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coastline, especially in archipelagic areas and waters busy with merchant and fishing vessels.<sup>31</sup> The coastal state, or potentially a coastal non-state actor, also benefits from the shorter ranges and protected waters that enable the use of small vessels. These can be used for swarming tactics, as have been employed by Iran in the Strait of Hormuz. Naturally, the coastal state also enjoys the home-field advantage and is able to bring land and air systems to bear.<sup>32</sup>

Shallow and constrained waters provide ample opportunities for both offensive and defensive mining as well as other means of modern undersea warfare. Covertly delivered, such systems have a capability of wreaking havoc on an enemy's freedom of movement at sea. However, a deliberately conspicuous emplacement will also represent a threat to sea lines of communication and cause time

consuming mine clearance, where time is traded for probability of clearing all mines, or rerouting. This is a powerful tool for coercion and for shaping the battlespace. By exploiting technological gains, autonomous vehicles can be used for various purposes by an attacker.<sup>33</sup>

Creating ambiguity and sowing doubt may have equal or potentially stronger effect than a successful attack. For example, the unclaimed explosions on tankers off Fujairah in May 2019 and in the Strait of Hormuz in July 2019 immediately affected oil prices and brought the world's attention to the region while retaining some deniability for the alleged perpetrator, even if Iran is strongly suspected for direct or indirect involvement. Unmanned systems, in particular in the lower cost range such as COTS (Commercial off the shelf) that are adapted for military use















