



IMCO

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MARINE POLLUTION, 1973

CONSIDERATION OF A DRAFT INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE PREVENTION OF POLLUTION FROM SHIPS, 1973

Comments and proposals on a draft text of the Convention

Submitted by the Government of Italy

The Italian Government made all efforts in order to obtain that, in the final text of Regulation 12 of Annex I of the Draft text of an International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships 1973, a special system for the prevention of pollution of the sea caused by oil tanker traffic should be acknowledged for the Mediterranean Sea, as a special area, in the event that the provisions set out in the Regulation concerned were not to be universally accepted for the other seas.

An amendment put forward by the Netherlands, whilst accepting the Regulation's provisions, suggests, however, that ships coming from the Atlantic be excluded.

The Italian Government cannot accept this derogation, which, in practical terms, would make it impossible to prevent oil tankers coming from the Atlantic from discharging their residual oils in the Mediterranean Sea. In fact, for the stability's sake of the vessels, it would be more expedient for them to withhold their ballast water until reaching proximity of a loading terminal as indeed it would be considerably easier for them to conduct their operation in calmer waters.

Furthermore, since it is a known fact that the discharge of ballast water to shore reception facilities involves a certain delay in the loading of crude oil, the derogation suggested for tanks incoming from the Atlantic would be conducive to an economically burdensome penalty for those vessels engaged in inter-Mediterranean traffic.

Finally, the suggested exception would have the foreseeable effect of compelling the Mediterranean countries to exercise their vigilance and controls over tanker navigation from the Atlantic - these controls being extremely difficult and, however, desultory - and would, furthermore, be tantamount to allowing the shipping in question to openly pollute the Mediterranean.
