



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

Press Release

(Issued by the Registrar)

APPLICATION FILED ON BEHALF OF THE SEYCHELLES AGAINST FRANCE FOR RELEASE OF ARRESTED FISHING VESSEL

HAMBURG, 27 November. Proceedings were instituted before the Tribunal today on behalf of the Seychelles against France under article 292 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The dispute concerns the fishing vessel MFV "MONTE CONFURCO", which flies the flag of the Seychelles. According to the application, the MFV "MONTE CONFURCO" sailed from Port Louis, Mauritius, on 21 August 2000, for long-line fishing expedition of toothfish in international waters of the Southern Seas, which was planned to last through December 2000. On 8 November 2000, it was arrested by a French frigate for alleged violation of fishery laws and failure to announce the entry of the MFV "MONTE CONFURCO" into the exclusive economic zone of the Kerguelen Islands. The application also states that the vessel and its Master are detained by French authorities in Réunion.

The Tribunal is requested, *inter alia*, to declare that the guarantee set by France for the release of the vessel of FF 56,400,000 (US\$ 7,254,375) is not reasonable and to set a bond in the maximum amount of FF 2,200,000 (US\$ 299,168). The application also requests that the Master be released without a bond and that he be allowed to attend the hearings in Hamburg.

The Registrar has notified the Government of France, the respondent in the case, and transmitted a copy of the application to it. France may provide its response to the application no later than twenty-four hours before the opening of the hearing in the case.

Under the Rules of the Tribunal, the date for a hearing is to be set no later than ten days from the receipt of the application and each party will be accorded one day to present its evidence and arguments at the hearing. By an Order dated 27 November 2000, the President of the Tribunal has fixed 7 and 8 December 2000 as the dates for the hearing.

(more)

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The Tribunal will deliver its Judgment at a public sitting of the Tribunal, to be held no later than ten days after the closure of the hearing.

The Press Releases of the Tribunal, documents and other information are available on the United Nations website: <http://www.un.org/Depts/los/> and from the Registry of the Tribunal. Please contact Mr. Robert van Dijk at Am Internationalen Seegerichtshof 1, 22609 Hamburg, Germany, Tel.: (49) (40) 35607-227/228, Fax: (49) (40) 35607-245/275; or United Nations DC-1, suite 1140, New York, NY 10017, Tel.: (1) (212) 963-6480, Fax: (1) (212) 963-0908, E-mail: press@itlos.hamburg.de

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