

Letter of Protest
concerning Sea Shepherd actions against Japan's whale research

Following last year's harassment, from 8 to 14 February 2007 Sea Shepherd perpetrated criminal obstructive actions against Japan's whale research vessels operating in the Antarctic. Japan's whale research is carried out making use of Kyodo Senpaku Kaisha Ltd. vessels by the Institute of Cetacean Research under a special permit issued by the government of Japan pursuant to the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling. Accordingly, Japan's whale research in the Antarctic is perfectly legal.

This year, Sea Shepherd resorted to throwing a large number of smoke bombs and bottles containing a harmful chemical substance on the decks of the mother ship Nisshin Maru and the non-lethal research dedicated sighting vessel Kaiko Maru, resulting in two injured crewmen. Sea Shepherd malicious attempts against the research vessels also included releasing ropes and nets to entangle their screw. Furthermore, the two Sea Shepherd vessels came to either side of the non-resistant Kaiko Maru stopping her from continuing sailing and rammed her three times, causing big damage to her hull.

Such vicious and reckless actions by Sea Shepherd not only violate the international agreements established in order to prohibit piracy and to guarantee the safety of navigation. They are inexcusable criminal acts that go against the practices of good seamanship. What is more, they are spiteful and mindless terrorism perpetrated in disregard of human life.

We condemn these actions by Sea Shepherd in the strongest possible terms. We strongly request that this kind of terrorist behavior which endangers human life is not repeated in future. Last year, the International Whaling Commission adopted by consensus a resolution declaring that the Commission and its contracting Governments do not condone any such wrongful actions that are a risk to human life and property in relation to whale research activities of vessels at sea. We also appeal strongly to the international community to refrain from providing support in any form, including their granting of ship nationality, to such terrorist organization.

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