

**Research Paper**



**The Political and Economic  
Impact of Somali Piracy  
During 1990-2012**

**Graduate School of Public Policy  
The University of Tokyo**

**Research Paper**

**International Political Economy  
Case Study**

**Professor of HIWATARI Nobuhiro**

**Political and Economic Impact of Somalia Piracy  
During the Period (1991–2012)**

**Elwaleed Ahmed Talha**

**51-128208**

**MPP/IP Student**

**July – 2013**

## I. Abstract

*This paper attempts to show the political and economic impact of maritime piracy by taking Somalia as a case study. It includes the historical background of maritime piracy as a general and then the history of Somalia piracy in particular. Additionally, it shows the emerging articles and scholars who search on the piracy issue. the paper also analysis the development of piracy during the period 1991 - 2012, throughout this period, the paper stated the main reasons that make the general trend of piracy varies over time. Moreover, the paper shows the key role of international community in reducing the crime of piracy. And finally, the paper comes up with the conclusion as well as some recommendations.*

**Keywords:** Maritime Piracy, International Community, Fishermen, Somalia Region

## II. Introduction

### ❖ Methodology

As it is based-qualitative paper, I followed distributive approach as well as statistical approach by describing the dependent variable figures. And I pick the period of 1991 - 2012 as a sample period for the Maritime piracy in Somalia.

### ❖ Research's Questions

Here I predominantly tend to answer the major questions on piracy expansion as follow:

1. **The First Question is:** Why in certain areas there are piracy activities? Based upon past studies and analysis done by researchers, it is found that piracy is highly influenced by the political and economic situation in a country. Specially, countries that suffer of absent of democratic regimes and have high poverty rates.
2. **The Second Question is:** Why the Pirate attack success rate is decreasing over time? In this question the student eager to show the enormous effort spent by international community to get rid of piracy. Moreover, based on empirical evidences and the statistical figures compiled, it is being puzzled out that the implemented (Actual) pirate attacks are increasing from year to year over time but the attack success rate is decreasing which means the vast majority of pirates attacks failed to achieve its target.

## ❖ **The Research's Hypothesis**

Based on an intensive search and analysis being done, it is found that a country with higher political freedoms tend to have less number of pirates. And also countries with poor social situations, tend to have piracy activities. In order to set this hypothesis, I took into account the foreseeable relationship between dependent and independent variables.

## ❖ **Obstacles**

In order to prepare this topic, there are number of obstacles that the student encountered one very common one is the lack of statistical figures. In this regards, I found difficulties to collect time series data for each variable (Dependent and Independent variables) because most of the variables are qualitative variables do not based on real figures. However, I could have set what is called Dummy Variables to run econometrics model but dummy variables are likely leads to inaccurate results . the only one variable I could justify time series to, is the dependent variable, which is named (Piracy) even though, I did not find all the period in one source, I compiled it from different sources and then made cross checking between all the sources .

Another problem is related to the lack of the theoretical literatures . Although there are vast studies done on the area of maritime piracy, not all of them are based on theoretical background. In this regard, I consolidated the empirical evident as a guide for my research.

