



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

## Press Release

### **APPLICATION FILED ON BEHALF OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AGAINST AUSTRALIA FOR RELEASE OF ARRESTED VESSEL AND MEMBERS OF CREW**

An application was submitted today to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea by the Government of the Russian Federation against the Government of Australia under article 292 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea for the release of the *Volga*, a vessel flying the flag of the Russian Federation, and three members of its crew.

According to the Application, on 7 February 2002 the *Volga* was boarded by Australian military personnel from a military helicopter on the high seas in the Southern Ocean for alleged illegal fishing in the Australian fishing zone. The vessel was directed by an Australian warship to proceed to Perth, where it is still detained. The crew of the vessel were repatriated to their respective home countries after a period of detention with the exception of three officers, of Spanish nationality, who remain in Perth under court orders. The catch which had been on board the vessel at the time of boarding was sold by the Australian authorities for the amount of AU\$ 1,932,579.28. The Australian authorities set the amount of the security for the release of the vessel and the crew in the amount of AU\$ 4,177,500.

The Russian Federation requests the Tribunal to order the Respondent to release the *Volga* and the officers upon the posting of a bond or security in an amount not exceeding AU\$ 500,000, or in such other amount as the Tribunal considers reasonable. A copy of the Application has been transmitted to the Government of Australia.

Pursuant to article 112, paragraph 3, of the Rules of the Tribunal, the President shall fix the dates of the hearing at the earliest possible date within a period of 15 days from the first working day following the date of receipt of the Application. By Order dated 2 December 2002, the President of the Tribunal, Judge Dolliver Nelson fixed 12 and 13 December as the dates for the hearings. The Tribunal will deliver its Judgment at a public sitting of the Tribunal, to be held no later than 14 days after the closure of the hearing.

The Press Releases of the Tribunal, documents and other information are available on the Tribunal's websites: <http://www.itlos.org> and <http://www.tiddm.org> and from the Registry of the Tribunal. Please contact Ms. Julia Pope at Am Internationalen Seegerichtshof 1, 22609 Hamburg, Germany, Tel.: +49 (40) 35607-227, Fax: +49 (40) 35607-245; E-mail: [press@itlos.org](mailto:press@itlos.org)

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