Insurance of shipowners for maritime claims

2005/0242(COD) - 07/04/2008

The Council held a public policy debate on a proposal for a Directive on the civil liability and financial guarantees of ship-owners.

During the debate, the Council reaffirmed its strong commitment to take the necessary measures in order to strengthen maritime safety. The Council also recalled that it already adopted six political agreements on the basis of five Commission proposals of the third maritime safety package and that the related common positions will be shortly transmitted to the European Parliament in order to reach a quick agreement and start their implementation as soon as possible.

The debate showed that the legislative proposal is not supported by a large majority of Member States. Ministers, although agreeing with the above aim as proposed by the Commission, considered that the proposed Directive would not be the most appropriate means to achieve this objective. Member States stated that a solution should be found at international (IMO) level and not through the proposed Commission Directive on civil liability.

In view of the above, a majority of Member States committed themselves to take the necessary steps to ratify and fully implement the LLMC 1996 and other related international conventions, in order to help to prevent damage caused by ships to third parties and to effectively respond to the interests of accident victims.

The presidency concluded that this proposal does not receive qualified majority support and that Member States instead reaffirmed their commitment to examine all possible solutions to achieve the outlined above objectives.