## ❖ **Data Sources and Materials**

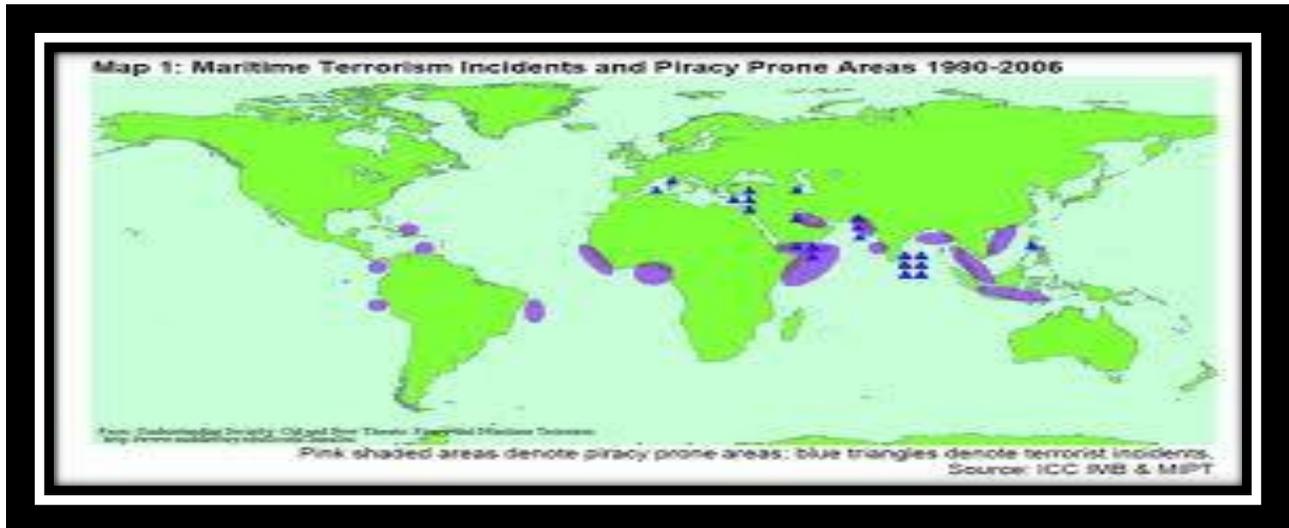
I relied mainly on the researches done on maritime piracy in addition to the reports published by the line organizations in charge of piracy such as :

International Chamber of Commerce, Commercial Crime Services ICC-CCS

International Maritime Organization

- NATO Shipping Center
- Financial Investigation Bureau
- Geographical Distribution of Maritime Piracy
- Around the World during 1990-2006

# Geographical Distribution of Maritime Piracy around the World During 1990-2006



Source: ICC, IMP, & MIPT - Pink shaded areas denote piracy prone areas

Blue triangles denote terrorist incidents

### III. A BRIEF HISTORY OF PIRACY

Historical records from over 2,000 years ago indicate that early civilizations, such as the Greeks and Romans, dealt with piracy. (Laura Barry and Benjamin Staver 2009), Which means the History of Piracy is returned back to 2000 years ago in Europe – Ancient Greece, when sea robbers threatened the trading routes of Ancient Greece. And the main reason behind pirates attack is the economic gain. For instance, Roman ships were attacked by pirates who seized their cargoes of grain, and olive oil. During the period between 1620 and 1720, piracy flourished and this period was known as the golden age of piracy where there have been different types of pirates such as privateers, buccaneers, and corsairs. (Supply Chain Security 2012)

- **Privateers** were lawful pirates who were authorized by their government to attack and pillage ships of enemy nations. They shared their profits with the government.
- **Buccaneers** were pirates and privateers who operated from bases in the West Indies, and attacked Spanish shipping in the Caribbean.
- **Corsairs** were Muslim or Christian pirates who were active in the Mediterranean from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries.

Recorded history shows that at least since the days of ancient Greece and the Roman Empire, piracy has been a constant hurdle to maritime trade, affecting at different times every maritime region of the world, from the Mediterranean and Northern European seas, to Asia, the Middle East and Africa and, of course, the America. (H.E. Jose´ Luis Jesus, 2003)

**Table No (1)**  
**History of Piracy Since 800 up until 2012**

The Area	The Period
The Greeks	(800–146 bc)
The Romans	(753 bc to ad 476)
The Vikings	(ad 793–1066)
The Buccaneers	(1650–1701)
The Barbary Pirates	(1320–1785)
The Tanka Pirates	(1790–1820)
America and the Barbary Pirates	(1785–1950)
Somalia Piracy	1990-2012

*Source, H.E. Jose´ Luis Jesus. 2003*

#### **IV. History of Somalia Piracy:**

Piracy in Somalia came up in 1991 When the Somali Democratic Republic collapsed in 1991 during the outbreak of the civil war, which left Somalia's coast line unprotected, and also let fishing vessels from other countries started to poach in the region. Moreover, other ships came and started using the unguarded Somali waters as a dumping area for toxic wastes. Devastated Somali fishermen and threatened the food supply for the people of the war-torn region. Result to that, Somali fishermen appealed for international help to deal with the illegal fishing and dumping, but no action was taken.

