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SECTION 1 OF 10

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WARNING: TOPIC: DOMESTIC POLITICAL, FOUO, INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL

SERIAL: AFP20090413642005

/\*\*\*\*\* THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE \*\*\*\*\*/

**BODY**

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SOURCE: STUTTGART AFRICA COMMAND PRESS SUMMARY IN ENGLISH 13 APR  
09 (U//FOUO)

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## TEXT:

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(Attachment not included: AFP20090413642005001.jpg) United States Africa Command

## Public Affairs Office

13 April 2009

## AFRICOM-related news stories

A summary of news stories related to United States Africa Command Somali Hijackers Taken by Military Forces for 2nd Time in a Week

VOA - By Alisha Ryu

13 April 2009

<http://www.voanews.com/english/2009-04-13-voa1.cfm>

Anarchy on Land Means Piracy at Sea

NYT Op-Ed - By Robert D. Kaplan

11 April 2009

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/12/opinion/12kaplan.html?em>

Q(-PLUS-)A: How the U.S. Navy ended Somali pirate drama

Reuters - By Andrew Gray

13 April 2009

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/usTopNews/idUKTRE53B2IB20090412?sp>

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How Captain Phillips was rescued

BBC - By non-attributed author

12 April 2009

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/7996213.stm>

UN, AU envoys urge DR Congo to implement peace agreements

Xinhua - By non-attributed author

12 April 2009

<http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-04/13/content>

(-UNDERSCORE-)11174903.htm

Challenges ahead for Algerian incumbent

Associated Press - By Alfred de Montcsquiou

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12 April 2009

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5i2RV7N9Im7vVz-nA-sbLTGw66Rjywd97H1DA00>

Sea scum a new peril, but military has long been fighting true terrorists on land in Somalia

Daily News - By James Gordon Meck

12 April 2009

<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/us>

(-UNDERSCORE-)world/2009/04/12/2009-04-12(-UNDERSCORE-)sca

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(-UNDERSCORE-)peril(-UNDERSCORE-)but.html

Military crackdown hasn't deterred **Somali pirates**

Associated Press - By Lara Jakes

12 April 2009

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gSXyAok3YrJTZLKD31SAjC9pfvkgD97H82KO0>

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/\*\*\*\*\* BEGINNING OF SECTION 2 \*\*\*\*\*/

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U.S. Military Considers Attacks on **Somali Pirates'** Land Bases

Bloomberg - By Jeff Bliss

13 April 2009

[http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid\(-EQUAL-\)20601103&sid\(-EQUAL-\)aYhvgOfyTmYA&refer\(-EQUAL-\)us](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid(-EQUAL-)20601103&sid(-EQUAL-)aYhvgOfyTmYA&refer(-EQUAL-)us)

(-EQUAL-)aYhvgOfyTmYA&refer(-EQUAL-)us

US lawmaker calls for policy debate on piracy

AFP - By non-attributed author

10 April 2009

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5i90ouB7KqZOblzFk8XiaDhKgoMJw>

k8XiaDhKgoMJw

Somali Hijackers Taken by Military Forces for 2nd Time in a Week

VOA - By Alisha Ryu

13 April 2009

The U.S. Navy operation that freed American ship captain Richard Phillips Sunday off the coast of Somalia was the second time in the past week that military force was used to free hostages after negotiations broke down with pirates.

An elite U.S. Navy unit rescued the captain of the Maersk Alabama after a brief firefight with four hijackers who had been holding him for ransom. The U.S. military says three pirates were killed. One was wounded and taken into custody.

The Somali government of President Sharif Sheik Ahmed was pleased with the rescue, telling reporters that the outcome sends a clear

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signal to criminals that their activities will no longer be tolerated by the international community.

The Navy operation ended four days of high-seas drama that began on Wednesday, when the pirates attempted to hijack the U.S.-flagged container vessel about 450 kilometers off the northern coast of Somalia.

The Alabama's American crew overpowered the pirates and re-took control of the ship. But the pirates escaped in an enclosed lifeboat, taking the captain, Richard Phillips, with them. The lifeboat ran out of fuel the next day and a stand-off ensued with the pirates demanding a \$2 million ransom for Phillips and safe passage back to Somalia.

