# Greed, Grievances and Anarchy at Sea

Human security and Somali piracy



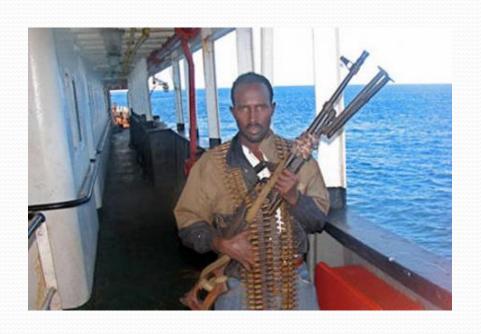
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# Human security and piracy

- Human security is comprised of freedom from want and fear (UNDP, 1994: 23)
- "When human security is at threat anywhere, it can affect people everywhere" (UNDP, 1994: 34)
- Piracy is a development issue, which is caused by and contributes to human insecurity

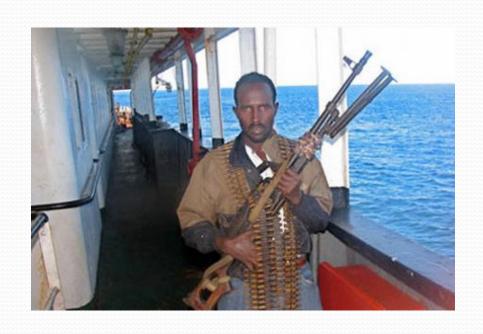


## The label of piracy



- Piracy is a highly charged term
- Somali 'pirates' are typically portrayed in an ahistorical manner
- What is the context behind these 'pirates'

# The label of piracy



"We are not pirates. We are gentlemen, defending our shores"

Jamal Akhmed (cited in *BBC*, 16/06/2009)

"I believe the title of pirates should be given to those who come to our waters illegally"

Farah Ismail Eid

(cited in Global Post, 6/12/2009)

#### Context on land in Somalia

- GDP per capita US\$600
- 43% live on less than US\$1 a day
- Life expectancy at birth 49.63
- 71% do not receive minimum dietary energy

(sources: ADB, 2010; CIA, 2010; UNICEF, 2010)



#### Somalia the 'failed state'

- The Somali central government collapsed in 1991
- The country has been ravaged by civil war
- Somalia is currently ranked the worlds most failed state (Fund for Peace, 2010)
- Failed state, but not necessarily a failed society



#### Crimes in Somali waters

#### Illegal foreign fishing

- 850 foreign vessels every year (Chatham House, 2009)
- Cost to Somalis \$US100-300 million annually (Marine Resources Assessment Group, 2005)
- Physical attacks on Somali fishermen



#### Crimes in Somali waters (cont.)

#### Hazardous waste dumping

- European and Asian companies have been dumping hazardous waste (UNEP, 2005)
- Contaminated ground water
- Caused health problems
- Resulted in the deaths of an estimated 300 people (Noury, 2010)



#### Crimes in Somali waters (cont.)

#### Piracy

- Began in response to illegal fishing
- It has since evolved into a big business
  - ransom of US\$85 million paid in 2009 (UNSC, 2010)
- Highly organized
  - sophisticated logistical infrastructure
  - advanced technology and weaponry
  - top-down structure





#### Motivating factors driving piracy

- Economic rationalism (Greed)
- Pirates are simply motivated by a profit motive (Chalk, 2008; Sörenson, 2008; Lesson, 2009)

"When we are going out to sea, we expect benefits and losses"

Yassin Dheere

(cited in East African Forum, 11/04/2009)



#### **Economic rationalism**

Presence of profitable targets

"It's like hunting out there. Sometimes you get a deer, sometimes you get a dik-dik"

Abshir Boyah

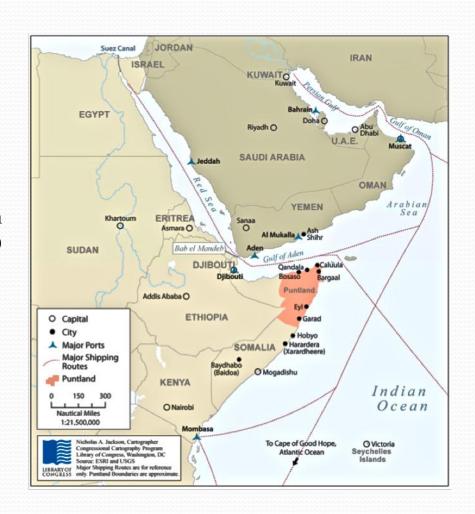
(cited in New York Times, 8/05/2009)



Maran Centaurus ransomed \$5-7 million



MV Sirus Star ransomed \$3 million



#### Economic rationalism (cont.)

 Low relative risks compared to alternative livelihood options

"First I decided to leave the country and migrate, but then I remembered my late colleagues who died at sea while trying to migrate to Italy. So I chose this option, instead of dying in the desert or from mortars in Mogadishu"



Abdirahman Ali (cited in Reuters, 1/12/2009)

#### Motivating factors driving piracy

#### Grievances

- Pirates are driven by a sense of injustice (Waldo, 2009; Schofield, 2009; Panjabi, 2010)

"I've been forced by the situation to become a pirate. I never wanted to become a pirate"

Indiana

(cited in Sixty Minutes, 29/03/2009)



#### Grievances (cont.)

#### Desperation

"I'm not happy with it [being a pirate], but since I have no education, I have no choice. If I had another choice, I'd do it, but this is the only job I know"

Mohamed (cited in *Time*, 1/04/2010)



#### Grievances (cont.)

Crimes by foreign vessels

"If we are forced to avoid fishing our waters, then those [commercial] ships are our fish"

Shamun Indhabur (cited in *News Week*, 18/12/2008)



#### Grievances (cont.)

 Lack of concern from the international community

"Now the international community is shouting about piracy. But long before this, we were shouting to the world about our problems. No one listened"

Farah Ismail Eid

(cited in *McClatchy Newspapers*, 3/05/2009)



### Summary of motivating factors

- *Economic rationalism*: a profit motive can enable piracy
- Grievances: may provide a form of self-justification for pirates
- There are no one-size fits all explanations for piracy
- However, most factors driving piracy appear to stem from weak human security in Somalia

# Call to arms for the 'development community'

- Piracy is a symptom of greater problems on land
- Naval responses are only focusing on addressing this 'symptom'
- There is major role for development institutions to play in addressing the underlying causes of piracy
- In the long-run this will improve human security for <u>all</u>





# Thank you

Any questions, comments, feel free to contact me: rees.aaron@gmail.com