Oil pollution: fund for damage compensation in European waters, package Erika II

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At the end of a wide-ranging discussion the Council gave its agreement to common positions on the Directive on ship inspection organisations and the Directive on port State control. Moreover, in response to the request by the Nice European Council to adopt provisions on maritime safety as soon as possible, the Council and the Commission reaffirm their determination that satisfactory Community provisions on the accelerated phasing out of single-hull tankers will be adopted by the end of June 2001. Furthermore, the Council took note of the Commission's submission of its "second ERIKA package" and of delegations' comments on it. At the end of its discussions on maritime safety, the Council adopted the following conclusions: - notes the commitment by Member States to intensify their efforts, in the framework of Port State Control, by henceforth increasing the number of inspections, where these are insufficient, and their efficiency, and by targeting ships with the highest risk, such as gas and chemical tankers over 10 years of age, bulk carriers over 12 years of age and oil tankers and passenger ships over 15 years of age not covered by Directive 99/35, in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Council's common position. It emphasises the need to properly implement and enforce Port State Control obligations and the need to harmonise such controls at a high level in the Community. It - - welcomes the prospect of being able to ban sub-standard ships from Community ports as from the entry into force of the necessary legal instrument; underlines the need to ensure a proper and, as far as possible, global regime for liability and compensation in cases of pollution damage resulting from contamination by petroleum products or other noxious and hazardous substances transported by ship; - calls on Member States to pursue their joint cooperation efforts with a view to increasing the quality and availability of information on maritime traffic by submitting appropriate proposals to the IMO and by setting up a regional information system between their processing centres in order to make as effective as possible the procedures for maritime traffic surveillance and for the prevention of risks to shipping and the environment; - invites the Commission to draw up regularly an inventory of the international and Community provisions of maritime social legislation applied by Member States.