



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

Press Release

LUXEMBOURG INSTITUTES PROCEEDINGS AGAINST MEXICO REGARDING THE VESSEL “ZHENG HE”

On 3 June 2024, Luxembourg instituted proceedings before the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea against Mexico in a dispute regarding the detention of the “Zheng He”, a vessel flying the flag of Luxembourg.

According to the Applicant, on 5 October 2023, the “Zheng He” left the port of Freeport, Bahamas, bound for the port of Tampico, Mexico, its next port of call. According to the Applicant, the vessel was engaged in high seas navigation. On 23 October 2023, the “Zheng He” was given permission to dock at the port of Tampico where it was to remain for refuelling and maintenance and to await further instructions. On 24 October 2023, the Mexican authorities imposed a first customs sanction against the “Zheng He”. On 1 November 2023, the vessel was visited by Mexican tax officials and detained on the basis that the vessel was to be considered as a good, whose entry into Mexican territory was to be treated as an import, subjecting the owner of the vessel to the payment of customs duty proportionate to the value of the vessel. The Applicant states that the entire customs procedure was subsequently annulled by the District Court of Tampico on 22 March 2024, but the vessel was not released by the Mexican authorities.

The Applicant claims that Mexico has violated articles 2, 17, 18, 19, 21, 58, 87, 90, 92, 131 and 300 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and requests the Tribunal to find, *inter alia*, that Mexico must immediately cease any ongoing violations, and that Luxembourg is entitled to reparation for all damages suffered in the form of compensation.

Both Luxembourg and Mexico have made declarations under article 287 of the Convention, recognizing the competence of the Tribunal as a means for the settlement of disputes concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention. The case has been entered in the List of cases of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea as Case No. 33.

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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