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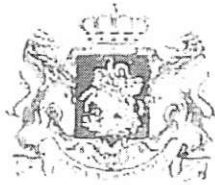
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Circular letter No.3043
17 March 2010

To: IMO Members
United Nations and specialized agencies
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status

Subject: **Communication received from Georgia**

The Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization has received, on 12 March 2010, the attached communication from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia.



საგარეო ურთიერთობების სამინისტრო
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GEORGIA

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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia presents its compliments to the International Maritime Organization and has the honour to request to notify all its member states on the following:

Abkhazia, Georgia is an integral part of Georgia, however presently it is occupied by the Russian Federation. On 28 August, 2008 the Georgian Parliament passed a resolution on the Occupation of the Georgian Territories by the Russian Federation and on 23 October, 2008 adopted the Law of Georgia on Occupied Territories. Both documents declare the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia and the Former South Ossetian Autonomous District as the Russian-occupied territories, and refer to the Russian troops as the occupying forces.

Territorial integrity of Georgia is recognized by the international community and therefore any attempt or even indirect support of possible illegal shipping to Abkhazia, Georgia is considered as the breach of the basic norms and principles of international law.

In compliance with paragraph 1(b) of article 3 of the Georgian Constitution, the Georgian higher state bodies have the exclusive competence to administer the status, boundary regime and protection of the state frontiers: the status and protection of territorial waters, airspace, the continental shelf and exclusive economic zone.

Pursuant to paragraph 3 of article 15 of the Law of Georgia on the Maritime Space of Georgia, the outer limit of Georgian territorial sea is the State Border of Georgia. Under paragraphs (a) and (b) of article 24 of the Law of Georgia on the State Border of Georgia, a person or a vehicle crossing or attempting to cross the state border of Georgia without passing through the border checkpoint or passing through the border checkpoint in violation of the established crossing rules, as well as a non-military or a military ship of foreign state that, while entering in the territorial and internal waters of Georgia, violates the rules established under this Law shall be considered as a violator of the state border of Georgia.

International Maritime Organization
London, the U.K.

According to Decree 140 of the President of Georgia of 31 January 1996 and Decree 313 of the President of Georgia of 3 August 2004, the territorial sea of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, Georgia and the contiguous zone shall be closed for all kinds of maritime transport, except the shipment of humanitarian cargos in compliance with the established regulations.

In accordance with article 2 of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the sovereignty of a coastal State, Georgia in the given case, extends beyond its land territory and internal waters to an adjacent belt of sea, described as the territorial sea.

According to the Law of Georgia on Occupied Territories, in the Black Sea, territorial waters and internal waters on the segment of Abkhazia, Georgia is considered as occupied territory and shipping to Abkhazia, Georgia is prohibited unless permitted by the Georgian central authorities.

Georgia reserves the right to take all appropriate measures in order to prevent and punish infringement of the national and international law by vessels illegally shipping to Abkhazia, Georgia.

Georgia requests the IMO to circulate this Note among the member states ensuring that the member states will undertake appropriate measures for the prevention of illegal shipping to Abkhazia, Georgia.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the International Maritime Organization the assurance of its highest consideration.