More importantly, because there are no series steps being taken by international community, the local fishermen took up arms to attack the commercial ships in the region, in an attempt to stop the stealing of fish and the dumping of toxic waste. As the international community started efforts to put an end to the attacks on ships passing through the area, soon later Somali militia

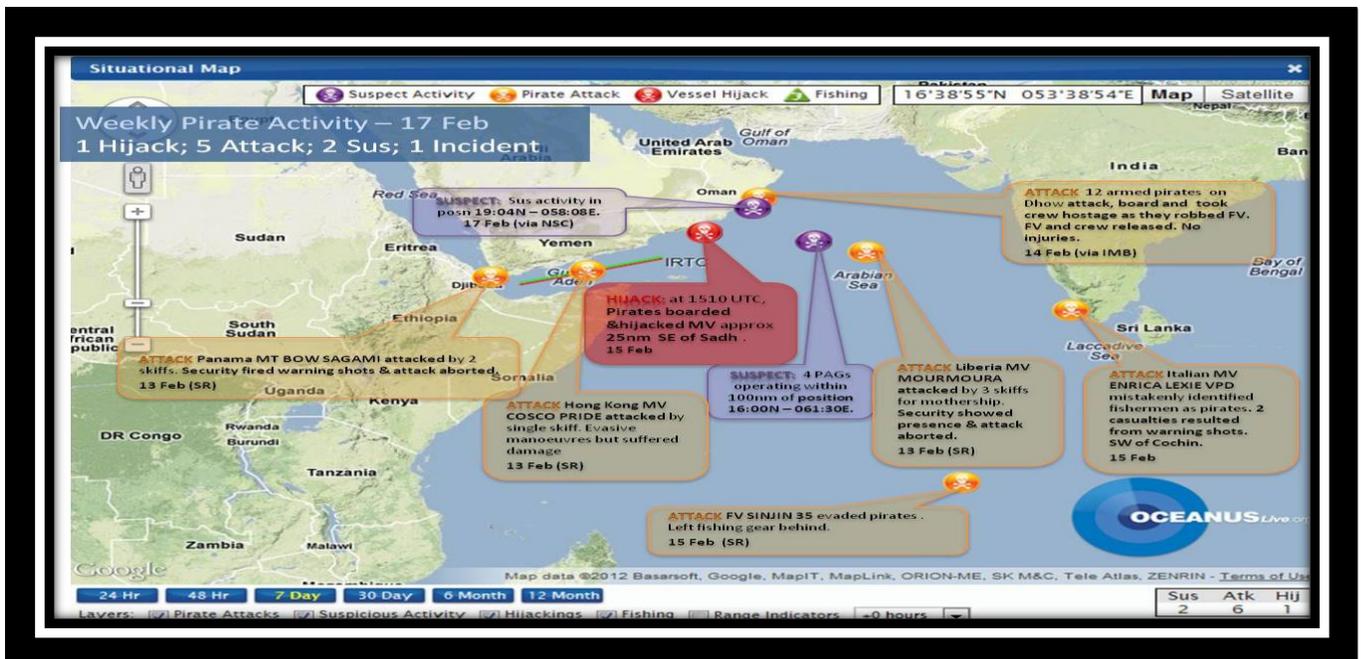
joined forces with the fishermen. From that point forward, the Horn of Africa, also known as Somalia, became the breeding ground for what is now known internationally as the Somali piracy problem.

During the period 1991-1994 the maritime piracy attacks have occurred mostly in the South East Asia coming to one hundred incidents per year, the situation have dramatically changed starting at 1995 when the amount of the maritime piracy attacks have grown to several hundred annually and geographically spread out around the globe. However this problem has acquired a truly alarming proportions since the 1999 in the South East Asian region, around Indonesia and in the Malacca Straits and then since 2005 have moved to the Gulf of Aden and the waters around Somalia . ( Tzvi Itzhak Arieli, 2012)

In 2005 piracy activities flourished in that region of Somalia and expanded to include the area closest to the Somali coast line Gulf of Aden and Arab sea. This area, however, was adjacent to Yemen and Oman, which border Saudi Arabia. It also involved the Gulf of Aden.

