**Committee:** Council of the European Union (EU)

**Topic:** Examining the Role of the EU in Addressing Violations of the Peremptory Norms on Piracy

**Student Officer:** Ioanna Zarogianni

**Position:** Deputy President

## PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear Delegates,

My name is Ioanna Zarogianni and I am enrolled in the 11th grade at the 1st Model High School of Thessaloniki. I am immensely honored to serve as one of the Deputy Presidents of the Council of the European Union (EU) at the annual 9th DSTMUN.

To begin with, I would like to warmly welcome all delegates to this year's EU Council and to inform you that this conference is set to bring out the best of your debating skills and critical thinking while also providing new experiences and friendships. Whether this is your first Model United Nations conference or one of many, I hope you will be able to experience MUN with the same passion, joy and fulfillment as I do.

The second agenda topic of this committee is one of "Examining the Role of the EU in Addressing Violations of the Peremptory Norms on Piracy"; the following study guide will be your primary resource since it is based on credible, well-researched sources rather than biased or unreliable material. It provides you with very specific and designed details to help you understand the topic clearly, allowing you to contribute more confidently and constructively to debate. However, conducting your own independent research on your county's policy regarding the topic later on is highly encouraged.

Alongside with my fellow Co- chairs, I am committed to fostering a diplomatic and intellectually stimulated environment while making sure that everyone feels respected and comfortable. Should you have any questions regarding the rules of procedure, the topic itself, or any issues with your preparation before the conference, do not hesitate to contact me via the following email address; joannazarogianni@gmail.com.

I am very much looking forward to meeting each and everyone of you in person.

Sincerely,

Ioanna Zarogianni

## TOPIC INTRODUCTION

In the past few years, piracy has challenged international security and maritime trade massively. While commonly linked to state-commissioned privateers and naval combat, piracy remains a threat for different regions of the world, particularly strategic shipping routes. The latest pirate attacks are focused on commercial vessels, human shipments, private jets and fishing boats, putting not only human lives at risk but also influencing global commerce.

Although piracy is a serious criminal offense that must be prosecuted, it often stands as a reflection of wider problems such as illegal fishing, poverty, political instability highlighting the absence of effective law enforcement in coastal states. These conditions have contributed to recurring piracy hotspots, most notably off the coast of Somalia during the late 2000s and previously, in the Gulf of Guinea. Although international naval operations have made several attempts to tackle the issue by reducing attacks on some regions, piracy has proven capable of challenging security measures and appears with different challenges for the international community. Moreover, the legal framework governing piracy is one of the oldest areas of international law. Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), piracy is subject to universal jurisdiction, allowing any state to seize pirate vessels and prosecute those responsible regardless of nationality. However, piracy is a complex issue, going far beyond pure law enforcement. Recently, criminal acts such as hostage-taking, torture, murder and other forms of inhumane treatment might represent violations of overriding principles of international law (jus cogens).

Even though this issue may only appear as a maritime security challenge, it is much more than that, since it raises fundamental questions regarding the international laws. This committee will examine whether the European Union's current legal and operational mechanisms are sufficient enough to address violations of peremptory norms arising from piracy acts and protect fundamental rights while balancing diplomacy and collaboration.

## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

### Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)

"The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) contributes to the EU's objectives of preserving peace, strengthening international security, promoting international cooperation and developing and consolidating democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms." [European Commission][1]

[1] "Common Foreign and Security Policy." *European Commission*, 2024, https://commission.europa.eu/funding-and-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/common-foreign-and-security-policy_en. Accessed 23 July 2026.

### Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)

"The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) is a key element of the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), enabling the EU to play a leading role in conflict prevention, crisis management and international peacekeeping." [European Union][2]

### Economic Mobility

"Economic mobility is a combination of economic success, power and autonomy, and being valued within the community, as defined by the U.S. Partnership on Mobility from Poverty. Economic mobility is measured by how economic status or outcomes can change over time." [New Growth Innovation Network][3]

### EU's maritime security strategy (EUMSS)

"The maritime security strategy promotes international peace and security, as well as respect for international rules and principles, while ensuring the sustainability of the oceans and the protection of biodiversity. " [European Commission][4]

### Operation Atlanta

"Operation Atalanta (EUNAVFOR ATALANTA) is the European Union's naval military operation conducted under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) to protect vulnerable vessels, deter, prevent and repress piracy and armed robbery at sea, and contribute to maritime security in the Horn of Africa and the Western Indian Ocean." [EU Naval Force][5]

### Peremptory Norms (Jus Cogens)

"A treaty is void if, at the time of its conclusion, it conflicts with a peremptory norm of general international law. For the purposes of the present Convention, a peremptory norm of general international law is a norm accepted and recognized by the international community of States as a whole as a norm from which no derogation is permitted and which

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[2] EEAS, 2025, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/common-security-and-defence-policy_en#114664. Accessed 23 July 2026.

