



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

## **Press Release**

**TRIBUNAL TO DELIVER ITS JUDGMENT IN *THE M/V "LOUISA" CASE*  
(*SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES V. KINGDOM OF SPAIN*)  
ON 28 MAY 2013 AT 11 A.M.**

The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea will deliver its Judgment in *The M/V "Louisa" Case (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines v. Kingdom of Spain)* on Tuesday, 28 May 2013, at 11 a.m. The Judgment will be read by the President of the Tribunal.

The dispute concerns the M/V "Louisa", a vessel flying the flag of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which was boarded, searched and detained by Spanish authorities on 1 February 2006. According to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the M/V "Louisa" was engaged in conducting surveys of the sea floor with a view to locating oil and gas deposits, on the basis of a permit issued by the Spanish Ministry of the Environment. According to the Spanish authorities, several pieces of underwater archaeological origin, five "assault rifles" and a handgun were found on board during the search of the vessel. On the day the vessel was detained, the Spanish authorities also arrested two crew members and another person who was staying on the vessel and took them into custody; another crew member was later arrested in Portugal. By indictment of the Court of Criminal Investigation No. 4 of Cadiz, criminal proceedings were instituted for alleged violations of Spanish laws on "the protection of the underwater cultural heritage and the possession and handling of weapons of war in Spanish territory".

The Application instituting proceedings before the Tribunal included a request for provisional measures under article 290, paragraph 1, of the Convention, in which the Tribunal was requested, *inter alia*, to order the Respondent to release the M/V "Louisa" and return the property seized. In its Order of 23 December 2010, the Tribunal found that "the circumstances, as they now present themselves to the Tribunal, are not such as to require the exercise of its powers to prescribe provisional measures under article 290, paragraph 1, of the Convention."

After both Parties had filed written pleadings, oral proceedings on the merits of the case were held from 4 to 12 October 2012. Witnesses and experts were called by both Parties and a number of exhibits were displayed by the Parties on screen, including photographs, maps, and excerpts from documents.

In its final submissions, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines requested the Tribunal, *inter alia*: to declare that the boarding and detention of the M/V “Louisa” was unlawful and that the detention of persons in connection therewith was unlawful and abused their human rights in violation of the Convention; and to order reparations to the owners, the flag State and the persons concerned.

The Kingdom of Spain, in its final submissions, requested the Tribunal to adjudge and declare that the Application was not admissible and had to be dismissed and that the Tribunal had no jurisdiction in the case.

### **Attending the reading of the Judgment**

The Judgment will be read in the main courtroom of the Tribunal and the reading is open to the public. Members of the diplomatic and consular corps and general public are welcome to attend. They are requested to [register](#) in advance.

### **Accreditation for media representatives**

Members of the press are welcome to attend the reading of the Judgment but are requested to [register](#) in advance with the Press Office using the accreditation form that is available on the [website](#) of the Tribunal.

Unobtrusive audio and video recording of the public sitting is possible. Filming is subject to special authorization from the Press Office. Facilities are available for radio crews to connect recording equipment directly to the Tribunal’s audio system.

### **Webcast**

The reading of the Judgment will be broadcast [live](#) on the Tribunal’s website. A recorded webcast of the reading of the Judgment will be available under [Webcast Archives](#).

The text of the Judgment will be made available on the website of the Tribunal shortly after its delivery.

Note: The press releases of the Tribunal do not constitute official documents and are issued for information purposes only.

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, Tel.: +49 (40) 35607-227; Fax: +49 (40) 35607-245; E-mail: [press@itlos.org](mailto:press@itlos.org)