A U.S. Navy destroyer arrived on the scene, and talks to free Phillips began between the pirates and the U.S. military aided by a negotiating team from the Federal Bureau of Investigation. On Friday, the American captain jumped overboard and attempted to swim to the destroyer, but he was quickly re-captured.

By Saturday, there were three U.S. warships within reach of the lifeboat. The hijackers threatened to kill Phillips if they were attacked. Clan elders intervened, hoping to end the stand-off by negotiating a deal in which the hijackers would release their hostage with no ransom paid. The pirates, in turn, would not be arrested.

According to U.S. military officials, President Barack Obama had authorized Navy commanders to use force if they believed Phillips was in danger. When one of the pirates pointed a rifle at Phillips on Sunday, Navy snipers opened fire.

Last week, the French government also negotiated with pirates to free a hijacked French yacht. **Somali pirates** had captured the yacht on April 4, taking the boat and several adults and a three year-old boy hostage.

But French troops raided the yacht on Thursday, killing two pirates and arresting three more. The owner of the yacht was also killed. Officials in Paris say the rescue mission was launched when talks with broke down and the pirates made specific threats against their French captives.

France rejects paying ransoms and has used military force twice before to free hostages in **Somalia**. **Pirates**, who have seized dozens of vessels off the coast of Somalia in the past year, usually release the crew unharmed after a ransom is paid.

Somalia expert Afyare Elmi of the University of Alberta in Canada says he believes pirates will be tempted to take revenge for the

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loss of their comrades. "There is no need to worry about what Somalis or Somali clans might do because none of them, as far as I know, morally condone what the pirates are doing. What can logically be expected here is that the pirates themselves might be more aggressive in their future attacks and they might particularly be tough with specific countries that they think would be aggressive with them," he said.

Elmi says the piracy problem in Somalia requires a political and economical solution, not a military one. Somalia is one of the poorest countries in the world and has not had a functioning government for the past 18 years.

Anarchy on Land Means Piracy at Sea

NYT Op-Ed - By Robert D. Kaplan

11 April 2009

Piracy at Sea  
PIRACY is the maritime ripple effect of anarchy on land. Somalia is a failed state and has the longest coastline in mainland Africa, so piracy flourishes nearby. The 20th-century  
/\*\*\*\*\* BEGINNING OF SECTION 3 \*\*\*\*\*/

CITE OSC RESTON VA 684042

French historian Fernand Braudel called piracy a "secondary form of war," that, like insurgencies on land, tends to increase in the lulls between conflicts among great states or empires. With the Soviet Union and its client states in Africa no longer in existence, and American influence in the third world at an ebb, irregular warfare both on land and at sea has erupted, and will probably be with us until the rise of new empires or their equivalents.

**Somali pirates** are usually unemployed young men who have grown up in an atmosphere of anarchic violence, and have been dispatched by a local warlord to bring back loot for his coffers. It is organized crime carried out by roving gangs. The million-square-miles of the Indian Ocean where pirates roam might as well be an alley in Mogadishu. These pirates are fearless because they have grown up in a culture where nobody expects to live long. Pirate cells often consist of 10 men with several ratty, roach-infested skiffs. They bring along drinking water, gasoline for their single-engine outboards, grappling hooks, ladders, knives, assault rifles, rocket-propelled grenades and the mild narcotic qat to chew. They live on raw fish.

The skiffs are generally used to launch attacks on slightly larger crafts, often a fishing dhow operated by South Koreans, Indians or Taiwanese, taking the crews prisoner. In turn, they use the

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new ship to take a larger vessel, and then another, working up the food chain. Eventually, they let the smaller boats and crews go free. In this way, over the years, **Somali pirates** have graduated to attacking oil tankers and container ships; the bigger the vessel, the higher the ransoms, which the pirate confederations can then invest in more sophisticated equipment. As Braudel suggested, there is nothing new here. Piracy has been endemic to the Indian Ocean from the Gulf of Aden to the Strait of Malacca, and particularly so after the Western intrusion into these waters, beginning with the Portuguese in the 16th century. Pirate groups, sometimes known as "sea gypsies," tended to escalate in number and audacity as trade increased, so that piracy itself has often been a sign of prosperity. The Moroccan traveler Ibn Battuta, who was the victim of pirates off western India in the 14th century, informed us that commercial ships in the Indian Ocean of his day traveled in armed convoys as a defense. Slightly earlier, Marco Polo described many dozens of pirate vessels off Gujarat, India, where the pirates would spend the whole summer at sea with their women and children, even as they plundered merchant vessels.

