

Committee: First General Assembly

Topic: Assessing the Surge of Piracy in the Singapore Strait

Delegation: Republic of Singapore

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Amidst the bustling Singapore Strait, where the convergence of global trade routes fuels economic prosperity, an ominous shadow lurks beneath the surface – piracy. Dubbed as “the most dangerous waters in the world” by the time magazine, piracy in the Singapore Strait, one of the world's busiest commercial waterways, has long been a threatening dilemma for Singapore, its neighboring nations, as well as international trade. A dramatic surge in the number of attacks in the strait has been reported in 2023 as documented by Anh, a researcher in international relations of the Asia-Pacific, maritime security, and public policy. The effects of piracy in the Singapore Strait on neighboring nations, global economy, international trade, the shipping sector, insurance companies, and even the crew on board ships are numerous and substantial. Thereupon, Singapore stresses on the obligation to cease and protect all parties against piracy.

Somali gangs peering over the barrels of their Kalashnikovs in the Indian ocean is usually one's first thought when the topic of piracy emerges; however, that stereotypical image is far from where reality lies. McCauley, a reporter on politics and international affairs, notes that the UN announced the Southeast Asian waters are the most notable location for piracy as they offer attractive goods. Unemployment, slow socio-economic recovery after Covid-19, and depletion of fish stocks are all inducements for individuals to take up piracy in the Singapore Strait as per Natrajan, the executive director of the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP). Inadequate surveillance and enforcement by the littoral states is another motive for piracy in the Strait. 136 seafarers were killed in Southeast Asian waters as a result of piracy from 1995 to 2013 — which totals to twice the number in the Horn of Africa, where Somalia lies. In conclusion, the Singapore Strait is a hotspot for piracy due to these inducements and the inadequate surveillance and enforcement by littoral states.

Exceeding 120,000 vessels pass along the Singapore strait each year, accounting for a third of the world's marine commerce. The spike in incidents is in consideration of the fact that around 80% of the oil imported by China and Japan is shipped through the strait. Piracy exposes numerous parties to danger. Primarily, it subjects crew members on board to risk, causes loss of property, increases security and insurance expenses for shipping companies, and interrupts maritime transport and adversely impacts international trade. Moreover, Over 90% of goods traded internationally are transported by sea; hence, the prevalence of piracy has a major deterrent effect on trade. In addition, as ships maneuver to avoid sea robbery, it can result in collisions and possibly force the strait to temporarily close as projected by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), a UN specialized agency with responsibility for the safety and

security of shipping and the prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution by ships. Furthermore, Gong, a PhD in maritime studies, and his associates note that the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) released a statement estimating that \$25 billion is lost globally in economic losses each year as a result of piracy, including increased insurance costs, theft, and ransoms. Ultimately, the alarming frequency of piracy in the Singapore Strait poses significant threats to seafarers and the security of maritime transport as well as the global economy.

Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia, all of which lie on the strait, have united to resolve the catastrophic issue of piracy. To illustrate, “CORPAT INDOSIN” was established by the Indonesian and Singaporean Navies in order to conduct coordinated patrols, hold meetings between senior commanders, share information on maritime issues, and facilitate timely responses. As per the Ministry of Defence and the Singapore Armed Forces (MINDEF), the shipping industry and the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore discuss the implementation of the necessary precautionary measures through dialogues and forums. Furthermore, Singapore issued a whole-of-Government setup for maritime security that preserves comprehensive situational awareness and coordinates responses to rule out maritime security threats named the Singapore Maritime Crisis Centre. To conclude, The examples given demonstrate a unified commitment to address and effectively counteract the pressing issue of piracy through strategic cooperation and comprehensive security measures.

The surge of piracy in the Singapore Strait, a pressing maritime security concern, demands a comprehensive approach to mitigate its adverse effects. Primarily, Monji, the First Secretary in the political department of the Japanese Embassy in Vietnam, calls for Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore to participate in enhanced regional cooperation. Furthermore, according to the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) the implementation of advanced technology including unmanned aerial vehicles and satellite surveillance reinforces monitoring and response capabilities. Additionally, reinforcing a dedicated UN committee focused on maritime security such as the International Maritime Organization would facilitate the development and enforcement of standardized protocols to combat piracy effectively. By combining regional cooperation, technological advancements, and international collaboration through established bodies, eliminating piracy from the Singapore Strait can be fulfilled.

Conclusively, amidst the escalating threat of piracy in the Singapore Strait, Singapore stands resolute in its commitment to collaborative efforts, regional security, and the safeguarding of crucial maritime trade routes. Singapore has long been affected by piracy in the region; hence, the endless endeavors in mitigating the effects and formulating of definitive solutions. In the face of the alarming surge of piracy in the Singapore Strait, Singapore leaves no room for complacency and demands the global community to take action.

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