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#### INFORMATION NOTE

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From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Council

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Subject: **Any other business**

Illegal seizure of two Greek-flagged vessels by Iranian armed groups in the Persian Gulf

Information from the Greek Delegation

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Delegations will find attached an information note prepared by the Greek delegation on the above-mentioned subject for consideration under "Any other business" at the meeting of the Council (Transport, Telecommunications and Energy) on 2 June 2022.

**Illegal seizure of two Greek-flagged vessels by Iranian armed groups in the Persian Gulf***AOB – Information from the Greek delegation**TTE Council, 2.06.2022****Illegal seizure of two Greek-flagged vessels by Iranian armed groups in the Persian Gulf  
Information from the Greek Delegation***

Greece wishes to inform the Council on a matter that constitutes a blatant violation of the rules and regulations set by the United Nation Convention on the Law of the Sea, in particular the fundamental principles of freedom of navigation and the right of innocent passage, as well as the jurisdiction assigned to the flag and the coastal States, undermining the safety of international maritime transport.

More specifically, on Friday 27.5.22 the Greek flagged vessel Poseidon was boarded by an armed group, without the consent of the captain and the flag state, while navigating in the EEZ of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 22,5 nm off the Iranian Coast. On the same day, the Greek flagged vessel Prudent Warrior was boarded by another armed group without the consent of the captain and the flag state, in the territorial waters of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2,5 nm from Fasor Isl.

As Iranian government officials have publicly declared, this was done in retaliation for the recent seizure and confiscation by judicial decision of a shipment of Iranian oil on the part of the Greek Authorities. However, in this latter case, the Greek Authorities acted in fully accordance with the judicial procedures and the rule of law, complying with sanctions against Russia at the first stage and a request for international judicial assistance by the US, on a basis of a relevant court ruling at the second stage. Until now, the allegedly Iranian vessel has failed to present registration and safety certificates under the applicable international Conventions.

In light of the above, it is evident that the Iranian retaliatory act of using armed force to unlawfully board the two Greek tankers and forcefully lead them to the Iranian coast is in flagrant contravention of the Law of the Sea. At the same time, it poses significant threats to the safety and security of maritime transport, on a route of critical importance for international shipping.

This serious incident has been brought to the attention of the IMO and Greece has requested the Iranian side to immediately release the two vessels and the members of the crew. Greece will keep the Member States and EU institutions informed of the developments in order to maintain a coordinated and firm position on the issue with the view to upholding freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf.

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