The big danger in our day is that piracy can potentially serve as a platform for terrorists. Using pirate techniques, vessels can be hijacked and blown up in the middle of a crowded strait, or a cruise ship seized and the passengers of certain nationalities thrown overboard. You can see how Al Qaeda would be studying this latest episode at sea, in which **Somali pirates** attacked a Maersk Line container ship and were fought off by the American crew, even as they have managed to take the captain hostage in one of the lifeboats.

So we end up with the spectacle of an American destroyer, the Bainbridge, with enough Tomahawk missiles and other weaponry to destroy a small city, facing off against a handful of **Somali pirates** in a tiny lifeboat. This is not an efficient use of American resources. It indicates how pirates, like terrorists, can attack us asymmetrically. The challenge ahead for the United States is not only dealing with the rise of Chinese naval power, but also in handling more unconventional risks that will require a more scrappy, street-fighting Navy.

In a sense, America needs three navies; yet, as this pirate crisis reveals, it may have only two. It has a blue-water force for patrolling the major sea lines, thus guarding the global commons. It packs enough precision weaponry on its warships to project

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power on land against adversaries like North Korea and Iran. But it still does not have enough of a sea-based, counterinsurgency component to deal with adversaries like **Somali pirates** and Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy. (The latter's force features speedboats loaded with explosives hidden in the many coves of Iran's coastline, which could ram ships on suicide missions.)

The Navy has plans to build 55 new Littoral Combat Ships to deal with this deficiency. Yes, these fast, maneuverable ships have low drafts and are thus suited for many different kinds of unorthodox missions close to shore. But the oceans are vast, and ships cannot be in two places at once. Without sufficient numbers of them, it's hard to believe that they will make much of a difference. Defense Secretary Robert Gates, in his recent budget statement, indicated that only a few of these ships will be built at first, even as he endorsed the whole program.

In recent years the American public has been humbled by the limits of our military power in dirty land wars. But navies have historically been a military indicator of great power. That a relatively small number of pirates from a semi-starving nation can constitute enough of a menace to disrupt major sea routes is another sign of the anarchy that will be characteristic of a multipolar world, in which a great navy like America's -- with a falling number of overall ships -- will be in relative, elegant decline, while others will either lack the stomach or the capacity to adequately guard the seas.

Q(-PLUS-)A: How the U.S. Navy ended **Somali pirate** drama  
Reuters - By Andrew Gray  
13 April 2009

U.S. Navy special forces shot dead three **Somali pirates** on a lifeboat off Somalia and freed American cargo ship captain Richard Phillips on Sunday in a dramatic end to a five-day standoff, officials said.

/\*\*\*\*\* BEGINNING OF SECTION 4 \*\*\*\*\*/

CITE OSC RESTON VA 684042

Here are answers to some key questions about the incident, mainly from information provided to reporters by Vice Admiral Bill Gortney, head of the U.S. Navy's Bahrain-based Fifth Fleet.

**HOW DID THE NAVY END THE STANDOFF?**

Navy **SEALs**, elite special operations troops, on the USS Bainbridge shot dead the pirates in the lifeboat after the Bainbridge's

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captain determined that Phillips' life was in imminent danger because a pirate pointed an AK-47 rifle at him.

Navy sailors then sailed to the lifeboat in a small inflatable craft and rescued Phillips, who was tied up inside the 18-foot-long lifeboat. He was later transferred to the USS Boxer, an amphibious assault ship.

A U.S. military official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said special operations forces had tried to approach the lifeboat earlier in the standoff, but the pirates had fired at them.

A fourth pirate who surrendered before the end of the standoff was aboard the Bainbridge when Phillips was freed.

The pirate had sought medical treatment for a stab wound to the hand, inflicted by a member of the Maersk Alabama's crew when the gang tried to hijack the ship, the official said.

The pirate was being transferred to the Boxer.