[3] "New Growth Innovation Network." *New Growth Innovation Network*, 30 Apr. 2025, https://newgrowth.org/blog/what-is-economic-mobility. Accessed 18 Aug. 2026.

[4] "Maritime Security Strategy." *Oceans and Fisheries*, 2021, https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/maritime-security/maritime-security-strategy_en?prefLang=fi&. Accessed 22 Aug. 2026.

[5] . *Eunavfor.Eu*, 2018, https://eunavfor.eu/mission/. Accessed 22 Aug. 2026.

can be modified only by a subsequent norm of general international law having the same character. ”[UN][6]

### Piracy

“Any illegal acts of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by the crew or the passengers of a private ship or a private aircraft, and directed: (i) on the high seas, against another ship or aircraft, or against persons or property on board such ship or aircraft; (ii) against a ship, aircraft, persons or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any State; (b) any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or of an aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft; (c) any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b)”. [UN][7]

### The European peace facility

“The European Peace Facility is an instrument aimed at enhancing the EU's ability to prevent conflicts, build and preserve peace, strengthen international security and stability. In an era of complex security threats, the European Peace Facility expands the EU’s ability to provide security for its citizens and its partners. It maximises the impact, effectiveness and sustainability of overall EU external action in peace and security. The European Peace Facility operates through missions and operations, as well as through assistance measures benefiting partner countries and regional and international organisations. These measures may include the supply of: military and defence-related equipment, infrastructure and technical support.” [EU][8]

### The Strategic Compass

“The Strategic Compass is an ambitious plan of action for strengthening the EU's security and defence policy by 2030. It's an EU security and defence strategy to advance towards a common forward-looking strategic culture as well. The Strategic Compass provides a shared assessment of the strategic environment in which the EU is operating and of the threats and challenges the Union faces. The document makes concrete and actionable proposals, many of which are already being delivered, improving the EU's ability to act decisively in crises and to defend its security and its citizens. As of 2026, most of the

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[6] . “Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.” *Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties*, 23 May 1969, https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/1_1_1969.pdf.
Article 53 Treaties conflicting with a peremptory norm of general international law (“jus cogens”)

[7] “United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.” *United Nations*, United Nations, 10 Dec. 1982, https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf. Accessed 8 July 2026.

[8] European Council. “European Peace Facility.” *Www.Consilium.Europa.Eu*, 2024, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/european-peace-facility/. Accessed 24 July 2026.

Compass's objectives have been implemented, while some work remains to achieve all of them." [EU External Action][9]

### Universal Jurisdiction

"The principle of 'universal jurisdiction' entitles a state to prosecute offenders even in the absence of any link between the crime committed and the prosecuting state. It is based on the notion that certain crimes are so grave that they affect the international community as a whole, and that every state therefore has an interest in prosecuting them. The rationale of universal jurisdiction is to avoid impunity and to prevent those who commit such crimes from finding a safe haven in third countries." [International Committee of the Red Cross][10]

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Causes of Modern Piracy

Examining the role of the European Union in addressing violations of the peremptory norms on piracy is required to understand why piracy is a long-standing issue of international security. The Article 101 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) defines piracy as "illegal acts of violence, detention or depredation committed for private ends on the high seas against another ship or the people and property on board". [UNCLOS][11] Even though piracy has existed for centuries, modern piracy has turned into a transnational security threat involving organized criminal groups, sophisticated equipment and international networks.

On another note, modern piracy depends on political instability and flourishes during times of weak governance. Regions experiencing either armed conflict, or corruption and ineffective law enforcement have often been proven to be unable to protect their territorial sovereignty giving pirate groups unrestricted freedom to operate. For instance, the collapse of state institutions in Somalia during the 1990s created ideal conditions for piracy, while similar governance challenges continue to affect the Gulf of Guinea. [UN][12] In addition,

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[9] European External Action Service. "A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence | EEAS Website." *Www.Eeas.Europa.Eu*, 2022, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/strategic-compass-security-and-defence-1_en. Accessed 24 July 2026.

[10] "ICRC Explainer: What Does International Law Say about Universal Jurisdiction for War Crimes Committed in Non-International Armed Conflicts?" *International Committee of the Red Cross*, 30 Aug. 2022, www.icrc.org/en/document/icrc-explainer-what-does-international-law-say-about-universal-jurisdiction-war-crimes? Accessed 30 June 2026.

[11] "United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea." *United Nations*, United Nations, 10 Dec. 1982, https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf. Accessed 13 July 2026.