To sum up, Piracy in Somalia began as a result of the collapse of Somalia and the onset of foreign dumping and illegal fishing. Because of the depletion of fishing stocks around the Somali coast, piracy became a way for fishermen to not only replace their lost income but to also scare off intruders.

## Somali Pirates Activities on the Arabia Sea, Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden During 2000-2012



## V. Literature views

There have been a number of important historical studies that have dealt with the subjects of piracy and piracy suppression. Books written from the point of view of those wishing to end piracy have tended to focus on legal issues, including the rights of victims, the procedures and decisions of Admiralty courts in punishing pirates, and the capture of piracy ships as prizes. Others have looked at the existence of piracy in terms of one particular place or time period, with the Barbary Coast and the Caribbean Sea. In the next few paragraphs, I will be showing several articles and scholars' arguments from different perspectives.

Some studies tried to calculate economic and human cost of piracy such as Anna Bowden research in 2010 which, pointed out that there is no clear sense of the cost of maritime piracy and it is difficult to calculate. However, there are some enormous efforts have been made to assess the global cost of maritime piracy (Anna Bowden research in 2010) For example, The Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO) has carried out a review of the methodologies and the calculations on maritime piracy in Somalia region. Moreover, the report stated that there are two piracy costs (First Order Cost-FOC and Second Order Cost-SOC). (BIMCO Report 2012)

The effect of piracy attacks not only on the economic and human cost but also is extended to include international trade between countries. Terrorist attacks also have a direct impact on the GDP of the targeted nation, and measures undertaken to fight terrorism impact bilateral trade. Moreover, the incidence of terrorist activity depends on the security measures undertaken to prevent it and on the extent to which modern economies are made vulnerable by their openness. (Sami Bensassi and Inmaculada Martínez 2011).

According to BIMCO, and based on FOC, it is found that maritime piracy costs the International Trade between \$5.7 and \$6.1 billion in 2012. This estimate is the result of extensive research, supplemented by contributions from and an extensive audit by independent piracy experts. At between \$5.7 and \$6.1 billion, the cost of piracy to the global community fell by around \$850 million, or 12.6% from 2011 (Jonathan Bellish 2012). Additionally, there is also tremendous human cost associated with this crime Although it focuses on economic costs, there are also tremendous human costs associated with this crime. Over the past five years (2006 - 2010) there have been around 1,600 acts of piracy which have caused immeasurable harm to the world's seafarers, including the deaths of over 54 individuals (Anna Bowden et al. 2010)

Eric Shea Nelson raised a point related to the different between maritime terrorists from pirates. He found that One way to separate them from each other's is through the Economic Gain and Political Aim, which are considered as the main purposes for the criminal of both crimes(Eric Shea Nelson 2012). According to Dana Dillon The current definition of piracy is completely inadequate as a tool for policymakers. The leading statistics and reporting systems are misleading.(Dana Dillon 2005).

Laura Barry and Benjamin Stave 2009 developed a model consists of number of variables that affect maritime piracy. The model called three-sector model and includes piracy sector, police sector, and fishermen sector. most importantly, the main assumption that the model based on is the biflow assumption and a sector attractiveness assumption. ( Laura Barry and Benjamin Staver 2009).

## **VI. Dependent and Independent Variables**

Based upon past studies is being found that there are number of variables could interact with each other in their effect on piracy. In this regard, I will include an interaction relationship between dependent variables (Democratic System, good governance, as well as three-sector model) and independent variable which is piracy.

**Table No (2)**  
**The Relation Between the**  
**Dependent Variable and Independent Variables**

<b>Variable Name</b>	<b>Type of the Variable</b>	<b>The Relationship</b>
<b>Poor social situations</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Positive</b>
<b>Democratic System</b>	<b>Political</b>	<b>Negative</b>
<b>Good Governance</b>	<b>Political</b>	<b>Negative</b>
<b>Police Sector</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Negative</b>
<b>Fishermen Sector</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Negative</b>
<b>Pirates Sector</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Positive</b>

## **1. Poor Social Situation.**

A country that suffers of high unemployment rate and high poverty rate tend to have high crime rate. with this concern, as piracy is kind of organized crime, it is considered an attractive destination so that people prefer to head into in anticipation of maximizing their payoffs by engaging into such activity.