#### HOW WERE SEA CONDITIONS AT THE TIME?

Conditions were deteriorating and the USS Bainbridge was towing the lifeboat in search of calmer waters at the time of the incident. The lifeboat was about 80 to 100 feet away from the Bainbridge when the Navy SEALs opened fire on the pirates. The lifeboat was about 20 miles off the coast of Somalia when the standoff ended. U.S. military officials were determined to prevent the lifeboat from reaching the Somali shore.

#### WHAT IS PHILLIPS' CONDITION?

Phillips is in good health, Gortney said. The former hostage declined an offer of food after his rescue and has called home. President Barack Obama also called the Boxer to speak to him.

#### WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE FOURTH PIRATE?

The Navy says it is working with the U.S. Department of Justice to determine how to hold the pirate accountable for his crimes. He could be prosecuted in the United States or in Kenya, Gortney said.

#### WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE INCIDENT?

U.S. officials insist they did not want the stand-off to end violently. **Somali pirates** have generally not harmed their hostages and officials fear they could now act more violently.

"This could escalate violence in this part of the world, no question about it," Gortney told reporters at the Pentagon on a conference call from his headquarters in Bahrain.

How Captain Phillips was rescued

BBC - By non-attributed author

12 April 2009

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US officials have been giving details about how Captain Richard Phillips was freed, in an operation which left three of the pirates who seized him dead.

US Navy spokesman Vice-Adm William Gortney said the pirates were shot because Capt Phillips' life appeared in "imminent danger". Snipers on a nearby US warship observed a pirate was pointing a gun at the captain's back, and decided to fire.

Capt Phillips was not hurt in the gunfire which killed the pirates.

At the time of the operations, a fourth pirate was on board the warship, the USS Bainbridge, which was tracking the lifeboat in which the captain was being held. He was taken into military custody.

Tied up

Capt Phillips had been held hostage in the lifeboat since Wednesday, when pirates attacked his ship, the Maersk Alabama. He had agreed to become a hostage so that his crew could go free, the crew said.

US officials said he had been kept tied up in the lifeboat.

Negotiations involving Somali elders had been going on throughout Sunday to secure the captain's release, and one of the pirates was taking part in the talks on board the USS Bainbridge.

Vice-Adm Gortney said the pirates were armed with AK-47 assault rifles and small-calibre pistols.

US President Barack Obama had given clear orders to shoot if Capt Phillips' life was in danger, he said.

Snipers determined that one of the pirates had trained an AK-47 on the captain and seemed about to fire, Vice-Adm Gortney added.

/\*\*\*\*\* BEGINNING OF SECTION 5 \*\*\*\*\*/

CITE OSC RESTON VA 684042

The snipers fired on the pirates for several minutes. Capt Phillips was unhurt despite being just a few metres away from his captors during the shooting.

He was then taken on board the Bainbridge, and later moved to the USS Boxer where he underwent a medical examination.

UN, AU envoys urge DR Congo to implement peace agreements  
Xinhua - By non-attributed author

12 April 2009

The UN special envoy and the African Union (AU) mediator urge the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) to fully implement the peace agreements in the region.

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Nigerian former President Olusegun Obasanjo, who is acting as the UN envoy, and former Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa, who represents the AU, made the call in which they also condemned the fresh wave of violence led by newly-formed rebel groups.

The News Agency of Nigeria said on Sunday Obasanjo and Mkapa called on leaders in the country "to support peace and take steps to implement agreed-on measures to improve stability in the volatile North and South Kivu regions in eastern DR Congo."

"Rapid and faithful implementation is key to success, and we urge them to fully implement the agreements, in accordance with their stated commitments and agreed timetable," they said in a statement.

They urged stakeholders to ensure that agreements were not used as pretext for the emergence of new armed groups in the Kivus.

"After years of conflict and humanitarian crisis, the region is now yearning for peace, and the international community is expecting full implementation of the agreements," said the statement.

The former presidents expressed satisfaction that some internally displaced persons were starting to return to their homes, but regretted that some new displacements took place in areas where military operations were going.

The special envoys also commended the initiative taken by regional leaders on the Congo crisis, saluting in particular to Nigeria for its generous contributions and support to the peace process.

