UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

21 ILM 1261
1833 UNTS 3

Opened for signature at Montego Bay
10 December 1982

Entered into force
16 November 1994

ARTICLE 100
DUTY TO COOPERATE IN THE REPRESSION OF PIRACY

All States shall cooperate to the fullest possible extent in the repression of piracy on the high seas or in any other place outside the jurisdiction of any State.*

ARTICLE 101
DEFINITION OF PIRACY

Piracy consists of any of the following acts:

(a) any illegal acts of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by the crew or the passengers of a private ship or a private aircraft, and directed:

(i) on the high seas, against another ship or aircraft, or against persons or property on board such ship or aircraft;

* The phrase “any other place outside the jurisdiction of any State” is construed to include outer space; accordingly, references to “ship or aircraft” in Articles 101 through 107 are construed to also include spacecraft.
(ii) against a ship, aircraft, persons or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any State;

(b) any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or of an aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft;

(c) any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b).

ARTICLE 102
PIRACY BY A WARSHIP, GOVERNMENT SHIP OR GOVERNMENT AIRCRAFT WHOSE CREW HAS MUTINIED

The acts of piracy, as defined in Article 101, committed by a warship, government ship or government aircraft whose crew has mutinied and taken control of the ship or aircraft are assimilated to acts committed by a private ship or aircraft.

ARTICLE 103
DEFINITION OF A PIRATE SHIP OR AIRCRAFT

A ship or aircraft is considered a pirate ship or aircraft if it is intended by the persons in dominant control to be used for the purpose of committing one of the acts referred to in Article 101. The same applies if the ship or aircraft has been used to commit any such act, so long as it remains under the control of the persons guilty of that act.

ARTICLE 104
RETENTION OR LOSS OF THE NATIONALITY OF A PIRATE SHIP OR AIRCRAFT

A ship or aircraft may retain its nationality although it has become a pirate ship or aircraft. The retention or loss of nationality is determined by the law of the State from which such nationality was derived.

ARTICLE 105
SEIZURE OF A PIRATE SHIP OR AIRCRAFT

On the high seas, or in any other place outside the jurisdiction of any State, every State may seize a pirate ship or aircraft, or a ship or aircraft taken by piracy and under the
control of pirates, and arrest the persons and seize the property on board. The courts of the State which carried out the seizure may decide upon the penalties to be imposed, and may also determine the action to be taken with regard to the ships, aircraft or property, subject to the rights of third parties acting in good faith.

ARTICLE 106
LIABILITY FOR SEIZURE WITHOUT ADEQUATE GROUNDS

Where the seizure of a ship or aircraft on suspicion of piracy has been effected without adequate grounds, the State making the seizure shall be liable to the State the nationality of which is possessed by the ship or aircraft for any loss or damage caused by the seizure.

ARTICLE 107
SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT WHICH ARE ENTITLED TO SEIZE ON ACCOUNT OF PIRACY

A seizure on account of piracy may be carried out only by warships or military aircraft, or other ships or aircraft clearly marked and identifiable as being on government service and authorized to that effect.