



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

Press Release

VISIT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSIONER FOR FISHERIES AND MARITIME AFFAIRS TO THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE LAW OF THE SEA

Dr. Joe Borg, Member of the European Commission with responsibility for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, was received today at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea during his visit to the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg. Dr. Borg, who was accompanied by a delegation consisting of Dr. Michael A. Köhler, Deputy Chef de Cabinet, and Mr Paul Nemitz, Head of Legal Affairs, Fisheries Directorate General, was welcomed by the President of the Tribunal, Judge Dolliver Nelson, the Registrar, Mr Philippe Gautier, and the Deputy Registrar, Mr Doo-young Kim. He was escorted to the President's chambers where a meeting took place and the visitor's book was signed.

Following his visit to the President, Dr. Borg addressed a group of academics, business and shipping experts in the courtroom of the Tribunal. The lecture was organized by the International Foundation for the Law of the Sea, the Senate of Hamburg, Info-Point Europa and the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce. President Nelson first gave a welcome statement, in which he outlined the importance of the Tribunal as the key forum for the settlement of disputes concerning the interpretation and application of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and highlighted the position of the European Union as the only international organization currently party to the Convention, recalling also that the European Commission had already had recourse to the Tribunal in the *Case concerning the Conservation and Sustainable Exploitation of Swordfish Stocks in the South-Eastern Pacific Ocean* between Chile and the European Commission, a case which is pending on the docket of the Tribunal.

Dr. Borg gave a statement entitled "Oceans and the Law of the Sea: towards new horizons" in which he noted that the European Union has been an active and interested party to the Convention since May 1998 and that the Convention has been incorporated into the Union's legislative architecture. Referring to the cooperative attitude taken by the Tribunal in handling the dispute between Chile and the European Commission and the guidance it provided to the parties, he praised the role of the Tribunal as a facilitator for the peaceful settlement of disputes. Dr. Borg expressed his interest in the suggestion that bilateral agreements between the European Union and other States relating to the law of the sea could include a provision binding parties to refer the settlement of any disputes to the Tribunal. He also proposed that the European Commission establish a mechanism

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with the Tribunal for future cooperation and the exchange of information.

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 Mrs Julia Ritter at Am Internationalen Seegerichtshof 1, 22609 Hamburg, Germany, Tel.: +49 (40) 35607-227, Fax: +49 (40) 35607-245;
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