

RESOLUTION ON THE PACIFIC MARITIME ENVIRONMENT

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The 13th Annual Meeting of the Asia - Pacific Parliamentary Forum,

Considering that the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum, in its various assemblies, has stated its concern about our common Pacific Ocean;

Observing that this can be seen in several resolutions about new administrative procedures and in international agreements dealing with the protection of the biodiversity and the monitoring of all the factors related to the protection of the marine environment;

Confirming that today maritime transportation has reached historic levels. The increase in the tonnage of goods and merchandise carried by sea in one year now exceeds that of several previous decades. This has brought hundreds of new vessels into our waters annually and significantly increased the number of people working in this area;

Appreciating that this has begun to cause problems in areas that affect our interests. One of them is the dramatic increase of waste being dumped into the sea, not only traditional rubbish but also hundreds—if not thousands—of containers being dumped into the waters of the Pacific Ocean. This causes not only environmental damage, but also produces a maritime safety hazard, especially for smaller vessels;

Keeping in mind that this poses several questions, such as the responsibility of those in command of the vessels; the possibility of equipping ports to receive large amounts of waste; the lack of common regulations regarding the dispatch and reception of cargo; and other considerations with respect to the oversight process in this area aimed at controlling the amount of cargo being disposed of in the sea;

Resolves to:

1- Reaffirm its commitment to the protection of the maritime environment in our Pacific Ocean;

2- Declare that the increase in the amount of waste being dumped into the sea has become an urgent problem that needs to be addressed. The increase, that has been confirmed by various independent sources, in the dumping of containers some of which may be carrying toxic materials with the potential to cause serious environmental damage, must be of particular concern of the authorities;

3- Warn that if appropriate measures are not taken, this increased dumping will begin to affect the overall safety of maritime navigation;

4- Notify all Governments, especially those whose Parliaments are represented in this forum, of the need to establish regulations to deal with the increase in the amount of waste being dumped into the sea;

5- Propose that such regulations necessarily requires to establish common port operation policies to standardize procedures dealing with the loading and unloading of cargo.