



PRESS RELEASE

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**Human Cost of Somali Piracy Report**

As violence against seafarers by Somali pirates escalates, a new study has been completed that provides new insights into this issue. The study was commissioned by the Oceans Beyond Piracy Project, a group of maritime experts are especially worried about the lack of public concern. Thousands of seafarers have been subjected to gunfire, beatings, extended periods of confinement and, in some cases, torture in the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden at the hands of their captors. The study, *The Human Cost of Somali Piracy*, is to be launched on 6<sup>th</sup> June at Chatham House in London.

The study's findings indicate that during the course of 2010:

- 4185 Seafarers were attacked with firearms and Rocket Propelled Grenades.
- 342 Survived Incidents in Citadels (ships' reinforced security rooms).
- 1090 Seafarers were taken hostage.
- 516 Seafarers were used as human shields.
- The cost to the Somali community is also concerning. Piracy affects food security and endangers Somali youth.

In spite of the violent nature of these crimes, the new study says the human cost of piracy is still underreported and misunderstood by the public. "There is very little reporting of the personal violence against seafarers in the waters off Somalia", says Kaija Hurlburt, lead researcher for the OBP study. "We have found strong evidence that over a third of the seafarers that were held in 2010 were abused, and the trend is looking more ominous this year. The lack of reporting prevents the true cost from being understood by the public."

The new study notes that the economic cost of piracy is now well-known, but it makes clear that the extent of the human cost is much less well-known and understood. According to Per Gullestrup, the C.E.O. of a shipping company, the Clipper Group, "Somali piracy has a tendency to be discussed in economic terms, but the real issue is the untold misery and trauma imposed on our colleagues at sea and their relatives by the Somali criminals. We should be very concerned about the lack of concerted action by the global community in dealing forcefully with this problem."

The Oceans Beyond Piracy Project is sponsored by One Earth Future Foundation (OEF). OEF is a private foundation located near Boulder, Colorado in the United States that is committed to seeking effective solutions to emerging governance challenges. OEF's first project is the Oceans Beyond Piracy Project, a collaborative effort that seeks to engage and mobilize maritime stakeholders affected by piracy.

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