## **2. Democratic System of the Country**

Political institutions are also important explaining this phenomenon. For example, the incidents that occur in a country with higher political freedoms tend to have less number of pirates and the incidents that occur in the territories of more democratic countries tend to reduce the chance of successful attacks. Incidents that take place in more democratic locations also tends to involve fewer cases in which pirates board the ship and ask for ransom demands. Results show that the negative effect of democracy on piracy is conditional on states fragility level. The result shows that democratic system with low state fragility has lower expected counts of piracy, but that the relationship is reversed for democracies with high levels of fragility.

## **3. Good governance**

Piracy is a crime like other forms of illegal activities such as smuggling and corruption. It has been argued between governance and crime (Piracy) is negative. In the case of Somalia, However, it has been shown that piracy increased in periods with better governance.

At the lowest levels of governance, piracy is not likely to occur for one reason is at such a low level, the supply of valuable goods to be stolen and ships to be hijacked is small

At higher levels of governance, the benefits to pirates from improvements in markets and facilities are offset by the increasing ability and willingness of governments to combat crime. Increased controls on corruption and improving capacities to capture and punish wrong-doers reduce piracy. For that reason, having said the influence of governance is likely to be non-linear. (Olaf J. de Groot and Anja Shortland 2010)

(Laura Barry and Benjamin Staver 2009) developed a model consists of number of variables that affect maritime piracy. The model called three-sector model and includes piracy sector, police sector, and fishermen sector. most importantly, the main assumption that the model based on is the bi-flow assumption and a sector attractiveness assumption.

#### **4. Initial Sector**

This sector includes the starting points (Values) of individuals before engaging into any of the three sectors (Police, Fishermen, and Piracy). These values were estimated to be the current situation and population in Somalia – some fishermen and pirates, but no police.

#### **5. Pirates Sector**

This sector shows the basic flow to and from Piracy sector with other sectors (Police and Fishermen) . there is what called an adjustment time, which acts as a delay. This delay is to represent the time needed for fishermen to convert to be pirates, or vice versa.

#### **6. Police Sector**

The Police Sector shows the process and possibility of fishermen becoming police. here . There is also a brief Police Adjustment Delay, to imitate the need for training time before police are prevailed. Desired Additional Domestic police increases the rate. External Enforcement, a switch that is activated to simulate the presence of international forces, will decrease the Desired Additional Domestic Police.

#### **7. Police Supply Sector**

The Police Supply sector includes the variables that affect the flow between the fishermen and police stocks. It has two variables, the first one is The Average Earnings per Fisherman and the second one is the Average Police Earnings, which are affect how attractive it is to become a policeman. Likewise, there is indispensable ratio related to the police supply sector called The Ratio of Fishermen Seeking Police Employment, which represents the number of fishermen that want to become police (based on desired additional police) and is a graph of predicted behavior

#### **8. Police Demand Sector**

The Police Demand Sector comprises several variables.

- The Marginal Efficiency of Police represents how successful (or unsuccessful) police are in capturing and arresting pirates.
- Desired Additional Police is the number of police needed to fight a rise in piracy represented by Excess Pirates.

- Lawlessness is the attitude of the Total Population – whether or not Somalis accept pirates or would rather not have any pirates. If Lawlessness is high but Acceptable Lawlessness (a switch) is off, then desired additional police will contribute to a larger police force.

## 9. Fishermen Sector

Fishermen is the stock that Pirates and Police draws from. Because there are biflows, or a two-way flow, between these stocks, it is possible for pirates and police to return to being fishermen.

## 10. Pirates’ attractiveness sector

The Pirate Attractiveness Sector shows the variables that impact the flow between fishermen and pirates. When Pirate Attractiveness is high, fishermen will become pirates faster. The Marginal Effectiveness of Police, both domestic and external, increase Police Threat as they increase. Pirate Chance of Failure affects Pirate Chance of Success, which in turn affects Expected Pirate Payoff. Potential Pirate Earnings will decrease as the number of pirates rises, because the share each pirate will receive will be smaller. Expected Pirate Payoff and Potential Earnings per Pirate are important variables, because they increase or decrease Pirate Attractiveness.

