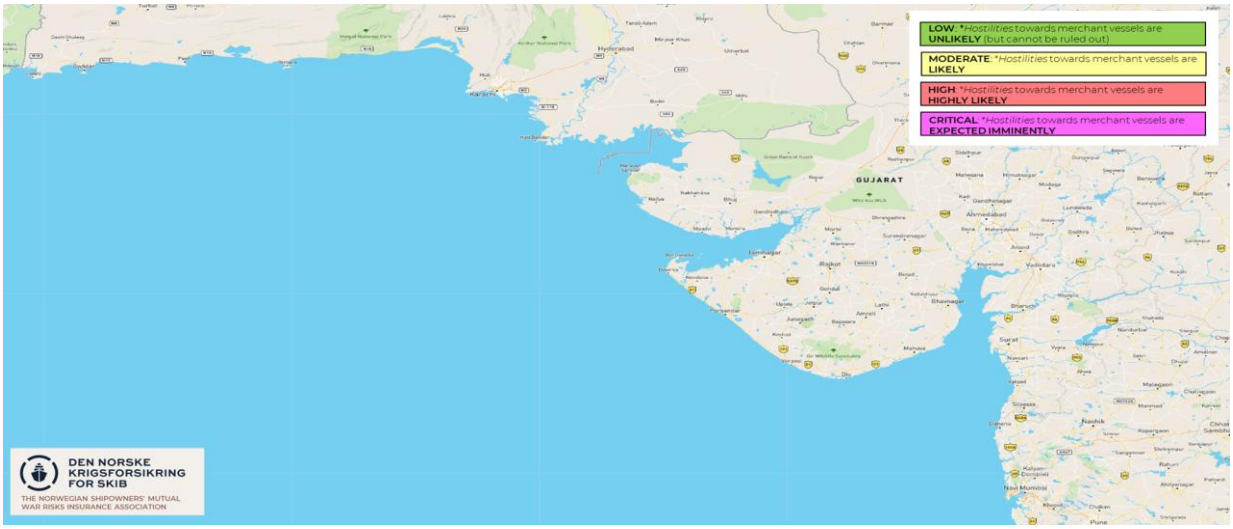
11. May 2025

DNK IOC SUPPLEMENTARY INTELLIGENCE REPORT (SUPINTREP) – Threat towards merchant vessels in Pakistani and Indian waters

Executive Summary

- **On 10 May 2025 at 17:00 LT, India and Pakistan activated a ceasefire. Even if minor violations occurred immediately after the activation and further violations LIKELY will be seen along the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir in the time ahead, the two warring parties will HIGHLY LIKELY now aim at restoring order and normalization. This will impact the threat towards merchant vessels operating in their waters:**
- ***The threat from India and Pakistan (REGULAR FORCES) towards merchant vessels in PAKISTANI & INDIAN WATERS in the EASTERN ARABIAN SEA, is assessed as INSIGNIFICANT (NO THREAT). (Change).***



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Background

Reporting is restricted to key incidents relevant to the threat from Indian and Pakistani regular forces towards merchant vessels from 7 May 2025. Previous reporting is provided in the 2025-05-07 DNK IOC SUPPLEMENTARY INTELLIGENCE REPORT (SUPINTREP) – Threat towards merchant vessels in Pakistani and Indian waters.

(Open Sources) On 8 May 2025, Pakistan reportedly imposed a maritime security alert at all of Pakistan's ports banning small vessel movements. The ban reportedly included fishing vessels and private vessels of all sizes. The purpose of the ban was reportedly to minimize non-essential movement and tighten maritime control. International merchant vessels were exempted.

(Open Sources) On 8 and 9 May 2025, Pakistan reportedly launched Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) and missiles towards at least three military bases in India-administered Kashmir, while Indian forces with Air-to-Surface Missiles (ASM) reportedly targeted three airbases in Pakistan. Indian and Pakistani soldiers also exchanged heavy volleys of shells and gunfire along the LoC in Kashmir in the same timeframe reportedly causing civilian casualties.

(Open Sources) On 10 May 2025 at an unknown in the early hours, Pakistan officially launched operation Iron Wall against India in response to the Indian operation Sindoor. The Pakistani military targeted Indian military bases with the Al-Fatah missile system, hitting a missile storage site, several airfields and other military targets.
See picture to the right provided by TV grab of an Al-Fatah missile system being launched as part of operation Iron Wall on 10 May 2025.

