.-USSR strategic nuclear balance had reached parity and Chinese missiles could not reach U.S. mainland. Therefore U.S. allies in the Far East wondered if the United States was willing to provide nuclear umbrella. Nevertheless, the deployment of a carrier one of whose missions was nuclear retaliation increased the credibility of U.S. nuclear umbrella and the carrier became the symbol of U.S. commitment.

2. The implication of GW deployment at Yokosuka

Then, what is the implication of *GW* deployment at Yokosuka in the new security environment in the 21st century? The Quadrennial Defense Review of February 2006, given the strategic and economic importance of the Pacific, set forth a plan to deploy six out of 11 carriers and 60% of submarine forces in the Pacific. With *GW*'s deployment at Yokosuka, the 6-carrier posture in the Pacific will be fixed. This Pacific-oriented posture is said to be designed with power projection into

the Korean Peninsula, the Taiwan Strait, the Middle East and the India Ocean.

The importance of power projection capability of carriers remains the same after the Cold War, carriers have been thrown out in conflicts in the Third World, especially the Middle East. In the 1991 Gulf War, the carrier force, lacked air wing equipped with precision weapons, could not distinguish itself in the Air Force-led forces. However, since there are few nearby bases available for U.S. troops in the War on Terror, the power projection capability of carrier force has been closely watched once again.

In fact, carriers were the first to be thrown out in the war in Afghanistan and 75% of air campaign was conducted by carrier-based aircraft. Also, 90% of the bombs launched from carrier air wings were precision bombs. Six carriers were engaged in the 11-week operation with a short preparation time. A carrier was also used as an afloat forward-staging base of a special operations force. In the 2003 Iraq War, being denied the use of bases by the neighboring countries, the United States put carriers in the Mediterranean and the Arabian Sea to provide air cover necessary for ground operations.

In addition, due to its flexibility, carriers can make a difference in operations other than combat. First, in the 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis, Washington successfully delivered a message to express its concern over Chinese actions by sending two carriers in the vicinity of the Strait. The power generation function, seawater desalination capacity, medical facilities and transport capacity of carriers are used for disaster relief mission and international cooperation activities. For example, a U.S. carrier was engaged in the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami disaster relief mission as the virtual command center of multinational rescue force.

On the other hand, observers often point out the inefficiency and vulnerability as restrictions of carrier operations. The construction of a *Nimitz*-class costs approximately \$4.5 billion and a carrier air wing costs almost the same. With more than 5,000 crew members aboard, a carrier spends millions of dollar a day. Because of its largeness, a carrier can be easily detected by radar and its flight deck is a desirable target of missiles. Once the flight deck suffers severe damage, a carrier loses almost all of its capability. Nevertheless, the durability of a *Nimitz*-class is estimated to be 50 years and the vulnerability has been reduced with the introduction of Aegis air-defense system. The defense range of a carrier is now as far as 700 Km in radius. Carriers will continue to play a central role in U.S. world strategy. In fact, the new U.S. maritime strategy lists forward presence, deterrence, sea control, power projection, maritime security and humanitarian support and disaster relief as capabilities to be expanded and carriers will play an important role in all of these.

The carriers based at Yokosuka got engaged in many military operations after the Cold War. Yokosuka is geographically close to the front lines and provides superior repair and supply facilities which keep the carriers under the best available conditions. The replacement of the aging conventionally-powered USS *Kitty Hawk* with the advanced nuclear-powered *GW* will lead to enhanced readiness, mobility and flexibility. A nuclear carrier, requiring no refueling, can take the shortest way to its destination at peak speed. Also, a nuclear carrier can carry more fuel for air wing or other materials in stead of heavy fuel oil for the ship.

The deployment of *GW* at Yokosuka will enhance U.S. Navy's capability in the Western Pacific, which will also contribute to the security of Japan. For Japan, lacking capability for attacking enemy missile sites, the carrier battle group at Yokosuka, coupled with missile defense system, will provide important deterrent power vis-à-vis North Korea developing nuclear weapons. North Korean nuclear test of October 2006 and subsequent Washington's conciliatory policy toward Pyongyang undermined the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence once again, but the deployment of *GW* at Yokosuka will reaffirm U.S. commitment. Moreover, the deployment of *GW* will have important implication vis-à-vis the expansion of China's sea power. The tracking of USS *Kitty Hawk* by a Chinese submarine in the vicinity of Okinawa in October 2006 and the cancellation of its port call in Hong Kong of October 2007 indicate that China has been concerned about the carrier strike group at Yokosuka since the 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis. It is estimated that Beijing is enlarging its submarine fleet to deter the deployment of carrier in an armed conflict in the Taiwan Strait.

