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Report of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea

to the Meeting of States Parties

Annual report of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea for 2025

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* SPLOS/36/L.1.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea is submitted to the Meeting of States Parties under rule 6, paragraph 3 (d), of the Rules of Procedure for Meetings of States Parties and covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2025.

2. The Tribunal was established under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982. It functions in accordance with the relevant provisions of parts XI and XV of the Convention, the statute of the Tribunal, as contained in annex VI to the Convention, and the Rules of the Tribunal.

II. Organization of the Tribunal

3. The Tribunal is composed of 21 members, elected by the States parties to the Convention in the manner provided for in article 4 of the statute.

4. Since 1 October 2023, the composition of the Tribunal has been as follows:

Order of precedence	*Country*	*Date of expiry of term of office*
President		
Tomas Heidar	Iceland	30 September 2032
Vice-President		
Neeru Chadha	India	30 September 2026
Judges		
José Luis Jesus	Cabo Verde	30 September 2026
Boualem Bouguetaia	Algeria	30 September 2026
David Joseph Attard	Malta	30 September 2029
Markiyan Z. Kulyk	Ukraine	30 September 2029
Óscar Cabello Sarubbi	Paraguay	30 September 2026
Kriangsak Kittichaisaree	Thailand	30 September 2026
Roman A. Kolodkin	Russian Federation	30 September 2026
Liesbeth Lijnzaad	Netherlands	30 September 2026
María Teresa Infante Caffi	Chile	30 September 2029
Jielong Duan	China	30 September 2029
Kathy-Ann Brown	Jamaica	30 September 2029
Ida Caracciolo	Italy	30 September 2029
Maurice K. Kamga	Cameroon	30 September 2029
Frida María Armas Pfirter	Argentina	30 September 2032

Order of precedence	*Country*	*Date of expiry of term of office*
Hidehisa Horinouchi	Japan	30 September 2032
Thembile Elphus Joyini	South Africa	30 September 2032
Zha Hyoung Rhee	Republic of Korea	30 September 2032
Osman Keh Kamara	Sierra Leone	30 September 2032
Konrad Jan Marciniak	Poland	30 September 2032

5. The Registrar of the Tribunal is Ximena Hinrichs Oyarce (Chile). The Deputy Registrar is Antoine Ollivier (France).

III. Election of the Deputy Registrar

6. In accordance with articles 32 and 33 of the Rules, the Deputy Registrar is elected from among the candidates nominated by the members of the Tribunal.

7. On 9 April 2025, the members re-elected Mr Antoine Ollivier (France), who has been Deputy Registrar of the Tribunal since 2020, for a term of five years.

IV. Chambers

A. Seabed Disputes Chamber

8. In accordance with article 35, paragraph 1, of the statute, the Seabed Disputes Chamber consists of 11 judges selected by the Tribunal from among its elected members. The members of the Chamber are selected triennially. On 31 December 2025, the composition of the Chamber, in order of precedence, was as follows: Judge Attard, President; Judges Jesus, Kulyk, Kittichaisaree, Kolodkin, Lijnzaad, Duan, Brown, Caracciolo, Armas Pfirter and Joyini, members.

9. The terms of office of the members of the Chamber expire on 30 September 2026.

B. Special chambers

1. Chamber of Summary Procedure

10. The Chamber of Summary Procedure is established in accordance with article 15, paragraph 3, of the statute and consists of five members and two alternates. The Chamber is constituted annually. On 31 December 2025, the composition of the Chamber, in order of precedence, was as follows: Judge Heidar, President (ex officio); Vice-President Chadha (ex officio) and Judges Jesus, Kolodkin and Infante Caffi, members; Judges Rhee and Marciniak, alternates.

2. Chamber for Fisheries Disputes

11. On 20 February 1997, the Tribunal established the Chamber for Fisheries Disputes in accordance with article 15, paragraph 1, of the statute. On 31 December 2025, the composition of the Chamber, in order of precedence, was as follows: Judge Kittichaisaree, President; Judges Bouguetaia, Attard, Kulyk, Infante Caffi, Duan, Horinouchi, Joyini and Kamara, members.

12. The terms of office of the members of the Chamber expire on 30 September 2026.

3. Chamber for Marine Environment Disputes

13. On 20 February 1997, the Tribunal established the Chamber for Marine Environment Disputes in accordance with article 15, paragraph 1, of the statute. On 31 December 2025, the composition of the Chamber, in order of precedence, was as follows: Judge Lijnzaad, President; Judges Bouguetaia, Cabello Sarubbi, Kamga, Armas Pfirter, Horinouchi, Rhee, Kamara and Marciniak, members.

14. The terms of office of the members of the Chamber expire on 30 September 2026.

4. Chamber for Maritime Delimitation Disputes

15. On 16 March 2007, the Tribunal established the Chamber for Maritime Delimitation Disputes in accordance with article 15, paragraph 1, of the statute. On 31 December 2025, the composition of the Chamber, in order of precedence, was as follows: Judge Heidar, President (ex officio); Vice-President Chadha and Judges Jesus, Kolodkin, Brown, Caracciolo, Kamga, Rhee and Marciniak, members.

16. The terms of office of the members of the Chamber expire on 30 September 2026.

V. Committees

17. On 18 September 2025, during its sixtieth session, the Tribunal reconstituted its committees. The composition of the committees is provided in paragraphs 18 to 23 below.[a]

A. Committee on Budget and Finance

18. The members of the Committee on Budget and Finance are: Judge Cabello Sarubbi, Chair; Judges Jesus, Kulyk, Kittichaisaree, Duan, Brown, Caracciolo, Kamga and Horinouchi, members.

B. Committee on Rules and Judicial Practice

19. The members of the Committee on Rules and Judicial Practice are: President Heidar, Chair; Vice-President Chadha and Judges Attard, Kolodkin, Lijnzaad, Duan, Brown, Armas Pfirter, Kamara and Marciniak, members.

[a] For the terms of reference of the committees, see: SPLOS/27, paras. 37-40; SPLOS/50, para. 37; and SPLOS/136, para. 46.

