



**INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE LAW OF THE SEA  
TRIBUNAL INTERNATIONAL DU DROIT DE LA MER**

# **Press Release**

**THE SEABED DISPUTES CHAMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR  
THE LAW OF THE SEA RECEIVES A REQUEST  
FOR AN ADVISORY OPINION**

Hamburg, 14 May 2010. The Seabed Disputes Chamber of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea has received its first Request to render an Advisory Opinion from the Council of the International Seabed Authority. The Council adopted Decision ISBA/16/C/13 on 6 May 2010 during the Authority's Sixteenth Session, in which, in accordance with article 191 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, it decided to request the Seabed Disputes Chamber to render an advisory opinion on the following questions:

1. What are the legal responsibilities and obligations of States Parties to the Convention with respect to the sponsorship of activities in the Area in accordance with the Convention, in particular Part XI, and the 1994 Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982?
2. What is the extent of liability of a State Party for any failure to comply with the provisions of the Convention, in particular Part XI, and the 1994 Agreement, by an entity whom it has sponsored under Article 153, paragraph 2 (b), of the Convention?
3. What are the necessary and appropriate measures that a sponsoring State must take in order to fulfil its responsibility under the Convention, in particular Article 139 and Annex III, and the 1994 Agreement?

The Request for an Advisory Opinion was transmitted by letter dated 11 May 2010, from the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority, Mr Nii Odunton, addressed to the President of the Seabed Disputes Chamber, Judge Tullio Treves. The Request was filed with the Registry on 14 May 2010.

In accordance with article 191 of the Convention, the Assembly or Council of the International Seabed Authority may request the Seabed Disputes Chamber to give an advisory opinion on legal questions arising within the scope of their activities.

This is the first advisory opinion that the Seabed Disputes Chamber has been called upon to render. The procedure, as contained in articles 130 to 137 of the Rules includes a written phase, in which States Parties to the Convention and relevant

intergovernmental organizations may present statements, as well as the possibility of holding oral proceedings.

The text of the Request for an Advisory Opinion will be available on the Tribunal's website.

The press releases of the Tribunal, documents and other information are available on the Tribunal's websites: <http://www.itlos.org> and <http://www.tidm.org> and from the Registry of the Tribunal. Please contact Ms Julia Ritter at: Am Internationalen Seegerichtshof 1, 22609 Hamburg, Germany,  
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