DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF FRANCE



COMMITTE: International Maritime Organization (IMO)

TOPIC: ‘’The rise of mega ships and flags of convenience’’

France is the country with the largest area in both Western Europe and the European Union, with an area of 543 945 km2. Its borders are 2889 km long, France is neighboring six countries, with Belgium and Luxembourg in the north, Germany and Switzerland in the east, Italy in the south east and Spain in the south west. France has a nationalist and socialist structure.

IMO – the International Maritime Organization – is the United Nations specialized agency with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution by ships. IMO's work supports the UN sustainable development goals. Today the IMO occupies a privileged place in the international maritime community. It brings together 172 member states and 3 associate members, has 300 officials and an annual budget of around €34 million.

It develops and promotes the highest possible technical standards in maritime safety, navigation efficiency, prevention and control of marine pollution from ships. It also addresses administrative and legal issues related to these topics and aims to explore possible synergies with the work of other United Nations organizations in the maritime field.

France is a leading player in the maritime field due to the size of its maritime sector and its world-renowned expertise. France manages an exclusive economic zone with a total area of just over 10 million km2. Some 22% of the world’s marine protected areas are under French jurisdiction. France has long been active in developing international standards for the safety and security of maritime transport as well as preventing vessels from polluting the seas. It ranks third among IMO Member States in terms of the number of ratified conventions. Each year, about 100 French experts take part in technical discussions at various IMO working groups. They thus play an extremely active role, submitting some 60 proposals each year. France is the 21st largest contributor to the IMO and also provides it with voluntary financial contributions.

Countries that use open registries do so because they pay lower tax rates. In addition, ship owners can hire foreigners as crew for low wages, without insurance, with inhumane treatment, and can continue to do so easily because there is no supervision. There have been many small attempts to stop the open registry from the past to the present, but no result has been achieved due to the impotence of the states. Another problem created by open registries is that toxic wastes generated during ship dismantling cause serious damage to the environment and the flag country is held responsible for cleaning up the damage. In addition, it has been revealed that ships using the flag of convenience pollute the environment more with accidents such as oil spills than ships using registered flags.

As the French republic, we do not support this situation and we want to increase the inspections as a solution proposal, especially in the way that the crew employed in inhuman conditions can at least communicate with their unions, so that there are extra radios on the ships and these it will be useful to check. In addition, the countries that use open registries by increasing sanctions in ports are listed and the income from the sanctions to be applied to these countries and the channels, ports and bridges are made suitable for mega ships.

<https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/united-nations/france-and-the-united-nations/france-and-the-international-maritime-organization/>

<https://www.imo.org/>