C. Committee on Staff and Administration

20. The members of the Committee on Staff and Administration are: Judge Kamga, Chair; Judges Jesus, Kolodkin, Lijnzaad, Infante Caffi, Brown and Rhee, members.

D. Committee on Library, Archives and Publications

21. The members of the Committee on Library, Archives and Publications are: Judge Infante Caffi, Chair; Judges Bouguetaia, Kulyk, Caracciolo, Horinouchi, Joyini and Kamara, members.

E. Committee on Buildings and Electronic Systems

22. The members of the Committee on Buildings and Electronic Systems are: Judge Marciniak, Chair; Judges Bouguetaia, Attard, Cabello Sarubbi, Kittichaisaree, Joyini and Rhee, members.

F. Committee on Public Relations

23. The members of the Committee on Public Relations are: Judge Caracciolo, Chair; Judges Attard, Armas Pfirter, Joyini, Rhee, Kamara and Marciniak, members.

VI. Meetings of the Tribunal

24. In 2025, the Special Chamber of the Tribunal constituted to deal with *The M/T "Heroic Idun" (No.2) Case (Marshall Islands/Equatorial Guinea)* held several judicial meetings in relation to the case. It met on 1 and 2 October 2025 for deliberations in advance of the oral proceedings which took place from 6 to 14 October 2025. Further deliberations were held from 20 to 30 October 2025 after the oral proceedings were completed.

25. The Tribunal also held two sessions devoted to legal and judicial matters as well as organizational and administrative matters: the fifty-ninth session was held from 31 March to 11 April and the sixtieth session from 15 to 26 September 2025.

26. The Tribunal decided to hold its sixty-first session from 16 to 27 March 2026, to deal with both legal and judicial matters and organizational and administrative matters.

VII. Judicial work of the Tribunal

A. *The M/T "Heroic Idun" (No. 2) Case (Marshall Islands/Equatorial Guinea)*

27. On 18 April 2023, the Marshall Islands and Equatorial Guinea concluded a special agreement to submit the dispute concerning the M/T *"Heroic Idun"* and her crew to a special chamber of the Tribunal to be formed pursuant to article 15, paragraph 2, of the statute. The Registrar received the special agreement and notification on the same date. The case was entered in the Tribunal's list of cases as case No. 32.

28. By an order dated 27 April 2023, the Tribunal constituted the Special Chamber as follows: Judge Hoffmann, President; Judges Infante Caffi and Brown; Judges ad hoc Eiriksson (chosen by the Marshall Islands) and Couvreur (chosen by Equatorial Guinea).

29. By order of 19 May 2023, the President of the Special Chamber, having ascertained the views of the parties, fixed 20 November 2023 and 20 May 2024 as the time limits for the filing of the memorial of the Marshall Islands and the counter-memorial of Equatorial Guinea, respectively. Further to a request of the Marshall Islands, and having sought the views of the parties, the President of the Special Chamber, by order of 16 November 2023, extended the time limit for the submission of the memorial of the Marshall Islands and the counter-memorial of Equatorial Guinea to 18 December 2023 and 15 July 2024, respectively. The pleadings were filed within the prescribed time limits.

30. By order of 25 July 2024, the President of the Special Chamber, having ascertained the views of the parties, fixed 25 November 2024 and 24 March 2025 as the time limits for the filing of the Reply of the Marshall Islands and the Rejoinder of Equatorial Guinea, respectively. The Reply and the Rejoinder were filed within the prescribed time limits.

31. By order of 13 May 2025, the President of the Special Chamber, having ascertained the views of the parties, fixed 6 October 2025 as the date for the opening of the oral proceedings.

32. Prior to the opening of the oral proceedings, the Special Chamber held initial deliberations on 1 and 2 October 2025, in accordance with article 68 of the Rules. The hearing was held over 12 public sittings between 6 and 14 October 2025. After the closure of the oral proceedings, the Special Chamber met for deliberations from 20 to 30 October 2025.

33. In accordance with article 75, paragraph 2, of the Rules, the following final submissions were presented by the parties at the conclusion of the last statement made by each party at the hearing:

On behalf of the Marshall Islands:

Pursuant to Article 75(2) of the Rules of the Tribunal, having regard to its written and oral submissions, the Republic of the Marshall Islands requests the Special Chamber to adjudge and declare as follows:

1. The Special Chamber has jurisdiction in respect of each of the claims of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the claims are admissible.

2. By its conduct in intercepting the "*Heroic Idun*" on 12 August 2022 in the exclusive economic zone of São Tomé and Príncipe, by forcing it to divert course to Luba anchorage, and by detaining the "*Heroic Idun*" at Luba anchorage, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea acted in breach of the Republic of the Marshall Islands' Flag State freedom of navigation rights and/or exclusive flag State jurisdiction with respect to the "*Heroic Idun*" contrary, *inter alia*, to Articles 87(1), 90 and 92(1) of UNCLOS, having regard to Article 58(2) of UNCLOS.

3. By detaining the "*Heroic Idun*" and her crew, by criminally charging the Master, and by levying a fine of EUR 2,000,132.00 on the Master, without any basis in and contrary to UNCLOS, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea acted in breach of Articles 56(1), 58(2), 87(1), 89 and 92(1) of the Convention and/or Article 300 read with Part V of UNCLOS.

4. All measures adopted by the Republic of Equatorial Guinea subsequent to its detention of the "*Heroic Idun*" in Luba anchorage, including but not limited to its extra-judicial hand-over of the "*Heroic Idun*" and her crew to the Federal Republic of Nigeria on 11 November 2022, were without basis in international law and, accordingly, in breach of general principles of legality in international law.