**Table No (3)**  
**Three-sector Model Attractiveness**

Police Sector	Fishermen sector	Pirates Sector	Attractiveness
Higher	Lower	Lower	Police Sector
Lower	Higher	Lower	Fisherman Sector
Lower	Lower	Higher	Piracy Sector
Higher	Higher	Higher	Police Sector
Lower	Lower	Lower	Policy Sector

*Source Laura Barry and Benjamin Staver, 2009.*

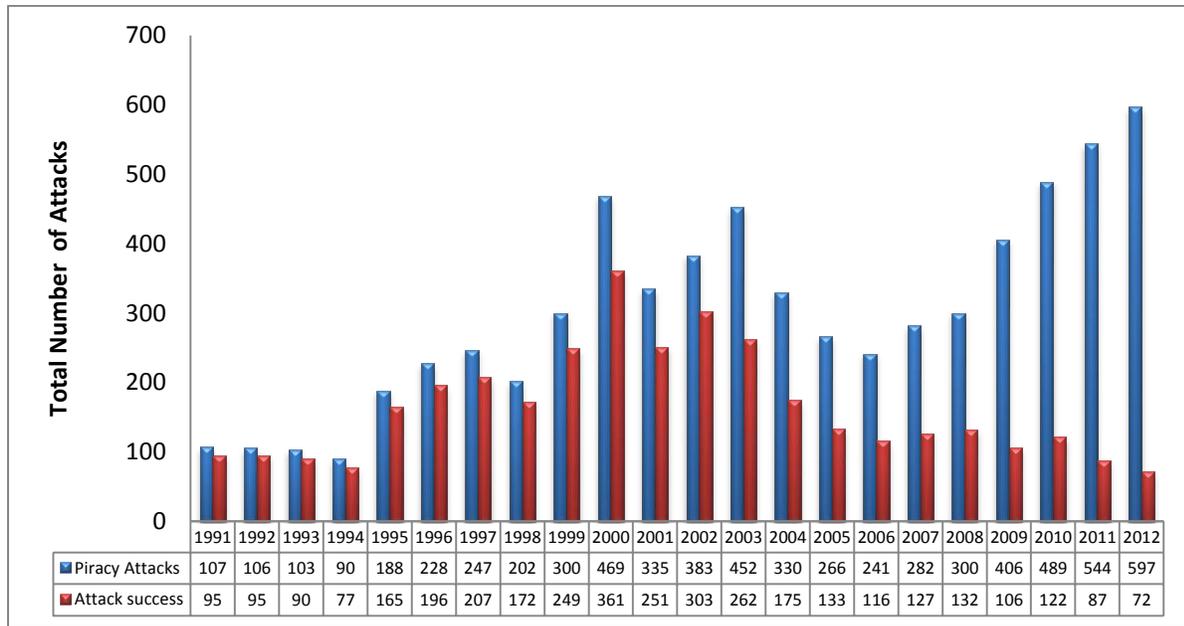
This table shows the relation between the three sectors( Police sector, fishermen sector and pirates sector). the main assumption that the model based on, is the two-way flow between three of them as well as the attractiveness level of each sector. the higher the attractiveness level of a sector (Police, Pirates, and Fishermen), the better the place for the people to earn money. In this regards, making the attractiveness of the police and fishermen sector very high, could be one possible solution to reduce pirates activities in Somali region.

## VII. The General Trend of Piracy from 1991-2012

Here I will trace the dynamics and trends of the growing numbers of maritime piracy as well as their geographical occurrence locations. Having known the period between 1991 - 2000 covers the period after the End of the Cold War. Similarly, the period between 2001 and 2012 witnessed several political and economic evident.

**Chart No (1)**

**Total Number of Piracy Attack in the World  
During The Period 1991-2012**



Source: International Maritime Organization, Reports on Acts of Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships: Annual Report, available at <http://www.imo.org> accessed August 2012.