[12] Secretary-General, UN. "Situation of Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea in the Gulf of Guinea and Its Underlying Causes :: Report of the Secretary-General." *United Nations Digital Library System*, UN, Nov. 2022, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/%203993689?ln=en&v=pdf. Accessed 8 July 2026.

unemployment, poverty and lack of economic mobility in coastal communities result in pirate recruitment specifically in regions where local livelihoods are reduced by illegal fishing. Particularly, in the Gulf of Guinea where poverty, underemployment and access to public services are at their core, coastal communities become more vulnerable to recruitment caused by pirate and other criminal groups. Moreover, local communities have reduced their access to their primary resources of income because of illegal fishing and increased environmental degradation which raises the chance of getting mixed up in crime, including piracy. [UN][13] In Somalia alone, the piracy industry was estimated to employ some 1500 to 3000 people. By promoting local dependency, coastal communities could be affected by the piracy economy, as residents may supply goods and services to illegal groups. [World Bank][14]

Furthermore, the results of piracy emerge as a significant threat for global markets and state sovereignty, as maritime trade becomes even more important for the global supply chain. Approximately 80 to 90% of international trade is transported by sea, therefore commercial vessels remain attractive targets for pirate groups seeking ransom, cargo or valuable equipment. [UNCTAD][15] According to the International Chamber of Commerce International Maritime Bureau (ICC IMB), piracy continues to threaten international shipping despite the fact that an overall decline in attacks over the past decade has been observed.

Moreover, maritime routes and several supply chains are getting disrupted by piracy when forcing shipping companies to implement extra security steps or divert ships. That results in increased operating and insurance expenses, as well as longer transit times. Premiums for insurance may also rise for ships operating in high-risks places since insurers are dealing with a high amount of risks regarding vessel damage, cargo loss or even crew members getting kidnapped. [UN][16]

Furthermore, piracy remains a significant threat in strategically important global maritime ports, especially in Southeast Asian maritime life. In addition, the Singapore Strait is one of the busiest piracy areas worldwide, connecting the Pacific and Indian ocean. Because of its narrow geographic conditions and increased vessel trafficking, the Singapore Strait has faced several piracy incidents and armed robbery acts against ships in the last few years. In 2022, there were 55 reported sea robbery incidents in the Strait of Singapore,

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[13] "Situation of Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea in the Gulf of Guinea and Its Underlying Causes : Report of the Secretary-General." *United Nations Digital Library System*, UN, Nov. 2022, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3993689?ln=en& . Accessed 20 Aug. 2026.

[14] *The PiraTes of Somalia Ending the Threat, Rebuilding a Nation the World Bank Regional Vice-Presidency for Africa Public Disclosure Authorized Public Disclosure Authorized Public Disclosure Authorized Public Disclosure Authorized*. https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/182671468307148284/pdf/76713-REPLACEMENT-pirates-of-somalia-pub-11-2-15.pdf. Accessed 20 Aug. 2026.

[15] UNCTAD. "Review of Maritime Transport | UNCTAD." *Unctad.Org*, 2020, https://unctad.org/topic/transport-and-trade-logistics/review-of-maritime-transport. Accessed 20 Aug. 2026.

[16] United Nations. "Piracy Under International Law." *Un.Org*, 2012, https://www.un.org/Depts/los/piracy/piracy.htm. Accessed 24 Aug. 2026.

which includes the territorial waters of Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. This was an increase from 49 incidents reported in 2021. Similar to previous years, most of the incidents in 2022 occurred outside Singapore's territorial waters. [MOT][17] The attacks in the Singapore Strait are carried out by small organised criminal groups, targeting vessels for the theft of equipment, or crew belongings, unlike piracy in areas suffering state collapse.

According to ReCAAP, perpetrators mainly focus on targeting stores and engine spares, involving incidents where crew cash and vessel property was stolen. In certain cases, the offenders board vessels while they are underway and temporarily threaten or hold crew members as hostages while stealing these items. [RECAAP][18] The ongoing occurrence of these incidents shows that modern piracy is not only a result of bad governance, but can also develop in highly developed environments where economic opportunities are created by maritime activity for criminal networks.




*Figure 1: The Singapore Strait [Britannica]*[19]

[17] "Ministry of Transport." *Ministry of Transport*, 2023, https://www.mot.gov.sg/news-resources/newsroom/written-reply-to-parliamentary-question-on-reasons-for-continuing-increase-in-number-of-armed-robbery-cases-onboard-commercial-vessels-in-singapore-strait-and-measures-to-minimise-such-cases/. Accessed 24 Aug. 2026.

[18] "Classification of Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships Incidents." *Www.Recaap.Org*, https://www.recaap.org/classification_of_incidents. Accessed 24 Aug. 2026.

[19] "Singapore Strait | Channel, Southeast Asia." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, https://www.britannica.com/place/Singapore-Strait. Accessed 20 Aug. 2026.

