



Maritime Administrator

Republic of the Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator Welcomes HEROIC IDUN Judgment
Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands, 29 May 2026

For Immediate Release

A Special Chamber of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) delivered its judgment Wednesday in the case of the Republic of the Marshall Islands v. Republic of Equatorial Guinea “Heroic Idun” (No. 2). The Republic of the Marshall Islands (hereinafter “Marshall Islands”) welcomes the judgment which found the Republic of Equatorial Guinea (hereinafter “Equatorial Guinea”) had violated the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) by intercepting and detaining the Marshall Islands-registered HEROIC IDUN and its crew. This is the first time the Marshall Islands has found it necessary to bring a case before ITLOS.

“It was important for the Marshall Islands to bring this case forward to protect the fundamental rules and principles of law for flag States, the humane and fair treatment of seafarers, the safety of vessels and the marine environment, and all engaged in international maritime trade,” said Meredith Kirby, Deputy Commissioner of Maritime Affairs, Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator, and Agent for the Marshall Islands in the case. “This judgment reaffirms the paramount importance of freedom of navigation and the principle of exclusive flag State jurisdiction on the high seas,” she continued.

The Special Chamber awarded the Marshall Islands more than USD 14 million in compensation for the unlawful acts of Equatorial Guinea, including in excess of USD 4 million for mistreatment of the crew. This is the largest amount ever awarded by ITLOS. From initial detention to judgment, the Marshall Islands spent more than three years pursuing the matter.

As stated by Ms. Kirby in her opening statement, “the [international marine transportation] system only works if all parties involved respect and abide by the rules and agreements in place; that is true for the vessels, true for the crews, and vitally important for both the flag State and coastal and port States.”

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