5. Insofar as the Republic of Equatorial Guinea is alleging that it was undertaking an anti-piracy operation vis-à-vis the "*Heroic Idun*":

a. There was no credible basis for the contention that the Republic of Equatorial Guinea was undertaking an anti-piracy operation vis-à-vis the "*Heroic Idun*".

b. In addition or in the alternative to 5(a) above, by its conduct in intercepting the "*Heroic Idun*" on 12 August 2022 in the exclusive economic zone of São Tomé and Príncipe, by forcing it to divert course to Luba anchorage, and by detaining the "*Heroic Idun*" at Luba anchorage, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea failed to cooperate with the Republic of the Marshall Islands in its capacity as Flag State of the "*Heroic Idun*" contrary, *inter alia*, to Article 100 of UNCLOS, having regard, on the facts of this case, to the ample opportunity to do so before the Republic of Equatorial Guinea took steps to seize the "*Heroic Idun*", including:

i. by failing to inform the Republic of the Marshall Islands of allegations regarding the conduct of the "*Heroic Idun*", and/or

ii. by failing to seek the cooperation of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, in its capacity as Flag State, with regard to the investigation of the "*Heroic Idun*" and her crew.

c. Having regard to the right of visit pursuant to Article 110 of UNCLOS:

i. the Republic of Equatorial Guinea had no reasonable ground for suspecting that the "*Heroic Idun*" was engaged in piracy;

ii. in the alternative, insofar as the Republic of Equatorial Guinea can establish that it had reasonable grounds to suspect the "*Heroic Idun*" was engaged in piracy, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea failed to undertake the verifications, checks and examination on board the "*Heroic Idun*" with all possible consideration, in breach of Article 110 of UNCLOS.

d. In addition or in the alternative to 5(c) above, by its conduct in seizing the "*Heroic Idun*", the Republic of Equatorial Guinea acted in breach of Article 105 of UNCLOS, having regard to Article 103 of UNCLOS and having failed to establish that the persons in dominant control of the "*Heroic Idun*" intended to use the Vessel for the purpose of committing any act of piracy, including for the reason that, on the facts of this case, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea did not seek to assess, including with the Republic of the Marshall Islands as Flag State, whether the persons in dominant control of the Vessel intended to use the Vessel for the purpose of committing any act of piracy.

6. In addition or in the alternative to the preceding:

a. By failing to notify the Marshall Islands, *inter alia*, of the interception, diversion and detention of the "*Heroic Idun*" and her crew, of the imposition of a criminal change and fine on the Master of the Vessel, and of the transfer of the Vessel to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea breached its duty to notify the Republic of the Marshall Islands as the Flag State of enforcement measures adopted in respect of its Vessel.

b. Having regard, *inter alia*, to the Convention on Safety of Life at Sea and its Protocols, the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers at Sea, and the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea:

i. failed to have due regard for and frustrated the exercise of the rights, duties and responsibilities of the Republic of the Marshall Islands as Flag

State of the "*Heroic Idun*" under, *inter alia*, Articles 94 and 217, in breach of Article 2(3) and 87(2), of UNCLOS;

ii. breached its obligations under Article 1(b) of the Convention on Safety of Life at Sea, Article I(2) of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers at Sea, and Article 1 of the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, by failing to take necessary steps to enable the conventions to be given full and complete effect, thereby preventing the Republic of the Marshall Islands from exercising its rights, duties and responsibilities thereunder.

c. Having regard to the matters in paragraph 6(b) and by, *inter alia*, requiring the "*Heroic Idun*" to be anchored in an unsuitable location where it was at significant risk of collision and by the unsafe manoeuvring of its naval vessel "*Wele Nzas*" on 26 September 2022, Equatorial Guinea breached Article 225 of UNCLOS.

d. Having regard to the detention and treatment of the crew of the "*Heroic Idun*" in the period 12 August 2022 to 11 November 2022, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea acted in breach of considerations of humanity and UNCLOS, including, *inter alia*, Articles 2(3) and 87(1).

e. By failing to engage with the Republic of the Marshall Islands in respect of the "*Heroic Idun*" and her crew, and by handing over the Vessel and her crew to the Federal Republic of Nigeria on 11 November 2022, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea acted in breach of the general obligation not to aggravate the dispute with the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

7. Having regard to the preceding alleged breaches, as well as, *inter alia*, to Article 106 and 110(3) of UNCLOS, the Republic of the Marshall Islands requests the Special Chamber to order the payment of reparations by the Republic of Equatorial Guinea to the Republic of the Marshall Islands in the following amounts:

a. Loss, damage and injury caused by the Republic of Equatorial Guinea that was visible and quantifiable within the period 12 August 2022 to 11 November 2022, including:

i, EUR 2,000,132.00, being the amount of the fine improperly levied by the Republic of Equatorial Guinea to release of the "*Heroic Idun*" and her crew;

ii. USD 7.628 million for material loss, damage or injury sustained by the "*Heroic Idun*" in the period 12 August 2022 to 11 November 2022;

iii. USD 4.784 million for non-material loss, damage or injury sustained by the crew of the "*Heroic Idun*" in the period 12 August 2022 to 11 November 2022.

b. Loss, damage or injury that was a direct consequence of Equatorial Guinea's conduct within the period 12 August 2022 to 11 November 2022 but only crystallised after this period or only became quantifiable after this period, specifically: USD 3.339 million for material loss and damage to the "*Heroic Idun*" that was a direct consequence of Equatorial Guinea's conduct within the period 12 August 2022 to 11 November 2022 but was only quantifiable in the period 27 May 2023 to 24 July 2023, namely, loss of hire, costs and expenses to repatriate the crew, and costs and expenses to repair the Vessel.

c. Loss, damage or injury to the "*Heroic Idun*" and her crew in the period 11 November 2022 to 27 May 2023 in consequence of the Republic of Equatorial

Guinea's extra-judicial rendition of the "*Heroic Idun*" and her crew to the Federal Republic of Nigeria that is sufficiently proximate to that rendition and is properly traceable to Equatorial Guinea, in an amount to be determined by the Special Chamber.

d. An award of interest on the sums specified above, as appropriate.

e. An award of such other sums as the Special Chamber may consider appropriate.

f. Order the Republic of Equatorial Guinea to acknowledge its wrongful conduct in respect of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and provide an assurance and guarantee of non-repetition.

g. An award of the costs of the Republic of the Marshall Islands in these proceedings, subject to assessment in the case of dispute.

