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## Maritime crime in Nigeria is alive and well

Nigerian piracy has not declined in 2011; it has merely moved elsewhere, according to analysis by the Denmark-based maritime security intelligence company Risk Intelligence.

For 2011, Risk Intelligence has recorded 70 Nigeria-related attacks against offshore oil & gas and against maritime targets – up from 58 attacks recorded for 2010. Nigerian criminals began to focus on product tankers in December 2010, when they attacked the Italian tanker VALLE DI CORDOBA off Cotonou. In 2011, they have attacked 30 tankers off Lagos, Lomé, and Cotonou and two more off the Niger Delta.

“The 24 attacks in the international waters offshore Benin and Togo in 2011 were an opportunistic move, driven by internal Nigerian developments” says Dirk Steffen, Risk Intelligence’s Director of Consultancy. “These included the amnesty for former Niger Delta militants, fuel subsidies, and political pressure on criminal networks in Nigeria.”

The pirates managed to hijack 14 vessels for short periods, and transferred petroleum products into small tankers. “Evidence provided by ship’s crews and by the Nigerian Navy suggests that several of the receiving vessels were operating for Nigerian interests out of Lagos and the Niger Delta. Those appear to have close links to the long-standing illegal oil bunkering business in Nigeria” adds Steffen.

Risk Intelligence has just published an assessment of Nigerian maritime security. The report examines key factors shaping maritime security and gauges the potential for piracy and insurgency in Nigeria’s maritime domain for 2012.

For further information:

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