### Historical background and the role of EU

Piracy has been regarded as a crime against all nations for many decades, therefore every state is allowed to exercise universal jurisdiction over suspected pirates regardless of nationality. [UNCLOS][20] As a consequence, regional and international organizations have assumed an increasingly important role in coordinating efforts to combat this evolving threat.

As a response to the dramatic rise in Somali piracy during the early 2000s, the global community enhanced collaboration through the United Nations Security Council resolutions and multinational naval operations. Within this framework, the European Union launched Operation Atlanta (EU NAVFOR Somalia) in 2008 under the Common Security and Defence Policy. The mission protects humanitarian aid shipments of the World Food Programme, safeguards commercial shipping and deters acts of piracy in the Western Indian Ocean. [EEAS][21] The operation also aims to deter, prevent and repress piracy and armed robbery at sea, while protecting vulnerable vessels. Its effectiveness is reflected in the decline of attacks from 176 in 2011 to four failed attacks in 2018. EU NAVFOR Somalia is the naval force operating under Operation ATALANTA, meaning that both names refer to the same EU counter-piracy operation. [EU][22]

Beyond military operations, the European Union fosters long-term solutions regarding maritime security by supporting judicial institutions, strengthening coast guards and collaborating with International organizations such as the United Nations, INTERPOL and International Maritime Organization (IMO). According to the International Maritime Organization, 150 incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships were reported in 2023, with one incident reported in the Mediterranean Sea. [IMO][23] However, organised criminal networks are also known to exploit European ports, including Antwerp, Hamburg/Bremerhaven and Rotterdam, for the movement of illegal shipments. [EUROPOL][24] Regardless of major breakthroughs, piracy remains closely linked to political instability, weak governance and socioeconomic inequalities, calling for persistent international cooperation to secure maritime domains and defend global legal standards.

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[20] "Legal Framework for the Repression of Piracy Under UNCLOS." *Www.Un.Org*, 21 June 2024, https://www.un.org/Depts/los/piracy/piracy_legal_framework.htm. Accessed 8 July 2026.

[21] "Missions and Operations|EEAS" Www.Eeas.Europa.Eu,https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/missions-and-operations_en. Accessed 8 July 2026.

[22] ---. *Www.Eeas.Europa.Eu*, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eu-navfor-somalia/european-union-naval-force-somalia-military-operation-atalanta_und_en. Accessed 24 Aug. 2026.

[23] "Maritime Safety Committee - 108Th Session (MSC 108), 15-24 May 2024." *Imo.Org*,  , 2024, https://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/MeetingSummaries/Pages/MSC-108th-session.aspx. Accessed 24 Aug. 2026.

[24] "Criminal Networks in EU Ports: Risks and Challenges for Law Enforcement." *Europol*, https://www.europol.europa.eu/publications-events/publications/criminal-networks-in-eu-ports-risks-and-challenges-for-law-enforcement. Accessed 24 Aug. 2026.

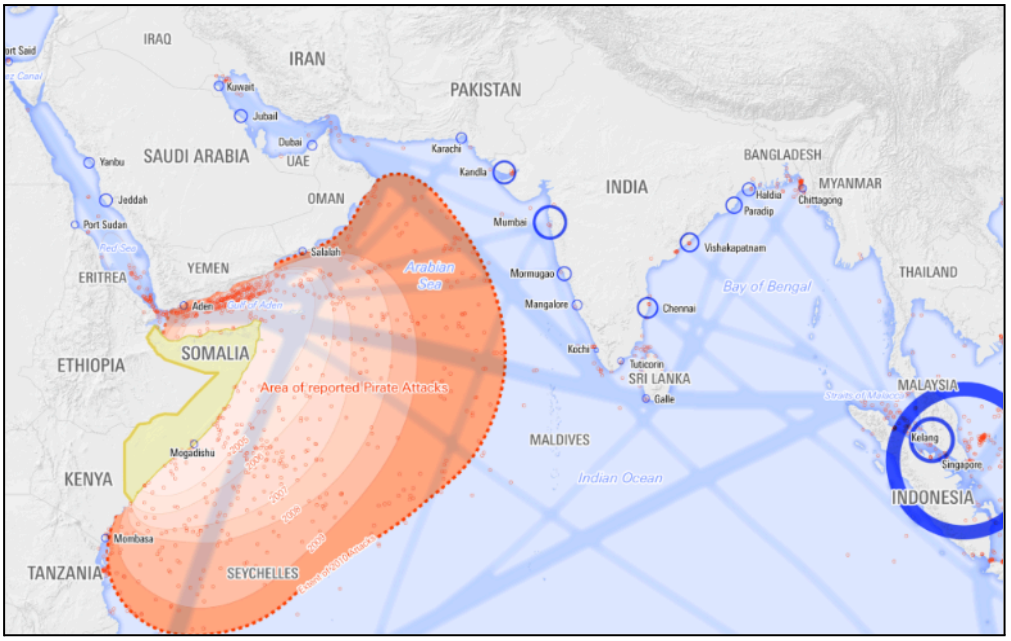



*Figure 2: Map illustrating the areas affected by Somali piracy and the maritime routes threatened by pirate activity in the Western Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden (2010). [Wikimedia]*[25]