Challenges ahead for Algerian incumbent

Associated Press - By Alfred de Montesquiou

12 April 2009

A front-page cartoon in the Algerian press seems to sum up the many challenges facing President Abdelaziz Bouteflika following his landslide re-election last week to a third term at the helm of the North African country.

The drawing, in Sunday's edition of the El Watan daily, shows a throne balanced on a powder keg. The words "unemployment, corruption, the judiciary, poor living conditions, housing, and the cost of life" all fly around, threatening to ignite it.

Bouteflika, who won a staggering 90.24 percent of votes in Thursday's race and has the firm support of the state apparatus, appears to be in a position of strength going into another five-year mandate.

Still, the social ills that plagued his first decade in office, including a lingering Islamist insurgency linked to al-Qaida,

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loom large in this vast north African nation, an important U.S. ally in the fight against terrorism and a key oil and gas exporter.

First elected in 1999 with the army's backing and re-elected in 2004, Bouteflika is widely credited with quelling a bloody insurgency that pitted Islamist militants against secular security forces and killed up to 200,000 people during the 1990s. He also launched a huge government spending program that saw the construction of roads, dams, bridges and housing throughout the country.

Bouteflika's election platform focused on continuity. A day after the vote, he said he would pursue his policy of national reconciliation and reconstruction.

But with an unemployment, ethnic tensions between Arabs and the Kabyle ethnic minority, and a sluggish economy outside hydrocarbons, Algeria's social unrest remains a key test for the 72-year-old president.

Officially, unemployment is at 10 percent, but many observers believe it is three times higher. The \$236 billion gross domestic product last year had a 3 percent growth rate, essentially sustained by hydrocarbons.

Easing joblessness among young people is particularly crucial. Under 30 year olds, who make up 70 percent of Algeria's population of 34 million, appear increasingly frustrated by a lack of opportunities.

Many have left the country to work illegally in Europe; others frequently riot at home. The angriest continue to join al-Qaida in Islamic North Africa, which partly explains how the group can still operate despite important losses inflicted by government forces, intelligence officials say.

/\*\*\*\*\* BEGINNING OF SECTION 6 \*\*\*\*\*/

Bouteflika is well aware of this.

During his campaign, he hinted at a general amnesty for insurgents, and security forces suspected of crimes, if militants finally renounce violence. He also insisted that a full and lasting peace would improve development in Algeria and promised a \$150 billion investment plan to create 3 million jobs during his third term.

Energy Minister Chakib Khelil said the government can fund this plan despite low oil and gas prices.

"It's largely feasible," said Khelil, underscoring that Algeria, which depends on hydrocarbons for 95 percent of its exports, has

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more than \$130 billion in cash reserves left over from the era of record-high oil prices.

"Youth unemployment does reach important levels, and we'll focus on it," Khelil told The Associated Press. The challenge, he said, is to make young people realize that the era of state-managed economy is ending and that they must look to entrepreneurship instead.

Interior Minister Noureddine Yazid Zerhouni, a key government player at the head of more than 200,000 police and security forces, listed three main challenges ahead: promoting democracy, luring youths into politics and forging a more diverse economy. Though his troops battle terrorists almost daily, Zerhouni told AP the local al-Qaida branch was "cornered," with remaining armed groups being hard to catch because they are "taking refuge" in remote mountains.

He stressed that shifting from a near civil war to a serene, expanding economy takes time. "That is why (Bouteflika's) third term is so important," Zerhouni said.

Bouteflika and his ministers all hail from a single-party system that has loosened but remained in power since Algeria's independence in 1962. Many Algerians see them as too old or secluded to relate with the public.

Nasser Djabi, a sociologist at Algiers' University, said the system has lost traction. He said Bouteflika needs to renew and reshape Algeria's bureaucratic public administration so it interacts better with the people.

Bouteflika must deliver on social issues, Djabi said, because "The country looks calmer, but it's explosive."

Sea scum a new peril, but military has long been fighting true terrorists on land in Somalia

Daily News - By James Gordon Meek

12 April 2009

Pirates pillaging freighters off Somalia have captured America's attention - but they're hardly the most lethal threat in the Horn of Africa, where the U.S. has waged a secret war since 2001.

The attempted hijacking of the U.S.-flagged ship Maersk Alabama and the hostage drama that followed has called attention to a U.S. military presence in the region that has steadily increased over nearly two decades.