(Open Sources) On 10 May 2025, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif called a meeting of the country's highest decision-making authority on nuclear and missile policy issues.

(Open Sources) On 10 May 2025 at 17:00 LT, a "*full and immediate*" ceasefire between India and Pakistan was activated. Government ministers from both countries confirmed the ceasefire in separate statements. Pakistani authorities also confirmed that their airspace had been fully restored for all types of flights. Both sides agreed to stop all military action on land in the air and by sea and that they would convene further talks on 12 May 2025. Hours after the activation, minor violations were reported in Kashmir.

DNK IOC Comment

(Open Sources) On 22 April 2025, at least 26 people were killed in a terrorist attack in the tourist resort of Pahalgam in the Indian-administered Kashmir on the border between India and Pakistan. India then held Pakistan responsible.

(Open Sources) Since 27 April 2025, both nations' naval forces had been deployed to respective and bordering Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) in the eastern Arabian Sea to conduct live firing exercises.

(Open Sources) On 7 May 2025 between 01:05 and 01:30 LT, Indian forces launched its operation Sindoor by aerial attacks on reportedly nine targets inside Pakistan. Pakistan claimed all targets were infrastructure linked to terrorist groups, like the reported headquarters of the Islamist terrorist groups Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiba, while Pakistan claimed India attacked civilian infrastructure in Pakistan.

DNK IOC Assessment

Both parties, being nuclear powers, will **HIGHLY LIKELY** continue to seek to avoid a large scale multi domain military conflict, which **HIGHLY LIKELY** would be devastating for both countries.

Minor violations in the time just after the activation of a ceasefire should always be expected. And also, that the parties will use such incidents in their nationalistic rhetoric, which **LIKELY** will continue even if talks are planned on 12 May 2025.

The Pakistani operation Iron Wall was aimed at military targets exclusively, and units and locations that allegedly were involved in the attack on Pakistan on 7 May 2025 (operation Sindoor). This response was **HIGHLY LIKELY** therefore aimed at being orchestrated by Pakistan to be below the threshold of escalating the situation further.

The reported meeting of the Pakistani highest decision-making authority on nuclear and missile policy issues at the same time as the launch of operation Iron Wall, was **LIKELY** also orchestrated by Pakistan to put emphasize on that further Indian response moving forward, would potentially force Pakistan to cross the nuclear line. As Pakistan is conventionally (militarily) weaker than India, Pakistan's nuclear doctrine informs the possible use of nuclear weapons at a lower threshold than India – in order to deter.

In contrast to land, air, cyber, and information-operations, neither India nor Pakistan chose to use their navies kinetically against each other during operation Sindoor and operation Iron Wall. The two navies were used exclusively in the role of deterrence.

However, the Pakistani actions taken to ban small vessel movements in Pakistani ports on 8 May 2025, were **LIKELY** preparations made by the Pakistanis to organize their defences of their port areas – indicating that an Indian naval response was not ruled out by Pakistan.

Currently, both Pakistan and India **HIGHLY LIKELY** still have naval capabilities available to cause damage to both naval and merchant vessels operating in their waters. However, the

two nations are currently **HIGHLY UNLIKELY** intending to use lethal force against each other at sea - as long as the situation does not escalate dramatically post the ceasefire.

Interesting questions as to why this decade-long conflict escalated to the level it did this time - will now be raised. A plausible explanation could be that there is an increasing lack of trust that there still is global order, feeding global instability. Old and new conflicts between states escalating potentially out of control should **LIKELY** be expected moving forward.

Summarizing the threat-actor activity forecast in bordering Pakistani & Indian waters:

