



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

Press Release

(Issued by the Registry)

**PUBLIC HEARINGS ON MERITS IN M/V "SAIGA" (No. 2) CASE
OPEN AT 10 A.M. ON 8 MARCH 1999**

HAMBURG, 4 March. Public sittings in the M/V "Saiga" (No. 2) case (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines v. Guinea) will open at 10.00 a.m. on Monday, 8 March 1999. The hearings will be held in the courtroom at the temporary premises of International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea in Hamburg, Germany. The hearings will take place over two weeks, with two sessions each day. The morning session will take place from 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon and the afternoon session will be held from 2.00 to 4.00 p.m.

The first round of oral proceedings will take place in the first week, with oral argument for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines scheduled for Monday to Wednesday of this week and for Guinea for Thursday to Saturday of this week. Both parties will have the opportunity to reply to each others oral presentations in a second round of pleadings during the following week. In each round, the Tribunal will hear the applicant, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, first followed by the respondent, Guinea.

Verbatim Records available at United Nations website: <http://www.un.org/Depts/los/>

The Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the United Nations has recently updated the information about the Tribunal on the United Nations website. Due to the good offices of the Division, the Verbatim Records of the hearings in the M/V "Saiga" (No. 2) case will be available on the United Nations Website, on a daily basis shortly after the hearing.

Presentations

The delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines will be led by His Excellency Mr. Carl Joseph, the Attorney General and Minister of Justice of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, with His Excellency Mr. Carlyle D. Dougan Q.C., High Commissioner to London for Saint Vincent and the

(more)

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Grenadines, Agent. The delegation of Guinea will be led by His Excellency Maurice Zogbélémou Togba, Minister of Justice of Guinea, with Mr. Hartmut von Brevern, Agent.

Members of the Press are invited to attend the hearing. Movie and still photography audio, and video recording of parts of the proceedings is authorized. The audio recording in English and French will be possible by using XLR plugs. Photographs may be taken before the opening, during the first few minutes of the sitting; and also for a few minutes towards the end. Filming is however subject to special authorization. There will be supplementary lighting for filming.

Further details concerning the case are contained in Press Releases Nos. 8 to 15, 17 and 19 of the Tribunal. Earlier Press Releases and further information can be obtained from the Tribunal's Registry. Please contact Mr. Robert van Dijk, Legal Officer at the Tribunal, at Tel: (49) (40) 35607-228 or Ms. Isabelle Kreiner, Press Assistant, at Tel: (49) (40) 35607-227 or Fax: (49) (40) 35607-245. Press information will also be available at the hearing itself.

Because there will be only a limited number of seats available, members of the Press are requested to contact the Registry to guarantee admission. Identification will be required for admission.

Background

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Guinea in an Agreement have requested the Tribunal to deal with all aspects of the merits, including damages and costs, and the objection as to jurisdiction raised by Guinea in the dispute between them concerning the arrest off the coast of West Africa by Guinea of the oil tanker M/V "Saiga" flying the flag of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

The proceedings on the merits raise many important issues, including: the freedom of navigation, the enforcement of customs laws, re-fuelling (bunkering) vessels at sea, and the right of hot pursuit (See Press Release No. 13). The case has been submitted to the whole Tribunal comprised of 21 Judges.

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,
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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,
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