"There is intense focus by our government on the Horn of Africa now," a U.S. counterterror official said.

The U.S. has rained down at least five air strikes on Al Qaeda and

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its allies in Somalia in the past two years and has unmanned drones spying on targets, said David Shinn, former U.S. ambassador to Ethiopia and State Department coordinator for Somalia.

Counterterrorism operations in Somalia remain "very covert" as analysts increasingly fret that Al Qaeda will gain a foothold there in a potential safe haven, Shinn said.

While intelligence officials downplay any hard links between Al Qaeda and the pirates, the crisis has increased pressure on President Obama's Pentagon to draw up plans for nailing the brigands in their home bases in six Somali ports, sources said. Skeptics say military resources are still too scarce in African countries on the Gulf of Aden. Most are under the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, which conducts counterterrorism operations under the guise of humanitarian missions for the U.S. African Command (AFRICOM).

But a U.S. counterterrorism official disagrees.

"If we can 'fix' locate a terrorist in Somalia and there is a decision made to take him out, we can do it," the official insisted to the Daily News.

Retired Army Special Forces Lt. Col. Jim Gavrilis agreed the U.S. has "unlimited direct-action capabilities" in the Horn, and secret operators "would love it" if they got the green light to strike pirates and terrorists more freely and more frequently there.

"There's no functional government in Somalia," Gavrilis said.

"It's going to have to be a U.S. military operation."

Obama may order the military to strike lethal blows, but the ghosts of America's first match up with Al Qaeda 17 years ago haunt the streets of Mogadishu, Somalia's capital.

No one in the U.S. government had heard of Osama Bin Laden's

\*\*\*\*\* BEGINNING OF SECTION 7 \*\*\*\*\*

CITE OSC RESTON VA 684042

network when his lieutenants helped Somali warlords deal the American humanitarian mission there a serious blow. It culminated in the October 1993 "Black Hawk Down" disaster, where Army Delta Force troops and Rangers fighting Al Qaeda-aided militias suffered 19 killed and 84 injured.

In any battle plans, "1993 is on everybody's mind," Gavrilis said.

The CIA stepped up its collection of intelligence over the past year as pirate raids quadrupled alarmingly and an Al Qaeda-affiliated jihadi group, al-Shabaab, rose in potency,

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sources said.

"Al-Shabaab is operating numerous training camps in southern Somalia attended by some Americans," said the U.S. counterterrorism official. "We believe that al-Shabaab and Al Qaeda have their sights set on hitting U.S. and Western targets elsewhere in Africa."

**Military crackdown hasn't deterred Somali pirates**

Associated Press - By Lara Jakes

12 April 2009

The U.S. military's moves to crack down on high seas piracy have done little to deter the epidemic of ship ransoms that preceded Sunday's Indian Ocean rescue, a top Navy official said Sunday. Instead, pirates have merely headed elsewhere to avoid a growing armada of U.S. and international warships, said Vice Adm. Bill Gortney, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command. Despite heightened ocean crackdowns that led to criminal charges against 130 suspected pirates over the last three months, "it wasn't having an effect of drawing the number of attempts down," Gortney told reporters during a telephone conference call from Bahrain.

The latest example of the military's handling of the **Somali pirate** problem was the most dramatic. It ended Sunday with the rescue of Capt. Richard Phillips after Navy snipers fatally shot three Somalis who were holding him captive at gunpoint.

The 18-foot pirate boat was within 20 nautical miles of Somalia's coast when Navy SEALs opened fire, said a U.S. military official with knowledge of the events. The pirates had tied up Phillips and were pointing an AK-47 assault rifle at his back, said a military official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

Acting on authorization from the White House to take action in order to save Phillips' life, "the on-scene commander saw that the weapon was aimed at him (Phillips) and took it as that pirate was getting ready to use that weapon on him," Gortney said. "That would be my interpretation of imminent danger."

For months, the Navy has sought to prevent or disrupt scores of ship hijackings near the Gulf of Aden. More than 100 ships off the Horn of Africa came under siege in the past year.

But as the Navy began focusing on the Gulf of Aden and seeing results, Gortney said, the pirates shifted their activity south into the Indian Ocean. Over the past week, pirates commandeered at least seven new ships, including the Maersk Alabama.

