

**Resolution A.731(17)**  
*Adopted on 7 November 1991*  
*(Agenda item 29)*

**UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT  
AND DEVELOPMENT, 1992**

THE ASSEMBLY,

RECALLING Articles 1(d) and 2(a) of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization, respectively concerning the purposes of the Organization and the performance of functions by the Assembly in relation to consideration of any matters concerning shipping and the effect of shipping on the marine environment that may be referred to it by any organ or specialized agency of the United Nations,

RECALLING ALSO that Article 15(i) of the Convention, in defining the functions of the Assembly, *inter alia*, relating to Article 2(a), requires the Assembly to refer such matters to the Council for formulation by it of any recommendations or instruments thereon,

RECALLING FURTHER that by resolution 44/228 of 22 December 1989, the General Assembly of the United Nations decided to convene in Brazil a United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992,

NOTING that UNCED's mandate includes, *inter alia*, the protection of the oceans and all kinds of seas including enclosed and semi-enclosed seas, and of coastal areas and the protection, rational use and development of their living resources, as an environmental issue of major concern in maintaining the quality of the Earth's environment and especially in achieving environmentally sound and sustainable development in all countries,

NOTING ALSO that IMO has actively participated in substantive sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the 1992 Conference, which has been established by the General Assembly of the United Nations,

MINDFUL of the contribution of maritime transportation to sustainable economic development and, in particular, the importance of the international regulatory framework developed by IMO in ensuring that the highest practicable standards of maritime safety and prevention of pollution from ships are applied to the world's merchant fleet,

RECOGNIZING the opportunity provided by the 1992 Conference to reassess the ways and means by which growing environmental problems are being addressed by mankind, in particular the linkage between environment and development, at the same time as opening up possibilities for new and innovative steps to be taken in this regard,

RECOGNIZING also that due to the considerable experience gained in the administration of a number of conventions dealing with the protection of the marine environment and related matters, for example the London Dumping Convention, 1972, MARPOL 73/78, the Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, 1969, the International Convention Relating to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Oil Pollution Casualties, 1969, and in the preparation of similar conventions not yet in force, such as the International Convention on Salvage, 1989, and the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation, 1990, IMO, as the responsible body, is exceptionally well placed to address various sources of marine pollution identified in UNCED's "Agenda 21",

RECOGNIZING further the many initiatives taken by IMO during the 1970s and 1980s to assist developing countries to enhance their level of expertise in maritime affairs, and in building up their human resources, culminating in the establishment by IMO of the World Maritime University, Malmö, Sweden; the International Maritime Law Institute, Malta; and the International Maritime Academy, Trieste, Italy,

AWARE of the potential for building on IMO's past experience to the further benefit of developing countries, with a view, in particular, to placing the above-mentioned institutions on a more secure financial footing,

1. RECOMMENDS that ministries and departments serving as IMO focal points in the Governments of Member States draw the attention of their Governments' delegations to UNCED 1992, to the important role played by IMO in its sphere of competence, and to the importance of giving due and appropriate regard to this role in the deliberations and conclusions of the Conference;
2. FURTHER RECOMMENDS that the Secretary-General ensures the continuing and active participation of the IMO Secretariat in the Preparatory Committee and in the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development with a view to ensuring that the appropriate aspects of IMO's work, as well as provisions of the relevant conventions and other instruments in respect of which IMO performs depositary or other functions, are duly taken into account in the deliberations, documents and decisions thereof, and, as appropriate, in the follow-up activities.