On behalf of Equatorial Guinea:

Pursuant to Article 75(2) of the Rules of the Tribunal, having regard to its written and oral submissions, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea requests the Special Chamber to adjudge and declare as follows:

1. The Chamber does not have jurisdiction to make determinations regarding alleged breaches of treaties or rules of international law outside of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea ("UNCLOS").

2. The Marshall Islands' claims alleging breaches of freedom of navigation and exclusive flag State jurisdiction are inadmissible, due to the *Monetary Gold* / indispensable third party principle.

3. The Marshall Islands has failed to exhaust local remedies as required by international law, rendering inadmissible those claims related to the treatment of individuals.

4. Equatorial Guinea's seizure of the *Heroic Idun* was lawful because it was carried out in accordance with Equatorial Guinea's obligation to co-operate to repress piracy under UNCLOS, and accordingly:

a) Equatorial Guinea did not breach its obligations to respect freedom of navigation on the high seas or in the exclusive economic zone, nor the principle of exclusive flag State jurisdiction on the high seas, including as set out in Articles 87(1), 90 and 92(1) of UNCLOS;

b) Equatorial Guinea did not breach its obligation to have due regard to the rights of other States, in particular of the Marshall Islands, under Articles 56(2), 58(3) and 87(2) of UNCLOS;

c) Equatorial Guinea did not breach any obligations owed to the Marshall Islands under Article 100 of UNCLOS;

d) Equatorial Guinea did not breach Article 300 of UNCLOS; and

e) to the extent that the Chamber finds, contrary to paragraph 1 above, that such matters fall within the jurisdiction of the Chamber, all measures adopted by Equatorial Guinea subsequent to the interception of the *Heroic Idun* are not in breach of other rules of international law.

5. Through the interception and seizure of the *Heroic Idun*, Equatorial Guinea did not violate Article 225 of UNCLOS or the principle of reasonableness.

6. In levying the Fine on the Master of the *Heroic Idun*, Equatorial Guinea acted pursuant to lawful prescriptive jurisdiction.

7. There is no general obligation to notify the flag State of enforcement measures, and in the alternative, Equatorial Guinea did not fail to comply with any obligation to notify Marshall Islands of enforcement measures.

8. In addition, or in the alternative to paragraphs (1) and (3),

a) the Marshall Islands' human rights claims fall outside the Chamber's jurisdiction and the so-called "gateway provisions" do not allow for determination of human rights treaties or customary international human rights law; and

b) in any event, Equatorial Guinea acted in accordance with considerations of humanity towards the crew members of the *Heroic Idun*.

9. In addition, or in the alternative to paragraph (1), the obligations invoked by the Marshall Islands under the Convention on Safety of Life and Sea ("SOLAS"), the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers at Sea ("SCTW"), or the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea ("COLREGS")

a) are either not applicable as pleaded;

b) cannot have been breached in isolation; or

c) were not breached by Equatorial Guinea.

10. Equatorial Guinea did not breach any obligations of the Marshall Islands as flag State of the *Heroic Idun* under Articles 94 and 212 of UNCLOS, under Articles 2(3) or 87(2) of UNCLOS.

11. Equatorial Guinea did not breach its obligation to preserve the rights of the Marshall Islands, nor any obligation, in so far as it exists, not to aggravate the dispute pending proceedings.

12. Having regard to this, Equatorial Guinea further requests the Chamber to:

a) dismiss all of the Marshall Islands' requests for payment of compensation for material and/or non-material damages;

b) dismiss the Marshall Islands' requests for satisfaction;

c) dismiss all of the Marshall Islands' requests for payment of interest; and

d) direct that each party should bear its own costs.

B. *The "Zheng He" Case (Luxembourg* v. *Mexico)*

34. By an application dated 3 June 2024 and filed with the Registry of the Tribunal on 4 June 2024, Luxembourg instituted proceedings against Mexico in a dispute regarding the vessel "*Zheng He*". The case was entered in the list of cases as case No. 33 and named *The "Zheng He" Case*.

35. On 7 June 2024, Luxembourg submitted to the Tribunal a request for the prescription of provisional measures under article 290, paragraph 1, of the Convention. The Tribunal delivered its order on this request on 27 July 2024.

36. By order of 8 August 2024, taking into account the agreement of the parties, the President fixed 10 February 2025 as the time limit for the filing of the Memorial of Luxembourg and 11 August 2025 as the time limit for the filing of the Counter-Memorial of Mexico.

37. Subsequently, by order dated 3 February 2025, taking into account the agreement of the parties, the President extended the time limits for the submission of the Memorial and

the Counter-Memorial to 24 March 2025 and 3 November 2025, respectively. The Memorial was filed within the extended time limit. By order dated 30 October 2025, taking into account the agreement of the parties, the President extended the time limit for the filing of the Counter-Memorial to 15 December 2025. The time limit for the filing of the Counter-Memorial was further extended to 19 January 2026 by order of the President dated 12 December 2025.

VIII. Legal matters

38. During the period under review, the Tribunal devoted part of its fifty-ninth and sixtieth sessions to the consideration of legal and judicial matters. In this respect, the Tribunal examined various legal issues of relevance to its jurisdiction, its Rules and its judicial procedures. The review was undertaken by both the Tribunal and its chambers. Some of the subjects considered are listed below.

A. Jurisdiction of the Tribunal

39. During the period under review, the Tribunal took note of the information presented by the Registry concerning the status of declarations made under articles 287 and 298 of the Convention.

B. Rules of the Tribunal and supplementary documents

40. On 25 September 2025, during its sixtieth session, the Tribunal amended its Guidelines concerning the Preparation and Presentation of Cases before the Tribunal. The amendments, which were made in particular in light of the Tribunal's practice as well as technological developments, entered into force forthwith.

C. Recent developments in law of the sea matters

41. During the period under review, the Tribunal considered reports prepared by the Registry concerning recent developments in law of the sea matters.