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The movement to the Indian Ocean is worrisome because the expanse is one of the world's most crucial shipping lanes, with oil vessels and other merchant ships carrying billions of dollars worth of cargo.

"As a result of our activity and a lot of Navy presence up in the Gulf of Aden, we saw both attempts and successful attacks go down," Gortney said. "But the last couple of weeks, we saw activity, attempts and successful attacks occur on the east coast of Somalia -- where this one did."

Gortney said the Navy has been warning cargo ships to stay in deeper waters, away from the Somali coast, and to better protect themselves by hardening their ships against attacks. The Maersk Alabama was 230 nautical miles off the coast when it was briefly hijacked before the crew retook the cargo ship.

Additional Navy ships also have been sent to the region to patrol for pirates, Gortney said.

U.S. Military Considers Attacks on Somali Pirates' Land Bases  
Bloomberg - By Jeff Bliss

13 April 2009

The U.S. military is considering attacks on pirate bases on land and aid for the Somali people to help stem ship hijackings off Africa's east coast, defense officials said.

The military also is drawing up proposals to aid the fledgling Somalia government to train security forces and develop its own coast guard, said the officials, who requested anonymity. The plans will be presented to the Obama administration as it considers a coordinated U.S. government and international response to piracy, the officials said.

The effort follows the freeing yesterday of Richard Phillips, a U.S. cargo ship captain held hostage since April 8 by Somali pirates. Security analysts said making shipping lanes safe would require disrupting the pirates' support network on land.

"There really isn't a silver-bullet solution other than going into Somalia and rooting out the bases" of the pirates, said James  
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Carafano, senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, a Washington-based group.

Any plan would have to be coordinated carefully, analysts said. In 1992, under then-President George H.W. Bush, U.S. forces that landed in Somalia to confront widespread starvation found themselves in the middle of a civil war. Forty-two Americans died

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before former President Bill Clinton pulled out the troops in 1994.

No such broad military effort is being seriously considered now, the defense officials said.

#### Need for Somali Support

The defense officials cautioned that any actions, whether diplomatic or military, would need the support of the Somali people, who are traditionally suspicious of foreign intervention. President Barack Obama, who gave permission for the military operation to free Phillips yesterday, is coordinating the U.S. response to piracy with other countries and the shipping industry to reduce vessels' vulnerability to attack, boost operations to foil attacks and prosecute any captured suspects, said a senior administration official.

The administration official, who requested anonymity, declined to provide further details.

U.S. officials said the goal of a response to the piracy problem would be to encourage Somalis to help clamp down on lawlessness and to ease poverty, an outgrowth of 18 years without a strong central government.

#### 'One Symptom'

"Piracy is one symptom of the difficult situation in Somalia," said Laura Tischler, a State Department spokeswoman.

Under discussion are ways to send more direct food and agricultural aid to the country, the defense officials said.

The U.S. military's African Command, or Africom, could lead the land-based effort. Unlike other commands, Africom doesn't have large military units. It also has only one permanent base, in Djibouti. The staff of Africom is half civilian and half military personnel and includes representatives from the Departments of State, Treasury and Health and Human Services.

Any U.S. actions on the seas may be coordinated by the Fifth Fleet, which is based in Bahrain.

Also, efforts to ferret out pirates may be jointly conducted with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the defense official said.

#### Joint Partnerships

The U.S. has used a similar partnership between the military and law enforcement to fight drug cartels in South and Central America.

U.S. action would come as new approaches to fight piracy have emerged over the past seven months. In August, countries increased ship escorts and naval patrols around the Gulf of Aden,

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site of most East African attacks. In December, the United Nations Security Council unanimously passed an anti-piracy resolution.

The UN measure allowed for attacks on pirate land bases and led to the formation of a 28-nation group that has met twice since January to coordinate diplomatic, legal and military efforts. In January, the U.S. also signed an agreement with Kenya to prosecute suspected pirates handed over by the U.S. military. The U.S. will try anyone who attempts to hijack U.S. ships or hold U.S. captives, Tischler said.

Countries should use existing legal codes, such as the Law of the Sea Treaty and Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation, to develop a process for prosecuting pirates, U.S. Coast Guard Commandant Thad Allen said.

