



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

# Press Release

**PRESIDENT HOFFMANN'S STATEMENT TO THE  
THIRTY-SECOND MEETING OF STATES PARTIES TO THE  
UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA**

**"THE TRIBUNAL STANDS READY TO ASSIST STATES"**

Today, Judge Albert Hoffmann, President of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, presented his statement to the thirty-second Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Meeting is taking place from 13 to 17 June 2022 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. In his statement, President Hoffmann introduced the Tribunal's annual report for 2021 and provided information on the judicial work of the Tribunal, organizational matters and capacity-building, and remarked on current developments relevant to the work of the Tribunal.

With regard to the judicial work of the Tribunal, the President reported on new developments in the *Dispute concerning delimitation of the maritime boundary between Mauritius and Maldives in the Indian Ocean*. He reminded the Meeting that in its Judgment of 28 January 2021, the Special Chamber concluded that it had jurisdiction to adjudicate upon the dispute concerning the delimitation of the maritime boundary between the Parties in the Indian Ocean and that the claim submitted by Mauritius in this regard was admissible. The President informed the Meeting that the proceedings on the merits are ongoing and that the Memorial, Counter-Memorial and Reply have been filed within the time-limits fixed by order of the President of the Special Chamber. The Rejoinder of the Maldives is due to be filed in August 2022 and it is expected that public hearings on the merits of the case will follow soon thereafter.

The President then briefly reported on the *M/T "San Padre Pio" (No. 2) Case (Switzerland/Nigeria)* concerning the arrest and detention of the *M/T "San Padre Pio"*, its crew and cargo. He informed the Meeting that in accordance with the Rules of the Tribunal, the President of the Tribunal, by order dated 29 December 2021, placed on record the discontinuance, by agreement of the Parties, of the proceedings and ordered that the case be removed from the list of cases.

Turning to organizational matters, the President noted that the Tribunal had held administrative sessions in September 2021 and March 2022, reporting that both sessions successfully took place in-person. He mentioned that a return to in-person meetings was most welcome. The President went on to note the importance of modernizing the facilities of the Tribunal and expressed his gratitude to the German

Government for its ongoing support in upgrading the audio-visual equipment in the main courtroom and in the deliberations room. In this regard, President Hoffmann informed the Meeting that the installation of this new equipment will ensure that the Tribunal remains well equipped to conduct proceedings as efficiently as possible.

The President then highlighted the Tribunal's commitment to capacity-building. He was pleased to report that planning for the inaugural ITLOS Workshop for Legal Advisors (sponsored by the Republic of Korea) was underway and will take place at the seat of the Tribunal in September this year. The President informed the Meeting that the fifteenth regional workshop had been held in Malta earlier this month and expressed his thanks to the IMO International Maritime Law Institute for its support and the Republic of Cyprus and the Korea Maritime Institute for their contributions to the workshop. President Hoffmann expressed the Tribunal's appreciation for the continued support given by the Nippon Foundation to the ITLOS-Nippon Foundation Capacity-Building and Training Programme. He thanked the China Institute of International Studies, the Government of China and the Korea Maritime Institute for their contributions to the Tribunal's internship programme and to the IFLOS Summer Academy, which will be held in August this year. Finally, the President informed delegates of the establishment of the Junior Professional Officer programme for young professionals to serve in the Registry of the Tribunal.

President Hoffmann concluded his statement with some remarks on current developments relevant to the work of the Tribunal. In this regard, he acknowledged that issues concerning sea-level rise and climate change have numerous implications for the law of the sea. He highlighted the unprecedented international attention being given to the protection of the marine environment and noted the obligation under the Convention that all States protect and preserve the marine environment. In light of the discussions at the most recent fourth session of the Intergovernmental Conference on Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction, the President noted the possibility that any eventual dispute settlement mechanism could include the option of requesting advisory opinions from the Tribunal on matters arising under the new agreement. He assured delegates that the Tribunal is available to discharge any such responsibility. In closing, the President reiterated the Tribunal's readiness to assist States in whatever way possible in order to meet new challenges facing the law of the sea, whether by answering new legal questions or through the settlement of disputes arising under new instruments such as an eventual agreement on marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

The President's statement may be found on the website of the Tribunal at <https://www.itlos.org/en/main/press-media/statements-of-the-president/>.

During his time in New York for the Meeting of States Parties, President Hoffmann will pay a courtesy call on the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr António Guterres, at the United Nations Headquarters tomorrow. He will be accompanied by the Registrar of the Tribunal, Ms Ximena Hinrichs Oyarce.

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 or Mr Robert Steenkamp 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)