### Piracy and the violations of jus cogens

Piracy is mainly defined in international law by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which defines piracy as any act of violence, detention or depredation committed for private ends on the high seas. Piracy is not universally considered a violation of jus cogens itself, but the crimes usually connected with piracy can violate fundamental principles of international law, especially those regarding attacks on human dignity, personal liberty and the right to life. [UN][26]

Jus cogens in particular, are the highest type of obligations in international law. Such norms are the peremptory norms of general international law accepted and recognized by the international community of States as a whole as a norm from which no derogation is permitted. Piracy is an offense which maritime law is mainly concerned with. However, some of the acts related to piracy, including enslavement, torture, and systematic violence against civilians, may amount to violations of the principles of jus cogens. [UN][27]

Modern piracy has transcended the classic form of maritime robbery to include ever more serious human rights abuses. Piracy and armed robbery against ships can result in loss

[25] "File:Somalian Piracy Threat Map 2010.Png - Wikimedia Commons." Wikimedia.Org, 31 Dec. 2010, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Somalian_Piracy_Threat_Map_2010.png. Accessed 10 Oct. 2026.
[26] "Legal Framework for the Repression of Piracy Under Unclos." *Www.Un.Org*, 21 June 2024, https://www.un.org/Depts/los/piracy/piracy_legal_framework.htm. Accessed 24 July 2026.
[27] *Un.Org*, 2021, https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/1_14.shtml. Accessed 24 July 2026.

of life, physical injury, and hostage taking of seafarers, according to the International Maritime Organization. Piracy itself is not generally classified as a jus cogens violation; however, acts that may occur during piracy, such as torture, slavery and other severe forms of violence, can engage rights protected by peremptory norms of international law. There has been a significant increase in the number of crew taken hostage – 126 in 2024 compared to 73 in 2023 and 41 in 2022. Twelve crew were reported kidnapped, compared to 14 in 2023 and two in 2022. A further 12 crew were threatened and one injured in 2024. [ICC][28] These results illustrate why piracy is an issue not only of maritime safety but also of the protection of fundamental human rights recognized in international law. [IMO][29]

## MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

### China

China has maintained a continuous sustained presence in the Gulf of Aden, the waterway between Somalia and Yemen since 2008 to preserve its expanding maritime economic interests and international transportation routes. The Gulf of Aiden in particular, has faced severe ship-trafficking due to Houthi missile attacks from Yemen and a resurgence of Somali piracy. The People's Liberation Army Navy has conducted several escort missions within the last few years for commercial vessels and has collaborated with international anti-piracy efforts in the western Indian Ocean. China and the EU have cooperated on counter-piracy through information exchange and coordination within the Shared Awareness and Deconfliction (SHADE) mechanism. [Operation Atlanta][30] China's long-term dedication illustrates the importance of international cooperation in securing one of the busiest maritime corridors across the globe and highlights how major trading powers contribute to worldwide maritime security.

### France

France has been one of the major contributors of the European Union to counter piracy operators in the Horn of Africa and the western Indian Ocean. As one of the originators of Operation Atlanta in 2008, to keep shipping safe and humanitarian aid moving, we have actively maintained a continuous presence of warships, patrol planes, and personnel to crack down on piracy. In addition to its military contributors, France plays a key

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[28] *ICC-IMB Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships ICC INTERNATIONAL MARITIME BUREAU PIRACY and ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS REPORT for the PERIOD*. 2024, https://icc-ccs.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/2024-Jan-Dec-IMB-Piracy-and-Armed-Robbery-Report-2.pdf. Accessed 24 Aug. 2026.

[29] "Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships." *Imo.Org*, 2019, https://www.imo.org/en/ourwork/security/pages/piracyarmedrobberydefault.aspx?form=mg0av3&. Accessed 24 July 2026.

[30] "EUROPEAN UNION Meets China in Gulf of Aden | EUNAVFOR." *Eunavfor.Eu*, 2026, https://eunavfor.eu/news/european-union-meets-china-gulf-aden. Accessed 24 Aug. 2026.

role by hosting the Horn of Africa Maritime Security Centre (MSCHOA) in Brest to bridge the gap between naval operations and commercial shipping. Their long-term dedication has truly reinforced Europe's capacity to counter maritime security risks.

