



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

Press Release

**CASE BETWEEN CHILE AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY
CONCERNING THE CONSERVATION OF SWORDFISH STOCKS IN THE
SOUTH-EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN**

**CHAMBER ACCEDES TO PARTIES' REQUEST FOR
EXTENSION OF TIME-LIMITS**

Hamburg, 11 December 2008. The Special Chamber of the Tribunal constituted to deal with the *Case concerning the Conservation and Sustainable Exploitation of Swordfish Stocks in the South-Eastern Pacific Ocean (Chile/European Community)* today adopted an order further extending the time-limits of the proceedings for one year until 1 January 2010.

The case was submitted to a special chamber of the Tribunal at the request of Chile and the European Community on 19 December 2000. The case raises, *inter alia*, the following issues: whether the European Community has complied with its obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to ensure the conservation of swordfish in the fishing activities undertaken by vessels flying the flag of its Member States on the high seas adjacent to Chile's exclusive economic zone; whether the Chilean decree which purports to apply Chile's conservation measures to swordfish on the high seas is in breach of the Convention; and whether the "Galapagos Agreement" of 2000 was negotiated in keeping with the provisions of the Convention.

By Order of 20 December 2000, the Tribunal constituted the Special Chamber, consisting of Judge P. Chandrasekhara Rao, President of the Chamber, Judges Caminos, Yankov and Wolfrum, and Judge *ad hoc* Orrego Vicuña, and fixed the time-limits for the submission of preliminary objections and the written pleadings.

At the request of the Parties, the time-limits for making preliminary objections were extended to 1 January 2004 and subsequently to 1 January 2006, 1 January 2008 and 1 January 2009, by Orders of 15 March 2001, 16 December 2003, 29 December 2005 and 30 November 2007, respectively. The Agent for the European Community, by letter of 20 October 2008, and the Agent for Chile, by letter of 23 October 2008, requested that the time-limits for the proceedings be suspended for a further year. In their communications, the Parties expressed their commitment to securing approval of a bilateral understanding concerning the conservation of swordfish stocks in the South-Eastern Pacific Ocean, in accordance with their respective procedures, in the course of 2009. The Special Chamber met on 10 and

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11 December 2008 to consider the request of the two Parties. During the meeting, representatives of the Parties answered questions put to them by the Special Chamber.

Pursuant to consultations between the President of the Special Chamber and the Agents of the Parties, the Parties provided the Special Chamber with further information in support of their request. On 11 December 2008 the Special Chamber adopted the Order extending the time-limits of the proceedings until 1 January 2010. The text of the Order may be found on the Tribunal's website.

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.

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