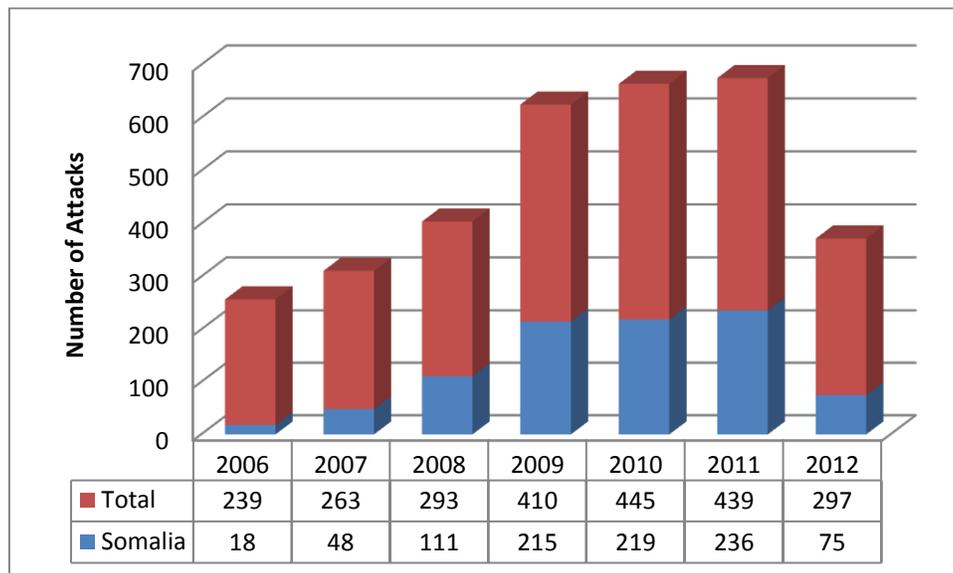
As it can be seen from the table, there have been only 107 attacks in 1991, all of which happened in one region, which is the Southeast Asia. In just a few years, the piratical attacks have spread all over the world, including West and East Africa, Latin America, and even around Europe (Abhyankar, 2002). The minimal decline in the total attacks number from 107 attacks in 1991 to 90 attacks in 1994 is attributed to the cold war between US and Kuwait from one side and Iraq from another side. After the year of 2000 there was a fluctuation in the total number of attacks. It is declined from 469 attacks in 2000 to 282 attacks in 2008.

The decline in 2006 to 241 attacks compare to 452 attacks in 2004 is attributed to Another reason that has had influence on the amount of attacks was the tsunami in December 2003, 2004, which has led to a decrease in 2005 and 2006. Additionally, there are other reasons such as a cause of the decrease in incidents, increase in awareness and anti-piracy watches by masters in risk prone areas, increase in law enforcement patrols, and international pressure on some governments to take action.

since then (2006) , the number of pirate attacks has nearly doubled from 300 reported incidents in 2008 to 406 reported pirate attacks in 2009 , which means 4 times higher than in1991.

**Chart No (2)**

**Piracy Incidents of Somalia During 2006 -2012**



Source: International Maritime Organization, Reports on Acts of Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships: Annual Report, available at <http://www.imo.org> accessed August 2012.

As it can be observed from the diagram above, Somalia Piracy represents between 40% to 50% of the total attack occurred around the world approximately. In 2004, the International Maritime Board warned all vessels to avoid sailing within 50 nautical miles of the Somali coast. In 2005, it increased this distance to 100 nautical miles. By 2006, some pirate attacks extended as far as 350 nautical miles off the coast of Somalia, with pirate attacks occurring in the Indian Ocean, in the Gulf of Aden and at the mouth of the Red Sea. Between 2007 and 2008, the main area of pirate activity shifted from southern Somalia and Mogadishu port to the Gulf of Aden. Since the beginning of 2009, there has been an increase in the number of attacks reported off the east coast of Somalia in the western Indian Ocean, with some attacks taking place over 1,000 nautical miles off that coast. (IMB, 2009)

And also the one of the reasons for the increase of Somalia piracy during 2006-2012 is the total number of vessels in the world engaged in international maritime trade steadily increases. an increase of vessels is enhanced by the growing pattern of the international trade between Europe and Asia from one side and between Africa and Asia from another side specially China. So that This factor should be taken into account by practitioners and theoreticians of marine and coastal management for effective work in the new realities of maritime shipping.