### India

India has been very active in the international efforts to fight piracy. India is a strategic location and is dependent on safe maritime trade routes especially in the Indian Ocean region. Since 2008, the Indian Navy has been engaged in a continuous counter-piracy deployment in and around the Gulf of Aden, conducting escort missions of merchant vessels, surveillance operations and responding to piracy threats. India has also engaged with international maritime actors, sharing information and supporting collective efforts for the freedom of navigation. With a sustained naval presence and commitment to maritime security, India is showing the role of regional powers in tackling piracy as a transnational security challenge and protecting important international trade routes. [Government of India][31]

### Spain

Spain, as a country that plays a major economic, political and cultural role in the European Union, has been a key- contributor on anti-piracy strategies and is one of the largest cornerstones of Operation Atlanta. Since 2019, the mission's Operational Headquarters has been located at the Rota Naval Base in Spain, reflecting the country's leadership within the operation. Spain has continuously provided naval vessels and military personnel to protect commercial shipping and vulnerable maritime traffic in the western Indian Ocean. Through its operational leadership and sustained involvement, Spain plays a significant role in implementing the EU's maritime security and counter privacy objectives.

### International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)

INTERPOL, the International Criminal Police Organization, helps coordinate international efforts to fight acts of piracy by facilitating the sharing of data across borders and joint criminal investigations. INTERPOL also provides direct assistance to national authorities in their efforts to defeat piracy networks. INTERPOL said piracy is often connected to organized crime as well as money laundering and other illicit financial activities, so cooperation between national police agencies is vital to ensure those responsible are effectively investigated and brought to justice.

### International Maritime Organization (IMO)

[31]"Indian Navy Foils Piracy Attempt in Gulf OF Aden." *Pib.Gov.In*, 2017,

https://www.pib.gov.in/newsite/printrelease.aspx?relid=171472&reg=48&lang=2

Accessed 24 July 2026.

"The International Maritime Organization (IMO), is the United Nations specialized agency with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution by ships. IMO's work supports the UN SDGs. As a specialized agency of the United Nations, IMO is the global standard-setting authority for the safety, security and environmental performance of international shipping. Its main role is to create a regulatory framework for the shipping industry that is fair and effective, universally adopted and universally implemented.

In other words, its role is to create a level playing-field so that ship operators cannot address their financial issues by simply cutting corners and compromising on safety, security and environmental performance. This approach also encourages innovation and efficiency." [IMO][32]

### North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

NATO is a vital component in tackling maritime piracy since it has significantly contributed to international counter-piracy attempts which focused on Operation Ocean Shield (2009-2016), protecting commercial shipping and deterring pirate attacks. Through this operation, NATO illustrated the effectiveness of multinational naval cooperation while sharing intelligence and helped regional states security capabilities independently. Although this mission was conducted 10 years ago, NATO remains an important example of successful collective action against crime piracy acts.

## BLOCS EXPECTED

### Bloc A

This bloc is expected to support a more convincing role in the EU while promoting combating piracy through expanded naval operations. Bloc A will also focus on increased maritime security systems and surveillance as well as closer cooperation between international partners. Delegates are likely to argue that piracy poses a significantly dangerous threat to international trade, humanitarian aid and deliveries while also calling for a robust and coordinated security response. Member states such as Greece, France, Spain, Italy and Portugal which have strong naval capabilities and a more strategic approach to maritime interests, are expected to favor being a part of bloc A.

[32] "Introduction to IMO." *Www.Imo.Org*, International Maritime Organization, 2019, https://www.imo.org/en/About/Pages/Default.aspx . Accessed 24 July 2026.

### Bloc B

This bloc is expected to debate whether military operations alone cannot eliminate piracy in the long term. Delegates are more likely to advocate for a more comprehensive approach that combines maritime security with development support and promotes robust legal systems and assistance for stable governance in affected coastal states. Moreover, delegates may emphasize the significance of working closely with regional governments and international organizations to address the root causes of maritime global piracy. Countries including, but not limited to Germany, Sweden, Netherlands, Finland and Belgium have often supported policies that balance development with maritime security and international collaboration, making them likely advocates of this approach.

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

| Date | Description of event |
|---|---|
| 10th December, 1982 | Adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). UNCLOS established the modern legal framework for piracy under international law. Articles 100–107 define piracy, require States to cooperate in its repression, and recognise universal jurisdiction over acts of piracy on the high seas. [UN][33] |
| 2nd June, 2008 | Adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1816. The Security Council authorised States cooperating with Somalia's Transitional Federal Government to enter Somali territorial waters and use all necessary means, consistent with international law, to repress acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea. [UNDL][34] |
| 10th November, 2008 | Council Joint Action. The Council of the European Union established EU NAVFOR Operation Atalanta, the first EU naval operation under the Common |

[33] "United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea." *United Nations*, United Nations, 10 Dec. 1982, https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf. Accessed 13 July 2026.
[34] ---. "Letter Dated 25 October 1962 from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Haiti Addressed to the Secretary-General." *United Nations Digital Library System*, UN, 27 Oct. 1962, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/629108?v=pdf. Accessed 13 July 2026.

