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

Press Release

PRESIDENT JESUS ADDRESSES THE TWENTIETH MEETING OF STATES PARTIES, INTRODUCES THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRIBUNAL, OUTLINES THE LATEST JUDICIAL DEVELOPMENTS AND ANNOUNCES THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW TRUST FUND FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

The President of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, Judge José Luis Jesus, addressed the Twentieth Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on 14 June 2010, introducing therewith the Annual Report of the Tribunal.

Welcoming the two new Parties to the Convention, the Dominican Republic and Chad, the President also noted that of the 160 States Parties, 43 had made a declaration concerning the procedure for the settlement of disputes relating to the interpretation or application of the Convention, of which 29 had selected the Tribunal as a means for the settlement of law of the sea disputes pursuant to article 287 of the Convention.

Turning to the latest judicial developments at the Tribunal, the President recalled that proceedings had been instituted before the Tribunal on 14 December 2009 in relation to the dispute concerning the delimitation of the maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal between the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Union of Myanmar. The President noted that the time-limits for the submission of the pleadings by the two parties had been fixed. Referring to a further dispute relating to maritime delimitation in the Bay of Bengal between Bangladesh and India, the President informed the Meeting that, at the request of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh and in consultation with the Parties, he had appointed three arbitrators to serve as members of the arbitral tribunal instituted for the settlement of the dispute, in accordance with article 3 of Annex VII to the Convention.

The President further noted that, concerning Case N°17, *Responsibilities and obligations of States sponsoring persons and entities with respect to activities in the International Seabed Area (Request for Advisory Opinion)*, the President of the Seabed Disputes Chamber, Judge Tullio Treves, issued an order fixing the date of 14 September 2010 for the opening of the hearing at which oral statements may be submitted to the Seabed Disputes Chamber.

The President went on to highlight the Tribunal's continuing efforts to enhance knowledge about the Convention and the dispute-settlement mechanisms relating to it, citing the workshops held by the Tribunal in 2009 in collaboration with the International

Foundation for the Law of the Sea. The first was held in Putrajaya (Malaysia) in cooperation with the Government of Malaysia and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization, and the second in Cape Town in cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and the Government of South Africa. In addition, the President referred to the Tribunal's internship programme, the Summer Academy of the International Foundation for the Law of the Sea and the capacity-building and training programme on law of the sea disputes settlement procedure, organized by the Tribunal with the support of the Nippon Foundation.

In this connection, the President informed the States Parties that the Tribunal had decided to establish a trust fund for training in law of the sea and maritime fields to be financed by voluntary contributions. He explained that the object of the fund was to give financial assistance to nationals of developing countries participating in the Tribunal's internship programme and the Summer Academy.

The text of the President's statement may be found on the website of the Tribunal.