



NGO
SHIPBREAKING
PLATFORM

TO: **Sigurður Ingi Jóhannsson**
Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Iceland
Skuggasundi 1 - 150 Reykjavik
Iceland

ALSO SENT TO: Ragnheiður Elín Árnadóttir, Minister of Industry and Trade of Iceland

CONCERNING : 3 vessels landed in Iceland for breaking.

Dear Minister Jóhannsson,

Brussels, 14 February 2014

It has come to our attention that at least three vessels are stranded at Hafnafjordur and Keflavik, destined to be scrapped. These ships are the OBSHA, IMO 8325676, the ORLIK, IMO 8326187, and the FERNANDA, IMO 7806025. The NGO Shipbreaking Platform (the Platform), representing 20 human rights and environment organisations worldwide, advocates and promotes clean and safe ship recycling, and we do not consider that the landing of vessels onto shores that are unable to contain toxic materials from the ships, leading them to polluting the water and the land, is a sustainable or acceptable way of breaking and recycling vessels.

One paramount requirement for safely breaking ships is that the activities take place in contained environments within impermeable structures and flooring. All vessels contain toxic materials within their structures, such as asbestos (in particular in ships that were built in the early '80's, such as the ones in question), and these are easily leaked into the environment when they are broken. Furthermore, lack of proper infrastructure also entails a deficiency in emergency equipment which will not be readily available in case of an accident during the dismantling process: the case of the fire on the Fernanda should be enough evidence to illustrate the danger and flammability of ships. In terms of safety for workers, which we cannot account for in this case, it is essential that they are provided with adequate personal protective equipment due to the hazardous nature of the job.

We do not believe that shipbreaking practices should be taking place in areas that cannot assure all the basic safeguards for the environment and workers, and we do not consider that the way that the said three vessels are being dealt with in Hafnafjordur and Keflavik is acceptable. No shipbreaking

activities should be taking place there at all unless and until minimum environmental and safety standards can be ensured.

We trust that you will look into the activities that are taking place in Hafnafjordur and Keflavik more closely in order to make sure that no more ships will end up stranded on your coast in the future, and that you will join us in promoting more sustainable ship recycling practices that are available elsewhere.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrizia Heidegger', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patrizia HEIDEGGER

Executive Director, NGO Platform on Shipbreaking

The NGO Platform on Shipbreaking is a global coalition of environmental, human and labour rights organisations working to reverse the environmental and human rights abuses of current shipbreaking practices and to ensure the safe and environmentally sound dismantling of end-of-life ships worldwide. More than **100 non-governmental organisations** around the world voiced their support to the Platform human rights and environmental objective to end the dangerous and polluting practice of breaking ships on tidal beaches, and Ms Rizwana Hasan, member of the Platform Executive Board has received the prestigious **Goldman Prize 2009** and the **Ramon Magsaysay Award 2012** for her work on the shipbreaking issue in Bangladesh. The **current members of the Platform** are: the Basel Action Network (BAN), Greenpeace, the International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH), the European Federation of Transport and Environment (T&E), Bellona, the North Sea Foundation, the Ban Asbestos Network, Prevention of Hazardous Shipbreaking Initiative Turkey, Young Power in Social Action (YPSA), Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS), the Bangladesh Occupational Safety, Health and Environment Foundation (OSHE), Toxics Link, Legal Initiative for Forest and Environment (LIFE), the Corporate Accountability Desk India, The Center for Rule of Law Islamabad (CROLI) and Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI).