



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

Press Release

IN HIS ANNUAL STATEMENT BEFORE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, PRESIDENT GOLITSYN HIGHLIGHTED THE JUDICIAL ACTIVITIES OF THE TRIBUNAL AND THE CELEBRATION OF ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Judge Vladimir Golitsyn, President of the Tribunal, gave his annual statement before the General Assembly of the United Nations on Wednesday, 7 December 2016, during the General Assembly's debate on the item "Oceans and the law of the sea".

Looking back at the events held to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Tribunal this year, the President recalled the visit of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr Ban Ki-moon, to the Tribunal's premises on 7 October 2016, and the solemn ceremony held on the same day in Hamburg City Hall. He also referred to the two-day international symposium held on 5 and 6 October at the premises of the Tribunal on "The contribution of the Tribunal to the rule of law", and the round table discussion on "The role of the Tribunal in the settlement of law of the sea disputes", organized in June this year during the Meeting of States Parties in New York. He expressed his gratitude to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, the City of Hamburg, the Government of Japan and the Korea Maritime Institute for their generous support for these events.

Regarding the judicial work of the Tribunal, the President referred to the Judgment recently handed down in the *M/V "Norstar" Case*, in which the Tribunal rejected Italy's preliminary objections to its jurisdiction and to the admissibility of Panama's application. He informed the General Assembly that, having rejected all of Italy's objections, the Tribunal found that it has jurisdiction to adjudicate the dispute and decided that Panama's application is admissible. The Judgment completed the preliminary objections stage, and proceedings on the merits have resumed.

Turning to the other case on the docket, concerning delimitation of the maritime boundary between Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire in the Atlantic Ocean, President Golitsyn recalled that the case is pending before a Special Chamber of the Tribunal and that oral proceedings would be held in February 2017.

President Golitsyn took this opportunity to remind delegates that the Tribunal's case law has not only increased over recent years but also diversified to cover a wide range of matters under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, such as maritime delimitation, requests for the release of detained vessels, claims for damages arising out of the alleged unlawful arrest of vessels, issues concerning responsibilities and liabilities of States in respect of deep seabed mining, and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

He also emphasized that the Tribunal could further establish itself as a key player in the dispute-settlement system under the Convention and consolidate its position as the central forum for the peaceful settlement of disputes in the field of the law of the sea.

On organizational matters, President Golitsyn paid tribute to Judge Antonio Cachapuz de Medeiros from Brazil, who passed away on 15 September 2016. The President informed delegates that the election to fill the vacancy would be held at the next triennial election of seven members of the Tribunal, during the Meeting of States Parties in June 2017. He also informed the delegates that Mr Philippe Gautier, Registrar of the Tribunal, had been re-elected for a term of five years.

The text of the statement is available on the Tribunal's website.

Note: The press releases of the Tribunal do not constitute official documents
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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 at: Am Internationalen Seegerichtshof 1, 22609 Hamburg, Germany, Tel.: +49 (40) 35607-227; Fax: +49 (40) 35607-245; E-mail: press@itlos.org