3. Challenge to be solved

Warships enjoy the right of innocent passage in foreign waters under the international law. They can also visit foreign ports according to international practices. However, the introduction of nuclear weapons aboard nuclear-capable carriers was a big problem in their visits to Japan. When the USS *Enterprise* visited Sasebo in 1968 as the first nuclear carrier to visit Japan, thousands rallied against the visit of "mobile nuclear base." It has become widely known that there is a tacit agreement between Tokyo and Washington to permit the introduction of nuclear weapons. Washington announced in 1992 that tactical nuclear weapons would be removed from all vessels and aircraft because precision-guided weapons are so accurate that they can pinpoint assault on military targets without relying on nuclear blasts. Thus the introduction of nuclear weapons is irrelevant to *GW* deployment.

On the other hand, some regard *GW* as a "mobile nuclear plant" and rally against the deployment of the "dangerous" carrier at Yokosuka. Tokyo has accepted the visits to Japan by U.S. nuclear-powered warships based on Aides-Memoir of 1964 and 1967 regarding the safety and liability issues of those ships. To ease concerns about the safety of a nuclear carrier, Washington released a "fact sheet" on the safety of U.S. nuclear-powered warships in April 2006. Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Japan and Yokosuka City concluded a disaster prevention agreement in March 2007 followed by U.S. Navy's first participation in the Yokosuka disaster drill of November, which the U.S. Navy has never done in homeports of nuclear carriers in U.S. mainland. The U.S. Navy has explained that nuclear carriers are build more solidly than civil nuclear power plants so that they can survive in war. However, the opposition groups have asserted that the deployment of *GW* is "not permissible" and demanded local referenda on the deployment and suspension of facility constructions necessary for the deployment. Those claims are all dismissed and now there is no procedural obstacle to *GW* deployment.

The challenge is to have *GW* perform to the best of her potential. For the most effective use of *GW*, it is important to maintain its air wing which provides the "striking power" under the best

conditions. In May 2006, Tokyo and Washington agreed to transfer the air wing from the noise-suffering Atsugi Base to Iwakuni. The operation of air wing requires ceaseless Carrier Field Landing Practices (CFLP), especially at night. The two governments need to fix a permanent CFLP site as quickly as possible.

Links

AFP	http://www.afp.com/home/
AP	http://www.ap.org/
Australian Ministry of Defence	http://www.defence.gov.au/
BBC News	http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/
Barents Observer	http://www.barentsobserver.com/
Bloomberg	http://www.bloomberg.com/
CNN	http://www.cnn.com/
Channel News Asia	http://www.channelnewsasia.com/
Chosun Ilbo	http://english.chosun.com/
Defense News	http://www.defensenews.com/
Die Welt	http://www.diewelt.com/
Fairplay Daily News	http://www.fairplay.co.uk/
globeandmail.com	http://www.theglobeandmail.com/
Ialamic Republic News Agency	http://www1.irna.ir/en/
International Herald Tribune	http://www.ihf.com/
Los Angels Times	http://www.latimes.com/
Mareeg Online	http://www.mareeg.com/
Maritime Global Net	http://www.mgn.com/
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China	http://www.mofa.gov.tw/webapp/mp?mp=6
Ministry of defence, India	http://mod.nic.in/
Navy News Stand	http://www.news.navy.mil/swf/index.asp
Pacific magazine	http://www.pacificmagazine.net/
Philippine Daily Inquirer	http://www.inquirer.com.ph/
RIA Novosti	http://en.rian.ru/
Ship Talk	http://www.shiptalk.com/
SinoDefence.com	http://www.sinodefence.com/
Thaindian News	http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/
The Bangkok Post	http://www.bangkokpost.com/
The Chronicle Herald	http://www.thechronicleherald.ca/
The International Maritime Bureau	http://www.icc-ccs.org/imb/overview.php
The Times of India	http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/
Toronto Star	http://www.thestar.com/
U.S. Department of State HP	http://www.state.gov/
U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs	http://www.cnaf.navy.mil/
U.S. Navy, Office of Naval Intelligence	http://www.nmic.navy.mil/index.htm
Xinhua	http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/