D. Chambers

42. During the period under review, the chambers of the Tribunal held meetings at which they considered reports prepared by the Registry on matters falling under their responsibilities.

IX. Agreement on Privileges and Immunities

43. The Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea was adopted by the seventh Meeting of States Parties on 23 May 1997. The Agreement was opened for signature for 24 months as from 1 July 1997[b] and entered into

[b] SPLOS/24, para. 27.

force on 30 December 2001, 30 days after the date of deposit of the tenth instrument of ratification or accession. As at 31 December 2025, 42 States had ratified or acceded to it.

X. Relations with the United Nations

44. At its fifty-first session, the General Assembly, by its resolution 51/204 of 17 December 1996, granted observer status to the Tribunal.

45. On 9 December 2025, at a plenary meeting of the eightieth session of the Assembly, the President delivered a statement under agenda item 75 entitled "Oceans and the law of the sea".[c] In his statement, the President gave an overview of the judicial work of the Tribunal and an update on the developments which had taken place since the previous meeting of the Assembly, in particular in *The M/T "Heroic Idun" (No. 2) Case (Marshall Islands/Equatorial Guinea)* and *The "Zheng He" Case (Luxembourg* v. *Mexico)*. The President also provided information to the Assembly on the Tribunal's capacity-building activities.

XI. Headquarters Agreement

46. The Agreement between the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and the Federal Republic of Germany regarding the Headquarters of the Tribunal was signed on 14 December 2004. In addition, the Agreement between the Tribunal and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany on the Occupancy and Use of the Premises of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea in the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg was concluded on 18 October 2000.

47. During the period under review, the Registry, in cooperation with the Federal Building Authorities of Germany, made several improvements to the Tribunal's equipment and systems. In particular, the Federal Building Authorities carried out works relating to the renovation of the façade of the Tribunal building.

XII. Finances

A. Budgetary matters

1. Budget of the Tribunal for 2027–2028

48. During the sixtieth session of the Tribunal, the Committee on Budget and Finance gave preliminary consideration to the budget of the Tribunal for the budget period 2027–2028 on the basis of a document presented by the Registrar.

2. Report on budgetary matters for the financial periods 2023 and 2024

49. At its fifty-ninth session, the Tribunal considered the report presented by the Registrar on budgetary matters for the financial periods 2023 and 2024 (SPLOS/35/3). Following consideration by the Tribunal, the report was submitted to the thirty-fifth Meeting of States

[c] The text of the statement is available on the Tribunal's website at www.itlos.org and www.tidm.org.

Parties for its consideration. The report included the performance report for 2023–2024 and a report on action taken pursuant to the Financial Regulations and Rules of the Tribunal (surrender of the cash surplus from the financial period 2021–2022; investment of Tribunal funds; and establishment of trust funds pursuant to regulation 6.5 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the Tribunal).

3. Cash flow situation

50. At its fifty-ninth and sixtieth sessions, the Tribunal took note of the information presented by the Registrar concerning the cash flow situation of the Tribunal.

B. Status of contributions

51. As at 31 December 2025, 128 States parties had made contributions to the budget for the financial period 2025, totaling €12,776,797, while 43 States parties had not made any payments with respect to their assessed contributions for the financial period 2025. The balance of unpaid contributions with respect to the financial period 2025 was €590,203. An amount of €3,262,387 was credited against the assessed contributions for 2026.

52. Furthermore, assessed contributions amounting to €732,702 in respect of the Tribunal's budgets for the budget periods 1996/1997 to 2024 were still pending as at 31 December 2025.

53. As at 31 December 2025, the balance of unpaid contributions with respect to the overall budget of the Tribunal amounted to €1,322,905. In July 2025, the Registrar sent notes verbales to the States parties concerning their assessed contributions for the year 2026 of the 2025–2026 budget of the Tribunal and information about outstanding contributions to the previous budgets.

C. Financial Regulations and Rules

54. The Financial Regulations of the Tribunal, adopted by the thirteenth Meeting of States Parties on 12 June 2003, became effective on 1 January 2004.[d] On 9 December 2020, the thirtieth Meeting of States Parties approved amendments to the Financial Regulations of the Tribunal, as set out in the annex to document SPLOS/30/6, which became effective on 1 January 2021 (SPLOS/30/16).

55. Pursuant to financial regulation 10.1 (a), the Tribunal, at its seventeenth session, approved the Financial Rules, which were submitted to the fourteenth Meeting of States Parties for its consideration. The Meeting took note of the Financial Rules of the Tribunal, which, in accordance with rule 114.1, became effective on 1 January 2005.[e]

56. Pursuant to financial regulation 14.2, the thirty-first Meeting of States Parties on 24 June 2021 endorsed the amendments to the Financial Rules proposed by the Tribunal (SPLOS/31/8). The amended Rules became effective on 1 January 2021 and apply to the financial period 2021 and subsequent financial periods.

57. Pursuant to financial regulation 12.1, the thirtieth Meeting of States Parties appointed BDO AG Wirtschaftsprüfungsgesellschaft as the Tribunal's auditor for the financial periods

[d] Financial Regulations, regulation 14.1.

[e] The Financial Regulations and Rules of the Tribunal are contained in document SPLOS/120.

2021–2024. The thirty-fourth Meeting of States Parties appointed the Audit Board of the Republic of Indonesia as auditor for the financial periods 2025–2028.

D. Report of the external auditor for the financial period 2024

58. The results of the audit for the financial period 2024 were presented by the Registrar at the fifty-ninth session of the Tribunal. The Committee on Budget and Finance noted the auditor's opinion that the financial statements gave a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the Tribunal as at 31 December 2024 and of its financial performance for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2024 in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards. The Tribunal took note of the audit report for the financial period 2024 (SPLOS/35/4) and requested that the report be submitted to the thirty-fifth Meeting of States Parties. The thirty-fifth Meeting of States Parties took note with satisfaction of the report of the external auditor (SPLOS/35/11, para. 21).

