



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

Press Release

PRESIDENT HOFFMANN'S ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

President Albert Hoffmann addressed the United Nations General Assembly today, giving his annual review of the work of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea during the Assembly's consideration of agenda item 72(a) "Oceans and the law of the sea".



UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

The President provided delegates with an update on the judicial activity of the Tribunal since his previous report, informing them about noteworthy developments in three cases. With regard to the *Dispute concerning delimitation of the maritime boundary between Mauritius and Maldives in the Indian Ocean*, President Hoffmann informed the assembly that oral proceedings were held in October after the conclusion of two rounds of written proceedings, and that the Special Chamber had now withdrawn to deliberate on the case, adding that the date of the reading of the judgment would be announced in due course.

President Hoffmann likewise apprised delegates of developments in *The M/T “San Padre Pio” (No. 2) Case (Switzerland/Nigeria)*, in which, following the implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding concluded between Switzerland and Nigeria, the proceedings were discontinued by agreement of the parties and the case removed from the Tribunal’s List of cases. He also spoke of the recent application filed on 10 November 2022 by the Marshall Islands against Equatorial Guinea, under article 292 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, for the prompt release of the M/T *“Heroic Idun”*, a crude carrier flying the flag of the Marshall Islands, and of its 26 crew members. The President noted that while the earliest possible date for the opening of the hearing in the case had immediately been fixed, in accordance with the Rules of the Tribunal, the Agent of the Marshall Islands informed the Tribunal on 14 November 2022 that “Equatorial Guinea caused the Vessel and her crew to be transferred into the jurisdiction, control and custody of Nigeria on 11 November 2022” and that these developments “rendered moot the Marshall Islands’ Prompt Release Application.” The case was therefore removed from the List of cases upon receipt of this formal notification of discontinuance of the proceedings.

President Hoffmann recalled that, from its inception until 2007, the Tribunal had entertained a total of nine applications for prompt release of vessels and crews. In this context, the President noted with interest that the M/T *“Heroic Idun”* case was the first since then in which a flag State had recourse to the Tribunal in an urgent situation with a view to seeking the prompt release of its vessel and crew.

President Hoffmann closed his statement with a review of the capacity-building programmes organized by the Tribunal in the past year, which included a regional workshop on the settlement of disputes related to the law of the sea held in Malta. He expressed his gratitude to both the Government of Cyprus and the Korea Maritime Institute for their financial support and to the IMO International Maritime Law Institute for co-organizing the event. He also mentioned the Summer Academy of the International Foundation for the Law of the Sea, held once again on the premises of the Tribunal in 2022, as well as the ongoing internship programme and the capacity-building and training programme in international dispute settlement in the law of the sea, for which he acknowledged the Korea Maritime Institute, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China and the Nippon Foundation of Japan for their valuable support. The President also informed delegates of a noteworthy addition to the Tribunal’s capacity-building activities, a workshop series sponsored by the Republic of Korea and designed for legal advisers. The inaugural workshop took place at the Tribunal in September and was attended by representatives of 18 South-East Asian and Pacific Small Island Developing States.

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

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