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|---|---|
| | Security and Defence Policy, to protect vulnerable vessels, deter piracy, and contribute to the repression of piracy off the Somali coast. [EU][35] |
| 8th December, 2008 | Launch of Operation Atalanta. Operation Atalanta officially began operations in the Gulf of Aden and the western Indian Ocean to protect World Food Programme vessels and other vulnerable shipping while deterring and repressing piracy . [EU External Action][36] |
| August, 2009 | NATO launches Operation Ocean Shield. NATO initiated Operation Ocean Shield to contribute to international efforts against piracy by protecting merchant shipping and strengthening the maritime security capabilities of regional states . [NATO][37] |
| 16th December, 2024 | In late 2024, EUNAVFOR Operation ATALANTA was extended towards February 2027 with a new mandate enforced, reflecting achievements, challenges and the evolution of the Operation to adapt to the demanding security situation in the region. [38] [EU] |

## RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

### United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is the main international legal framework governing activities at sea. As to piracy, Articles 100-107 lay down the duties of States to cooperate in the suppression of piracy, define piracy in terms of

[35] "EUR-Lex - 32008E0851 - EN - EUR-Lex." *Europa.Eu*, 2025, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32008E0851. Accessed 13 July 2026.

[36] "EU NAVFOR Atalanta: 10 Years of Fighting Piracy in Somalia | EEAS." *Www.Eeas.Europa.Eu*, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/node/55058_en. Accessed 13 July 2026.

[37] "NATO Concludes Successful Counter-Piracy Mission." *North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)*, 2025, https://www.nato.int/en/news-and-events/articles/news/2016/12/15/nato-concludes-successful-counter-piracy-mission. Accessed 13 July 2026.

[38] "Missions and Operations | EEAS Website." *Www.Eeas.Europa.Eu*, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/missions-and-operations_en. Accessed 13 July 2026.

international law and outline the circumstances under which States may act against pirate ships on the high seas. The Convention remains the main legal reference for States and organisations carrying out counter-piracy operations. [UN][39]

### United Nations Security Council Resolution 1816 (S/RES/1816)

As a response to the concerning increase in piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia the UN Security Council adopted the Resolution 1816. This document gave states the permission to work alongside the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia to enter Somali territorial waters and use “all means necessary" to counter piracy as long as they did so in accordance with international law. This was one of the first major international approvals of allowing foreign naval forces to operate in Somali waters to fight piracy. [UNDL][40]

### Council Joint Action 2008/851/CFSP (10 November 2008)

November 10, 2008, the Council of the European Union proceeded with the adoption of the Joint Action 2008/851/CFSP, which later led to the establishment of the EU NAVFOR Somalia Operation Atalanta. Additionally, the operation was created to contribute to the deterrence, prevention, and repression of piracy and armed robbery off the Somali coast. Responsibilities of this programme included the protection vessels delivering humanitarian aid, particularly World Food Programme shipments, and the implementation of measures according to relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. [EU][41]

## PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

### European Union Naval Force Somalia - Operation Atalanta (2008–Present)

In December 2008 the European Union initiated the EU NAVFOR Operation Atalanta as its first maritime Common Security and Defence Policy operation. The mission was established to protect vessels carrying World Food Programme humanitarian aid, safeguard vulnerable shipping, and contribute to the deterrence, prevention, and repression of piracy and armed stealth off the Somali coast. [EU][42] The operation has also endorsed broader maritime security efforts in the region via collaboration with international organisations and regional partners. Operation Atalanta contributed to the reduction of piracy incidents in the

[39] “United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.” *United Nations*, United Nations, 10 Dec. 1982, https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf. Accessed 13 July 2026.
[40] UN. Security Council (63rd year : 2008). “Resolution 1816 (2008) /.” *United Nations Digital Library System*, 2 June 2008, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/627953. Accessed 13 July 2026.
[41] “EUR-Lex - 32008E0851 - EN - EUR-Lex.” *Europa.Eu*, 2025, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32008E0851. Accessed 13 July 2026.
[42] “EUROPEAN UNION NAVAL FORCE SOMALIA Military Operation ATALANTA | EEAS.” *Www.Eeas.Europa.Eu*, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eu-navfor-somalia/european-union-naval-force-somalia-military-operation-atalanta_und_en. Accessed 13 July 2026.