E. Trust funds and donations

59. On the basis of resolution 55/7 on oceans and the law of the sea, adopted by the General Assembly on 30 October 2000, a voluntary trust fund has been established by the Secretary-General to assist States in connection with disputes to be settled by the Tribunal. According to information provided by the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the financial statements of the trust fund showed a balance of $15,464.14 as at 31 December 2025.

60. In addition, the Registrar has established the following trust funds pursuant to regulation 6.5 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the Tribunal: Nippon Foundation trust fund, trust fund for the Law of the Sea, China Institute of International Studies trust fund (closed in 2018), twentieth anniversary trust fund (closed in 2017) and a special account for a workshop to be held for legal advisers.

61. The Nippon Foundation trust fund was established in 2007, further to a grant provided the same year by the Nippon Foundation to fund the participation of fellows in a capacity-building and training programme on dispute settlement under the Convention. During the period 2007–2025, the Nippon Foundation made contributions to the trust fund in the amount of €4,388,080. As at 31 December 2025, the balance of total reserves was €120,180.

62. The trust fund for the Law of the Sea was established in 2009, pursuant to a decision of the Tribunal at its twenty-eighth session. The terms of reference for the trust fund were adopted by the Tribunal and submitted to the twentieth Meeting of States Parties for its consideration. The trust fund is intended to promote human resource development in developing countries in the law of the sea and maritime affairs in general. Contributions made to the trust fund are used to provide applicants from developing countries with financial assistance to enable them to participate in the Tribunal's internship programme and the summer academy as well as for the organization of regional workshops. States, intergovernmental organizations and agencies, national institutions, non-governmental organizations and international financial institutions, as well as natural and juridical persons, are invited to make voluntary financial or other contributions to the trust fund. Several contributions to the trust fund from different sources (Korea Maritime Institute, Government of China, Government of Cyprus, Government of France and the company Korwind) were received between 2009 and 2024. During the financial period 2025, two contributions from the Korea Maritime Institute totaling €31,000, and one contribution from Cyprus in the amount of €15,000 were received. As at 31 December 2025, the balance of total reserves was €270,065.

63. The Tribunal received voluntary contributions from the Government of the Republic of Korea in the amount of €984,111 between 2020 and 2024 and €269,986 in 2025. The contributions are used for capacity-building of legal advisers in the field of international dispute settlement in matters pertaining to the law of the sea. In accordance with regulation 6.5 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the Tribunal, a special euro bank account was set up with Deutsche Bank for a workshop for legal advisers sponsored by the Republic of Korea. The contributions covered the expenses of high-level professionals involved in decision-making related to the law of the sea to enable them to participate in the workshop, the fourth of which was held on the premises of the Tribunal from 7 to 12 September 2025 (see para. 99). As at 31 December 2025, the balance of total reserves was €177,152.

64. In December 2022, the Tribunal and the Government of China signed a memorandum of understanding concerning junior professional officers (see para. 75). On the basis of the cost estimates provided by the Tribunal, a contribution in the amount of €164,310 was received from the People's Republic of China in June 2024 and placed into a trust fund established for the purposes of the programme. The Junior Professional Officer was appointed on 1 July 2024 for a period of one year. His appointment was extended for another year, until 30 June 2026, and a further contribution in the amount of €144,710 was received from the People's Republic of China in June 2025 and placed into the trust fund. The balance of the trust fund amounted to €87,368 as at 31 December 2025.

XIII. Administrative matters

65. During the period under review, the committees of the Tribunal considered various administrative matters within the scope of their activities; reference is made below to some of those matters.

A. Staff Regulations and Staff Rules

66. In order to ensure compatibility of the Staff Regulations of the Tribunal with the United Nations common system of salaries, allowances and benefits, as required under regulation 12.6 of the Staff Regulations, the Tribunal, during the period under review, approved the recommendations of the Committee on Staff and Administration regarding amendments to the Staff Regulations concerning the salary scale for staff in the Professional and higher categories.

67. During the period under review, further to the recommendation of the Committee on Staff and Administration, the Tribunal took note of the amendments to the Staff Rules of the Tribunal concerning the pensionable remuneration for staff in the Professional and higher categories. Pursuant to regulations 12.2, 12.3 and 12.4 of the Staff Regulations, the amendments to the Staff Rules that had been applied provisionally entered into full force and effect on 1 January 2026.

B. Staff recruitment

68. In 2025, the Tribunal recruited staff members for the posts of Legal Officer (P-4), French Translator/Reviser (P-4), Information Systems Assistant (G-7), Personal Assistant to the President (G-7), Administrative Assistant (G-7), Legal Assistant (G-6), Finance Assistant (G-6) and Finance Assistant (Accounts Payable) (G-5). At the end of 2025, recruitment was in progress with respect to the posts of Administrative Assistant (Finance) (G-6), Personnel Assistant (G-6) and Administrative Assistant (G-5).

69. A list of the staff members of the Registry as at 31 December 2025 is contained in annex I to the present report.

70. Temporary personnel were recruited to assist the Tribunal during its fifty-ninth and sixtieth sessions and during the hearings and deliberations in case No. 32.

71. The Registry comprises 39 posts, of which 19 are in the Professional and higher categories.

72. The recruitment of staff members in the Professional category, excluding language staff, is subject to the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in accordance with regulation 4.2 of the Staff Regulations, which provides as follows:

> The paramount consideration in the appointment, transfer or promotion of the staff shall be the necessity for securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. Due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible.

73. Taking into account the small number of staff in the Registry of the Tribunal, a flexible regional approach has been followed in this regard. The Tribunal has taken steps to ensure that vacancy announcements for posts in the Professional category are disseminated in such a way as to enable recruitment of staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible. Information on vacancies is transmitted to the embassies of the States parties to the Convention in Berlin and the permanent missions in New York. Information is also posted on the Tribunal's website and in the Tribunal's social media accounts (X, LinkedIn) and disseminated to United Nations Headquarters and the specialized agencies.