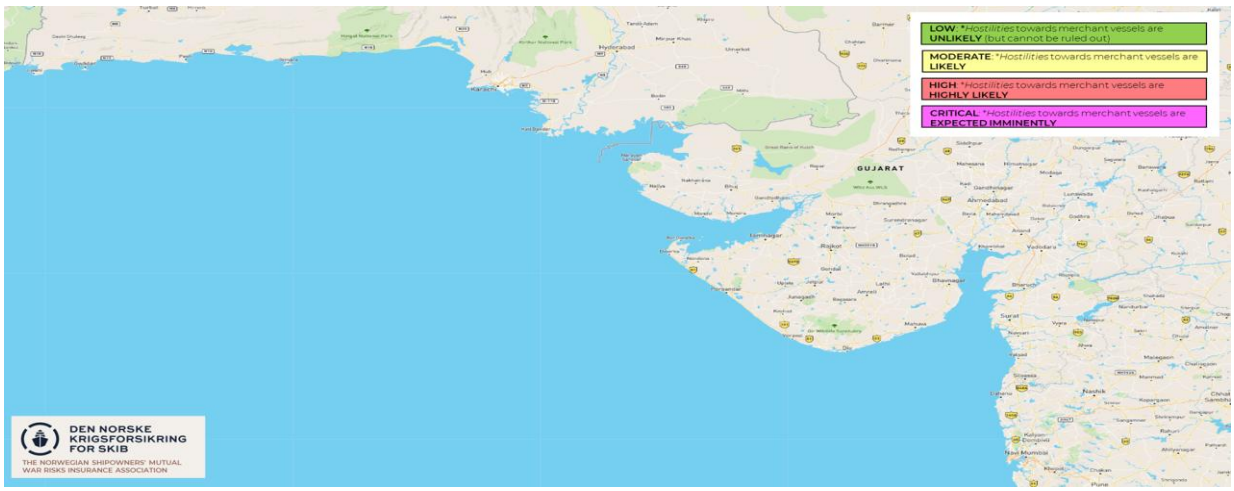
The parties will **HIGHLY LIKELY** now aim at restoring order and normalization. Further minor clashes along the LoC in Kashmir will **LIKELY** occur now and then also in the future - and should be interpreted as part of pattern of life in that area, and therefore easy to control and maintain below the threshold of escalation.

As kinetic naval operations **LIKELY** are more challenging to keep below the threshold - as like sinking of a naval vessel would potentially cause many casualties and sever loss of prestige, open and kinetic naval operations are **HIGHLY UNLIKELY** to be seen as long as the conflict is kept under control. Thereof are collateral damage affecting merchant vessels operating in the same area, due to misunderstandings or technical- or human failure, also **HIGHLY UNLIKELY** as well.

Except for cyber-operations, further hybrid action towards merchant vessels in order to influence pressure, is also **HIGHLY UNLIKELY** as long as the conflict is kept under control moving forward.

DNK IOC Threat Summary Pakistani and Indian waters

The threat from India and Pakistan (REGULAR FORCES) towards merchant vessels in PAKISTANI & INDIAN WATERS in the EASTERN ARABIAN SEA, is assessed as INSIGNIFICANT (NO THREAT). (Change).



Standardisation

The threat: The threat is derived from DNK IOC's knowledge of threat-actors' capabilities, hostile intentions, and their opportunities to inflict future damage deliberately/directly towards vessels-/units and their crew, limited to defined areas. The threat could also be of an indirect nature, caused as collateral damage when vessels/units plausibly could be affected by mistake or by coincidence.

Words of Estimative Probability (Confidence Levels): Words of estimative probability (WEP) are standardized terms used to convey the likelihood of either a context or a future event occurring. DNK IOC is using the following WEPs:
HIGHLY LIKELY - LIKELY – (EVEN CHANCE) - UNLIKELY - HIGHLY UNLIKELY

Threat Levels: Threat levels are designed to conclude the future threat posed by each threat-actor. DNK IOC is using the following Threat Levels (NATO and Norwegian standards) related to the different WEPs:

- **LOW** means future hostilities towards merchant vessels are **UNLIKELY** (but cannot be ruled out)
- **MODERATE** means future hostilities towards merchant vessels are **LIKELY**
- **HIGH** means future hostilities towards merchant vessels are **HIGHLY LIKELY**
- **CRITICAL** means hostilities towards merchant vessels are expected imminently

A Threat Assessment should not be mistaken as a Security Risk Assessment. DNK IOC does not consider each vessel and their vulnerabilities, nor risk mitigation measures taken or not taken by the member. The Threat Assessment should, however, be understood as an input to our member's Security Risk Assessments processes.

The DNK IOC Threat Assessment is valid only from the date of dissemination and until a revised Threat Assessment is disseminated by DNK IOC. Out-dated Threat Assessments should never be used as inputs to Security Risk Assessments or as any kind of decision support on Security matters.

Specifications and Contact details

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