'Ample Legal Requirements'

There are "ample legal requirements and jurisdiction to be able to take action against these pirates," Allen said yesterday on ABC's "This Week." "That's what we should be doing."

The Obama administration also is urging shipping companies and international maritime groups to employ private security forces and take steps such as unbolting ladders that pirates could use to board a vessel.

The U.S. should make sure to involve other countries, international aid organizations and the shipping industry in its plans, security analysts said.

Lack of coordination has been a major reason for the proliferation of piracy incidents, said Yonah Alexander, director of the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies' International Center for Terrorism Studies, a Washington-based policy group.

Lack of Strategy

"Everyone is trying to water their own tree rather than looking at the whole forest," said Alexander, co-author of the soon-to-be-published "Error on the High Seas: From Piracy to Strategic Challenge." "The international community doesn't have a coherent, holistic strategy to deal with this."

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Current military efforts have had limited success, security analysts said. In January, the U.S. formed Task Force 151, which uses ships, helicopters and Marine Corps snipers to thwart piracy in the region.

In February, the task force prevented pirates from seizing two

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vessels. It also responded to the seizure of Phillips' vessel, the Maersk Alabama, which is operated by Maersk Line, the Norfolk, Virginia-based U.S. unit of Copenhagen-based A.P. Moller-Maersk A/S.

About 25 warships from the European Union, the U.S., Turkey, Russia, India and China have concentrated their efforts to protect the Gulf of Aden.

In response, the pirates have moved south and further out to sea.

Futility

The capture of the Maersk Alabama, which was hijacked 500 miles south of the Gulf of Aden in the Indian Ocean, shows the futility of concentrating security forces solely at sea, said Neil Livingstone, chairman and chief executive officer of ExecutiveAction LLC, a Washington-based anti-terrorism consultant for businesses.

"It's a massive area," he said. "You can't patrol all of it."

The region **Somali pirates** operate in is equal in size to the Mediterranean and Red Seas combined.

The U.S. should take as its model the 1801 decision by then-President Thomas Jefferson to send a naval force to assault the land bases of Barbary pirates, who were extorting money from U.S. merchant ships off Libya's coast, security analysts said.

The pirates eventually succumbed to a mixture of U.S. military and diplomatic pressure.

Before taking any action, though, the U.S. should come up with a plan so it isn't caught unprepared like it was during its 1992 Somalia intervention, Carafano said.

"We need to be a little more thoughtful and rational" this time and develop a detailed strategy, he said.

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US lawmaker calls for policy debate on piracy

AFP - By non-attributed author

10 April 2009

Senator John Kerry on Friday called for a US policy debate on the "growing threat of piracy," as an American ship captain was being held by pirates in a lifeboat adrift in the Indian Ocean.

"These acts of piracy off Somalia's coastline may seem surreal, but they're all too real and a thorough policy debate is long overdue," said Kerry, a former presidential candidate and current chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Two US warships, one bearing helicopters, were in a tense standoff with pirates holding captain Richard Phillips, whose US-flagged

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Danish freighter, Maersk Alabama, was hijacked Wednesday by four pirates.

Although the pirates were later overpowered by the unarmed US crew, they were able to separate Phillips and bundle him onto a lifeboat. Phillips was hailed as a hero Friday by friends, relatives and US media.

"When Americans, including at least one from Massachusetts, are endangered, you've got a complicated and dangerous international situation brewing, and that includes questions about a hot pursuit policy on Somalia's coastline," Kerry said.

The Democratic senator for Massachusetts said more than 50 pirate attacks off the eastern coast of Africa have been recorded so far this year.

"I plan to hold hearings to further examine the growing threat of piracy and all the policy options that need to be on the table before the next fire drill becomes an international incident with big implications," he added.

Also on Friday, a hostage and two pirates were killed when French special forces stormed a yacht ending a six-day ordeal off the coast of Somalia, and **Somali pirates** released a Norwegian tanker and its crew held since March 26, their owners said.

Since April 4, **Somali pirates** have stepped up their attacks. They have hijacked a US container ship, a small French sailing yacht, a British-owned Italian-operated cargo, a German container carrier, a Taiwanese fishing vessel and a Yemeni tugboat.

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