74. Although the principle of geographical distribution does not apply to the recruitment of General Service staff, the Tribunal has also made efforts to recruit staff in that category on as wide a geographical basis as possible.

C. Junior Professional Officer programme

75. During its fifty-second session, on 30 September 2021, the Tribunal established a Junior Professional Officer programme for young professionals to serve in the Legal Office of the Tribunal's Registry or in other departments of the Registry, as necessary. The programme is governed by guidelines concerning the Junior Professional Officer programme of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, as adopted by the Tribunal. Junior Professional Officers are recruited under memorandums of understanding concluded between the Tribunal and participating States.[f] On 1 December 2022, a memorandum of understanding between the Tribunal and the Government of China concerning the Junior Professional Officer programme was signed and a Junior Professional Officer was recruited on 1 July 2024. On 7 February 2024, a memorandum of understanding between the Tribunal and the Government of the Republic of Korea concerning the Junior Professional Officer programme was signed.

D. Staff Pension Committee

76. Further to the proposal of the Tribunal, the sixteenth Meeting of States Parties decided that a Staff Pension Committee would be established with the following composition: (a) one member and one alternate member to be chosen by the Meeting; (b) one member and one alternate

[f] The text of the guidelines and a model memorandum of understanding are available on the Tribunal's website at www.itlos.org and www.tidm.org.

member to be elected by the staff. The term of office of members and alternates is three years.

77. On 25 June 2025, the thirty-fifth Meeting of States Parties adopted a decision extending the nominations of Indonesia as member and Canada as alternate member of the Staff Pension Committee for a three-year term of office starting on 1 January 2026 (SPLOS/35/9).

E. Language classes at the Tribunal

78. English and French classes for Registry staff members were held in 2025.

XIV. Buildings and electronic systems

A. Building arrangements and new requirements

79. During the fifty-ninth and sixtieth sessions, the Registrar presented reports on building arrangements and use of the Tribunal's premises. These reports were prepared by the Registry for review by the Committee on Buildings and Electronic Systems and by the Tribunal with a view to improving working conditions at the Tribunal.

B. Use of the premises and public access

80. The following events took place on the premises of the Tribunal during 2025:

(a) International Foundation for the Law of the Sea Summer Academy, from 13 July to 8 August 2025; and

(b) Fourth workshop for legal advisers (sponsored by the Republic of Korea), from 7 to 12 September 2025 (see para. 99).

XV. Library facilities and archives

81. During the fifty-ninth and sixtieth sessions, the Registrar reported on several matters pertaining to the Library, including the collections and an integrated library management system. The Registrar also presented reports on the archive collections and databases.

82. A list of donors to the Library is contained in annex II to the present report.

XVI. Publications

83. During the period under review, the status of the Tribunal's publications was reviewed by the Committee on Library, Archives and Publications and by the Tribunal.

84. In 2025, the following volumes were published:

(a) *Yearbook 2024, Vol. 28*;

(b) *Reports of Judgments, Advisory Opinions and Orders 2024, Vol. 21;*

(c) *Pleadings, Minutes of Public Sittings and Documents 2024, Vol. 35*.

XVII. Public relations

85. During the period under review, the Committee on Public Relations gave consideration to a set of measures to provide and disseminate information on the work of the Tribunal and participation by representatives of the Tribunal in international legal meetings.

86. The Tribunal publicized its work by means of its website, press releases and briefings by the Registry, and through the distribution of its judgments, orders and publications.

87. The website of the Tribunal can be accessed at the following addresses: www.itlos.org (English) and www.tidm.org (French). The texts of judgments and orders of the Tribunal and the verbatim records of hearings, as well as other information about the Tribunal, are available on the website.

88. In 2025, judges and Registry staff members also delivered lectures and published papers on the work of the Tribunal.

XVIII. Capacity-building activities

89. A number of capacity-building activities relating to the work of the Tribunal continued to be conducted in 2025.

A. Internship programme

90. The internship programme of the Tribunal, which was established in 1997, is designed to give participants the opportunity to gain an understanding of the work and functions of the Tribunal. Funding has been available for applicants from developing countries to assist them in covering the costs incurred for travelling to Hamburg and participating in the programme. The trust fund for the Law of the Sea is currently used to provide financial assistance to interns.

91. As of 31 December 2025, a total of 451 interns from 114 States had participated in the programme, 197 of whom had received funding.

92. During 2025, 18 interns from 16 States (Brazil, Cameroon, China, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Togo, Uruguay and Venezuela) participated in the programme at the Tribunal.

93. Information on the programme and an online application form can be obtained from the Tribunal's website.

B. Capacity-building and training programme

94. In 2025, for the nineteenth time, a capacity-building and training programme on dispute settlement under the Convention was conducted with the support of the Nippon Foundation. The Nippon Foundation Grant was set up in 2007 to provide fellows with capacity-building and training and to assist them in covering the costs of participation in the programme. Programme participants attend lectures on topical issues related to the law of the sea and maritime law and training courses on negotiation and delimitation. They also visit institutions engaged in work in the fields of law of the sea, maritime law and dispute settlement. At the same time, they carry out individual research on selected topics.

Information about the programme can be obtained from the Registry or from the Tribunal's website.

95. Nationals of Brazil, France, Ghana, Maldives, Pakistan, Philippines and Zimbabwe are currently participating in the 2025/26 programme (July 2025-March 2026).

C. Regional workshops

96. The Tribunal has organized a series of workshops in different regions of the world on the settlement of disputes related to the law of the sea. The purpose of the workshops is to provide government experts engaged in work on maritime and law of the sea matters with insight into the procedures for dispute settlement contained in part XV of the Convention, with special emphasis on the jurisdiction of the Tribunal and the procedural rules applicable to cases before the Tribunal.

97. From 4 to 6 May 2025, a workshop was organized in Hanoi, Viet Nam, by the Tribunal, in cooperation with the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and with the financial support of the Korea Maritime Institute (KMI), on the theme "The role of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea in the settlement of disputes relating to the law of the sea". The workshop was attended by representatives of 14 States of the region: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei-Darussalam, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.

