



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

Press Release

**THE TRIBUNAL INVITES STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION,
THE COMMISSION OF SMALL ISLAND STATES ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND
INTERNATIONAL LAW AND OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
TO PRESENT WRITTEN STATEMENTS BY 16 MAY 2023**

The President of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, Judge Albert Hoffmann, issued today an order regarding the conduct of Case No. 31 on the *Request for an Advisory Opinion submitted by the Commission of Small Island States on Climate Change and International Law* (“the Commission”).

In a decision adopted at its third meeting on 26 August 2022, the Commission decided to request an advisory opinion from the Tribunal, in accordance with article 2, paragraph 2, of the Agreement for the establishment of the Commission of Small Island States on Climate Change and International Law (“the Agreement”), on the following:

What are the specific obligations of State Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (‘UNCLOS’), including under Part XII:

- (a) to prevent, reduce and control pollution of the marine environment in relation to the deleterious effects that result or are likely to result from climate change, including through ocean warming and sea level rise, and ocean acidification, which are caused by anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere?
- (b) to protect and preserve the marine environment in relation to climate change impacts, including ocean warming and sea level rise, and ocean acidification?

On 12 December 2022, the Co-Chairs of the Commission, H.E. Mr Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, and H.E. Mr Kausea Natano, Prime Minister of Tuvalu, representing the Commission pursuant to article 3, paragraph 3, of the Agreement, transmitted the request for an advisory opinion to the Tribunal.

In the Order, the President decides that the intergovernmental organizations listed in its annex are likely to be able to furnish information on the questions submitted to the Tribunal and invites those organizations, the States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Commission to present written statements

on the questions contained in the request, fixing 16 May 2023 as the time limit to do so. The President further decides that oral proceedings shall be held. The subsequent procedure has been reserved for further decision.

The text of the [Order](#) is available on the website of the Tribunal.

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 website (<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