The greatest victim of this piracy is undoubtedly the Somalis themselves. On top of the ongoing conflict, Somalia is also suffering from four years of catastrophic drought, and an estimated 3.2 million Somalis, approximately 43% of the population, were dependent on food aid in the latter part of 2008. Some 95% of international aid supplies to Somalia is shipped by sea. The World Food Programme (WFP) ships approximately 30,000 to 40,000 metric tons of food aid per month to the Horn of Africa region. As a result of the attacks on aid-bearing ships, WFP has reported that it has become more expensive and dangerous to ship food assistance to Mogadishu. (Maritime Piracy Report, 2010)

## **VIII. International community and Somalia Piracy**

The international community has made appreciable progress to fight Somalia piracy. The United States, Russia and India, among other nations, have fielded warships and Navy Special Forces teams to deal directly with pirates and pirate ships. Various government entities in Somalia have also worked to stop piracy by attacking their bases on land. Over the years, pirate attacks skyrocketed, reaching a peak of 151 known attacks in 2011.

In Somalia, the international community still focuses many of its efforts on finding solution to Somalia piracy in Mogadishu. Also, the mission of the African Union which is supported by the European Union and the United States guarantees the survival of the Somali government. In January 2010, the European Union has set up the European Training Mission Somalia (EUTM), to contribute to the training of Somali security forces. The mission takes place in Uganda and is characterized by close cooperation with the African Union and Somali Government. (Leonard Remondus van der Meijden, 2008)

Despite these efforts, the Somali transitional government has no actual power in the northern regions of Portland and Somali land bordering the Gulf of Aden. (Andreas Graf 2010) Although the international community does very well, the need for the local community and solution is strongly recommended and considered as indispensable part to solve this problem radically.

An alternative manageable solution that International community can adapted is to provide strong backing for one of the new Somali proto-states, and start a program for recycling pirates as pirate-fighting coast guards. This solution would have the advantage of being relatively cheap and creating an area of stability in a strategic region for International trade. (Sami and Inmaculada, 2010 ).

Any effective strategy to combat Somali piracy in the long-term will require the international community to engage in extensive development efforts on land. But efforts on this front are sorely lacking, suggesting that piracy off the coast of Somalia will be a recurring problem. Furthermore, because Somalia lacks a reliable legal system, the international community has had to assume responsibility for pirate prosecutions. (Andreas Graf 2010)

## **IX. Conclusion and Recommendations**

Based upon above sketch of analysis and empirical literature, I found that an increase in piracy attack is attributed to number of reasons

As the scale and frequency of maritime threats grow in the horn of Africa, there is an increasing desire among the international community to mitigate this crime.

- According to statistical figures, all piracy incidence in 1991 occurred in one region, which is Southeast Asia.
- The war between Kuwait and Iraq had an enormous impact on shrinking the number of piracy incidence during 1991-1994.

- Also, Natural Disasters considered one of the reasons that could reduce piracy activities in the world. One well known example is Tsunami in Southeast Asia.
- An increase in awareness and anti-piracy watches by masters in risk prone areas could decrease the number of incidence. For Example, in 2004, the International Maritime Board warned all vessels to avoid sailing within 50 nautical miles of the Somali coast.
- Pirates Sector is a catchy sector among the three sectors, because of the high level of attractiveness it offers

## **X. Recommendation and Suggestions**

Moreover, I can propose number of solution hopefully be as a contribution and help to reduce piracy incidents in terms of Somalia Piracy.

1. The international community must work to improve the legislative and judicial capacity of the Somalia's territories of Somalia, so that pirates can be prosecuted and incarcerated in their districts of origin. Policymakers in Somalia should also resist the temptation to pirates on the relatively functional.
2. One solution also is for bilateral society is to establish a public fishery to end piracy, which would be the best means in the world to prevent Piracy, and employ a number of poor people.
3. In terms of the three-sector model, the government of Somalia should make fishermen sector much more attractive compare to the piracy sector just to grantee that it would be (fishermen Sector) the best place for the people to head, thus, reduce piracy activity in Somali region.
4. The government of Somalia with the support of the International community, should form joint effort to strength police sector to be able arresting pirates. Most importantly, it is found that some police men and fishermen quit their sector in order to join pirates sector where the attractiveness is very high.

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