

European NGO Platform on Shipbreaking:



Brussels, 13 January 2006

Mr. Stavros DIMAS
EU Commissioner for Environment
(BERL 11/106)
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 Brussels
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BY FAX AND EMAIL

Concerning: The export of the French aircraft carrier MV Clemenceau

Dear Mr. Dimas,

The European NGO platform on shipbreaking would like to express its concern about the French government's decision to send the French ex aircraft-carrier MV Clemenceau to India for dismantling.

India as import country and France as export country are parties to the Basel Convention on transboundary movements of hazardous waste. As a Member State of the European Union, France is also legally bound to Council Regulation (EEC) 259/93/EEC on Shipments of Waste which incorporates the Basel Convention into Community law and includes the so-called "Basel-ban" on exports of hazardous waste to non-OECD countries.

According to the Basel Convention (article 9), sending the Clemenceau to Alang Bay in India is an "illegal traffic" of hazardous waste.

The official announcement of the French Ministry of Defence is that the ship contains at least 100 tons of asbestos. In an exclusive interview, the executive director of Technopur, the French asbestos removal company responsible for the preliminary asbestos removal in Toulon, France, declared that there remains much more asbestos (between 500 and 1000 tons) in the Clemenceau (see the January 1st issue of the Indian national paper *The Hindu*). After having heard Technopure representatives on 6 January 2006, the Chair of the Indian Supreme Court Monitoring Committee on hazardous waste has asked the Indian and French governments to further clarify the issue. In the meantime, they decided not to allow the Clemenceau within the 220 nautical miles exclusive economic zone of the Indian Union as they consider the Clemenceau to be hazardous waste as defined in the Basel Convention.

Egypt has, 12 January 2006, echoed India's decision. The Clemenceau is not allowed to enter Egyptian territorial waters, including the Suez Canal, as long as the Basel Convention obligations are not fulfilled. The Egyptian government is demanding full decontamination of the Clemenceau.

The European NGO platform on shipbreaking hereby express its deep concerns about the French government's breach of existing EU and international legislation. We urge the Commission to publicly articulate the legislative context of the EU on shipments of waste and to demand that France comply with these rules.

Yours sincerely,

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*On behalf of the following NGOs: **Bellona, European Federation for Transport and Environment, North Sea Foundation, Greenpeace, International Ban Asbestos Secretariat and International Federation for Human Rights, Association pour le paquebot France***

A copy of this letter has been sent:

To the following Members of the European Parliament:

Karl-Heinz Florenz (PPE, DE), Johannes Blokland (ID, NL), Satu Hassi (Green/EFA, FI), Georgs Andrejevs (ALDE, LV), H  l  ne Flautre (Green/EFA, FR), Enrique Bar  n Crespo (PSE, ES), Dirk Sterckx (ALDE, BE), Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert (ALDE, NL), Neena Gill (PSE, UK), Alain Lamassoure (PPE, FR), B  atrice Patrie (PSE, FR), Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL, NL), Margrete Auken (Green/EFA, DK), Marie-H  l  ne Aubert (Green/EFA, FR), Jean-Luc Bennahmias (Green/EFA, FR), Marie Anne Isler B  guin (Green/EFA, FR), Alain Lipietz (Green/EFA, FR), G  rard Onesta (Green/EFA, FR), In  s Ayala Sender (PSE, ES), Dorette Corbey (PSE, UK), Paolo Costa (ALDE, IT), Luis Grandes Pascual (PPE, ES), Robert Evans (PSE, UK), Anne Ferreria (PSE, FR), Duarte Freitas (PPE, PT), Gyula Hegyi (PSE, HU), Marian Boguslaw Liberadski (PSE, PL), Marios Matsakis (ALDE, CY), Robert Navarro (PSE, FR), P  ter Olajos (PPE, HU), Luis Queir   (PPE, IT), Luca Romagnoli (NI, IT), Gilles Savary (PSE, FR), Ari Vatanen (PPE, FR), Dominique Vlasto (PPE, FR), Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE, NL), Roberts Zile (UEN, LV), David Casa (PPE, MT), Dorette Corbey (PSE, UK), Elisa Ferreira (PSE, PT), Aldis Kuskis (PPE, LV), Vittorio Prodi (ALDE, IT) and Anja Weisgerber (PPE, DE).

To the following members of the press:

Ga  lle Dupont (Le Monde), Laurent Zecchini (Le Monde), Jean Quatremer (Lib  ration), Fabrice Randoux (AFP), Frederic Simon (EURACTIV), Sarah Gilbert (BBC), Jarle Hetland (European Voice), Jeff Mason (Reuters), Jorn de Cock (De Standaard), Anne Eckstein (EIS), Justin Staes (Lloyds List), Jean Luc Porquet (Le Canard Encha  n  ), Vaiju Naravane (The Hindu) and Egypt State Information Service.