Horn of Africa by maintaining a naval presence and improving coordination between international actors. However, official EU sources recognise that the mission should not stand alone. Nonetheless it should be part of a wider multiface approach which also is accompanied by humanitarian aid and assistance, and strengthening the rule of law, showing that maritime operations alone are only one part of tackling the issue of piracy. [NATO][43]

### NATO Operation Ocean Shield (2009–2016)

NATO Operation Ocean Shield was launched in August 2009 as part of NATO's contribution to international efforts to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia. The operation focused on conducting counter-piracy patrols, providing protection to vessels, and helping countries in the region develop their ability to fight piracy.[44][NATO] NATO reported that the operation contributed to the decrease in piracy attacks in the area by maintaining a maritime presence and cooperating with other international organisations involved in counter-piracy efforts. The mission was concluded in December 2016 after NATO determined that its objectives had been achieved and that piracy incidents had significantly declined. [NATO][45]

## POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

### Establishing an EU framework for maritime threat response

The EU should step up practical cooperation with countries with good track records in combating piracy by increasing information sharing, joint training and exchange of marine surveillance technologies. For instance, Singapore cooperates with Indonesia and Malaysia on coordinated patrols and information sharing to fight maritime robbery. International cooperation against piracy in the Gulf of Aden has likewise relied on shared information systems and collaborative training. The EU should go further by holding frequent combined exercises and training programs for European maritime authorities with seasoned regional forces to boost their ability to identify, prevent and respond to piracy situations. [MOT][46]

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[43] *Operation Ocean Shield*. 2014, https://www.nato.int/content/dam/nato/legacy-wcm/media_pdf/pdf_topics/141202a-Factsheet-OceanShield-en.pdf. Accessed 13 July 2026.

[44] NATO. "Allied Maritime Command - Operation OCEAN SHIELD." *Mc.Nato.Int*, https://mc.nato.int/missions/operation-ocean-shield. Accessed 13 July 2026.

[45] "NATO Concludes Successful Counter-Piracy Mission." *North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)*, 2025, https://www.nato.int/en/news-and-events/articles/news/2016/12/15/nato-concludes-successful-counter-piracy-mission. Accessed 13 July 2026.

[46] ---. *Ministry of Transport*, 2023, https://www.mot.gov.sg/news-resources/newsroom/written-reply-to-parliamentary-question-on-reasons-for-continuing-increase-in-number-of-armed-robbery-cases-onboard-commercial-vessels-in-singapore-strait-and-measures-to-minimise-such-cases/ . Accessed 24 Aug. 2026.

### Improving cooperation on the investigation and prosecution of piracy incidents

By fostering further collaboration between Member States and other countries affected by piracy, the Council of the European Union could advance investigation and prosecution of piracy incidents.The EU could establish a specialised maritime prosecution network that would allow Member States to use common procedures for transferring piracy suspects and evidence between naval forces, investigators and national courts. Inspired by the Seychelles' piracy prosecution model, the framework could also organise regular prosecution-readiness exercises simulating the transfer of suspects, evidence and witnesses. In addition, specialised courts or designated prosecutors could receive training in maritime evidence and international piracy law, reducing the risk that cases fail because of procedural or jurisdictional difficulties. Moreover, the judicial authorities could exchange legal expertise and strengthen coordination in order to help the EU reduce impunity for violations of the peremptory norms against maritime piracy. [GMCPAR][47]

### Promoting preventive measures through sharing maritime information

The EU could boost preventive efforts by exchanging maritime information regarding security between Member States and International corporations. The information could be used to identify high-risk areas and suspicious vessels and thereby allow authorities to issue early warnings and increase patrols in vulnerable maritime zones. Ships could also be given updated threat information before entering high-risk areas, and asked to report suspicious activity to national or regional maritime information-sharing centers. Crews may also take preventive measures including more watches, controlled access points and security drills prior to entering areas where piracy is likely to occur. In addition, authorities will have better access to information regarding suspicious acts in the sea, and emerging threats that might lead to piracy. Consequently, this could potentially lead to identifying dangers in advance and taking more appropriate action before attacks occur. [RECAAP][48]

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[47] *Global Maritime Crime Programme Annual Report 2 0 1 7*. https://www.unodc.org/documents/Maritime_crime/UNODC_ANUAL_REPORT_2017_web.pdf . Accessed 24 Aug. 2026.

[48] *GUIDE for TANKERS OPERATING in ASIA AGAINST PIRACY and ARMED ROBBERY INVOLVING OIL CARGO THEFT a Joint Project by: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT*. https://www.recaap.org/resources/ck/files/guide/Guide%20for%20Tankers%20Operating%20in%20Asia%20Against%20Piracy%20and%20Armed%20Robbery%20Involving%20Oil%20Cargo%20Theft.pdf. Accessed 24 Aug. 2026.

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