D. Summer academy

98. The International Foundation for the Law of the Sea held the seventeenth summer academy on the Tribunal's premises from 13 July to 8 August 2025. An open event entitled "Protection and Exploitation of the Ocean: Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue" was held in the second week of the academy. A total of 41 participants from 35 countries attended lectures on issues relating to the law of the sea and maritime law. The lectures were given by judges of the Tribunal and the Registrar, as well as by experts, practitioners, representatives of international organizations and scientists.

E. Workshop for legal advisers (sponsored by the Republic of Korea)

99. The Tribunal, with the financial support of the Republic of Korea (see para. 63), held the fourth workshop for legal advisers on international dispute settlement in matters pertaining to the law of the sea, at the seat of the Tribunal, from 7 to 12 September 2025. The aim of the workshop was to familiarize legal advisers, in particular from developing countries, with the dispute settlement mechanisms under the Convention and provide insight into the Tribunal's procedure and practice. The fourth workshop was designed for legal advisers from African States. Representatives from the following 28 States participated in the workshop: Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia and Uganda. The lectures were given by the President and Vice-President of the Tribunal, judges of the Tribunal and the Registrar, as well as experienced international adjudication practitioners and leading academics in the field.

Annex I

Information on staff (2025)

A. Professional and higher categories

Name	*Title*	*Country of nationality*	*Level of post*	*Level of incumbent*
Hinrichs Oyarce, Ximena	Registrar	Chile	ASG	ASG
Ollivier, Antoine	Deputy Registrar	France	D-2	D-2
Füracker, Matthias	Senior Legal Officer, Head of Legal Office	Germany	P-5	P-5
Gaultier, Léonard	Senior Translator/Reviser, Head of Linguistic Services	France	P-5	P-5
Mizerska-Dyba, Elzbieta	Head of Library and Archives	Poland	P-4	P-4
Ritter, Roman	Head of Budget and Finance	Germany	P-4	P-4
Pak, Joomi	Translator/Reviser (English)	France	P-4	P-4
Ferla, Federico	Head of Personnel and Building	Uruguay	P-4	P-4
Benatar, Marco	Legal Officer	South Africa	P-4	P-4
Panagis, Nikiforos	Legal Officer	Greece	P-4	P-4
Mba, Patrice	Information Systems Officer	Cameroon	P-4	P-3
Vacant	Translator/Reviser (French)		P-4	
Rostan, Jean-Luc	Translator (French)	France	P-3	P-3
Phan, Hao	Legal Officer	Viet Nam	P-3	P-3
Ritter, Julia	Press Officer[a]	United Kingdom	P-2	P-2
Buergers-Vereshchak, Svitlana	Associate Administrative Officer (Contributions/Budget)	Ukraine	P-2	P-2
Berberovic, Dejan	Associate Archivist	Bosnia and Herzegovina	P-2	P-2
Steenkamp, Robert	Associate Press Officer[a]	South Africa	P-2	P-2
De Herdt, Sandrine	Associate Legal Officer	Burkina Faso	P-2	P-2
Bothe, Andreas	Building Facilities Management and Security Officer	Germany	P-2	P-2
Tang, Yuhao	Junior Professional Officer[b]	China	P-2	P-2

Abbreviations: ASG, Assistant Secretary-General.
Note: Number of posts totals 19 and one Junior Professional Officer.
[a]Fifty per cent part-time post.
[b]Funded by the Government of China.

B. General Service

Name	*Title*	*Country of nationality*	*Level of post*	*Level of incumbent*
Egert, Anke	Publications/Personal Assistant (Registrar)	Germany	G-7	G-7
Albiez, Berit	Linguistic Assistant/Judiciary Support	Germany	G-7	G-7
Naegler, Thorsten	Administrative Assistant (Procurement)	Germany	G-7	G-7
Enenta, Prince	Information Systems Assistant	Nigeria	G-7	G-7
Boiton, Sandra	Personal Assistant (President)	France	G-7	G-7
Vacant	Administrative Assistant		G-7	
Karanja, Elizabeth	Administrative Assistant	Kenya	G-6	G-6
Bartlett, Emma	Personnel Assistant	United Kingdom	G-6	G-6
Heim, Svenja	Library Assistant	Germany	G-6	G-6
Rouault, Stéphanie	Linguistic Assistant/Judiciary Support	France	G-6	G-6
Fusiek, Christoph	Finance Assistant	Germany	G-6	G-6
Janz, Jane	Legal Assistant[a]	Germany	G-6	G-6
Vacant	Administrative Assistant (Finance)		G-6	
Schneider, Inga	Administrative Assistant	Germany	G-5	G-5
Fislage, Sylvie	Personal Assistant (Deputy Registrar)	France	G-5	G-5
Banerjee, Mita	Administrative Assistant	Germany	G-5	G-5
Duddek, Sven	Senior Security/Administrative Assistant	Germany	G-5	G-5
Aziamble, Papagne	Senior Security/Administrative Assistant	Togo	G-5	G-5
Al Khoury, Jad	Finance Assistant (Accounts Payable)	Lebanon	G-5	G-5
Ntinugwa, Chuks	Security/Administrative Assistant	Germany	G-4	G-4

Note: Number of posts totals 20.

[a]Part-time 80 per cent until 31 December 2026.

Annex II

List of donors to the Library of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea as at 31 December 2025

Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos, San José, Costa Rica

International Court of Justice (ICJ), The Hague, Netherlands

Japan Branch of the International Law Association, Tokyo, Japan

Japanese Society of International Law, Tokyo, Japan

Mareverlag, Hamburg, Germany

Barbara Mourão Sachett, Núcleo de Estudos em Tribunais Internacionais (NETI-USP), Faculdade de Direito, Universidade de São Paulo, Brazil

Gabriela A. Oanta, Instituto Universitario de Estudios Europeos “Salvador de Madariaga”, Universidade da Coruña, A Coruña, Spain

Walther-Schücking-Institut für Internationales Recht an der Universität Kiel, Kiel, Germany