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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 2013

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/68/438)]

68/208. Cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution [65/149](#) of 20 December 2010,

Recalling also the relevant recommendations of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in June 1972,¹

Noting the relevant provisions of Agenda 21, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992² and reaffirmed in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation), adopted in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2002,³ and the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”, adopted in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012,⁴

Reaffirming the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,⁵ which provides the legal framework for ocean activities, and emphasizing its fundamental character, conscious that the problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be considered as a whole through an integrated, interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach,

¹ See *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm, 5–16 June 1972* (A/CONF.48/14/Rev.1), part one.

² *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

³ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

⁴ Resolution 66/288, annex.

⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1833, No. 31363.



Recalling relevant international and regional instruments such as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction,⁶ the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter,⁷ the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region,⁸ the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean,⁹ the Agreement on the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Area of the South-East Pacific,¹⁰ the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area¹¹ and the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic,¹²

Taking note of the ministerial declaration of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (Helsinki Commission) adopted in Copenhagen on 3 October 2013, in which the signatories recognized the need for forward-looking options for solutions and an assessment of the environmental risks posed by, inter alia, munitions dumped at sea, welcomed the 2013 report of the ad hoc expert group to update and review the existing information on dumped chemical munitions in the Baltic Sea and agreed to produce, by 2015, a one-off thematic assessment of the environmental risks of hazardous submerged objects, also utilizing the 2013 report on dumped chemical munitions,

Noting the national, regional and international activities, including scientific research,¹³ data collection and sharing, awareness-raising, reporting on encounters and technical advice, related to munitions dumped at sea, inter alia, in the frameworks of the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic and the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean,

Emphasizing that, in the report on the Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Third Review Conference), adopted at The Hague on 19 April 2013, the States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction were invited to support voluntary sharing of information, raising awareness and cooperation on this issue,

Noting that Member States, international and regional organizations and civil society have undertaken activities to discuss and promote the issues related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, including international cooperation and the exchange of experiences and practical knowledge, in particular at the International Workshop on Environmental Effects Related to Waste

⁶ Ibid., vol. 1974, No. 33757.

⁷ Ibid., vol. 1046, No. 15749.

⁸ Ibid., vol. 1506, No. 25974.

⁹ Ibid., vol. 1102, No. 16908.

¹⁰ Ibid., vol. 1648, No. 28325.

¹¹ Ibid., vol. 2099, No. 36495.

¹² Ibid., vol. 2354, No. 42279.

¹³ See, for example, the Baltic Sea research project entitled "Chemical Munitions, Search and Assessment (CHEMSEA)", which is conducting research on environmental effects related to chemical munitions dumped at sea.

Originating from Chemical Munitions Dumped at Sea, held on 5 November 2012 in Gdynia, Poland,

Noting also the concerns about the potential long-term environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, including their potential impact on human health and safety and on the marine environment and resources,

Recognizing the mandates and capacities of competent United Nations system entities in the fields of marine environment monitoring, research and information sharing, as well as pollution preparedness and response,¹⁴

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General,¹⁵ including the views submitted and contained therein;

2. *Notes* the importance of raising awareness of the environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea;

3. *Invites* Member States and relevant international and regional organizations to keep under observation the issue of the waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, to continue outreach efforts to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to that issue and to cooperate, including by strengthening existing efforts within regional seas conventions and other international, regional and subregional activities related to risk assessment, monitoring, information gathering, risk prevention and response to incidents;

4. *Encourages* voluntary sharing of information on waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea through conferences, seminars, workshops, training courses and publications aimed at the general public and industry in order to reduce related risks;

5. *Also encourages* partnerships between Governments, industry and civil society for raising awareness, reporting and monitoring of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea;

6. *Invites* Member States in a position to do so to consider providing assistance and sharing expertise aimed at building capacities related to risk assessment, monitoring, information gathering, risk prevention and response to incidents resulting from waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea;

7. *Invites* the Secretary-General to continue to seek the views of Member States and relevant regional and international organizations on cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of the environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, also with a view to exploring the possibility of establishing a database¹⁶ and options for the most appropriate institutional framework for such a database, as well as identifying the appropriate intergovernmental bodies within the United Nations system for further consideration

¹⁴ Competent United Nations system entities include, inter alia, the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Maritime Organization, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and the Secretariat.

¹⁵ A/68/258.

¹⁶ Such a database could contain relevant and voluntarily shared information on, inter alia, the location of dumping sites, the type, quantity and, to the extent possible, the current condition of chemical munitions, the recorded environmental impact, best practices on risk prevention and response to incidents or accidental encounters and destruction or impact reduction technologies, including by means of data collection and management.

and implementation, as appropriate, of the cooperative measures envisaged in the present resolution, building on and without duplicating existing activities, and with a view to achieving efficiency and synergies, taking into account the mandates and capacities of relevant international and regional organizations;

8. *Also invites* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session a report on the matters covered in the present resolution, prepared using responses of Member States and relevant regional and international organizations, as well as other available information.

*71st plenary meeting
20 December 2013*
