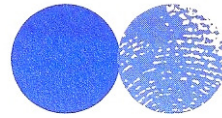


The International Ocean Institute participates in the



Ocean Governance XXI

SESSÃO COMEMORATIVA DO 10º ANIVERSÁRIO DA DECLARAÇÃO DE LISBOA
COMMEMORATIVE SESSION ON THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LISBON DECLARATION

OCEAN GOVERNANCE XXI

OCEANÁRIO DE LISBOA
12 DE DEZEMBRO DE 2008

Dr. Mario Soares, former President of Portugal, in his capacity as the former President of the World Independent Commission on the Oceans, convened in Lisbon on 12-13 December 2008 a commemorative meeting of the tenth anniversary of the 1998 report of the Commission.

Dr. Soares explained that despite numerous efforts over the last ten years the area of ocean governance had not seen meaningful progress on a worldwide basis. Taking that into account he initiated this meeting of personalities involved in ocean affairs to take stock of the achievements so far and to look towards the possibilities of promoting more effective ocean governance as a key element in achieving sustainable development.

On the invitation of the patron of IOI Dr Mario Soares, Dr Awni Behnam, President IOI, attended this commemorative meeting and spoke on **New and Emerging Challenges to Ocean Governance**. In attachment please find the following PDF files for information.

- SOARES Discurso Ocean Governance XXI
- BEHNAM Lisbon Statement Dec 08

Ambassador Salvino Busuttil, Host Country Representative on the IOI Governing Board, read two messages: one from Professor Guido de Marco as the former Vice President of the Independent World Commission on the Ocean and the other in his capacity as President of the Fondation de Malte and former Treasurer and Board Member of the Commission.

Page two of this IOInforma contains the full text of the Ocean Governance Session Press Release and the meeting website also contains further information of interest:

http://www.fmsoares.pt/iniciativas/ilustra_iniciativas/2008/000680/Default.asp#Eng



PRESS RELEASE

An urgent call for Ocean Governance in the XXI Century.

Lack of political will was identified as one of the main causes of an increasingly deteriorating state of many ocean resources and ecosystems putting at risk essential ecological and socio-economic services the oceans provide to society, concluded the participants in the Commemorative Session of the tenth Anniversary of the Lisbon Declaration, yesterday December 12 in Lisbon. The urgent appeal issued in Lisbon in 1998 for improving Ocean Governance was *"like a message in a bottle, thrown to the sea, that nobody picked up"*, declared Ambassador Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares from Brazil and former member of the Independent World Commission on the Oceans participating in the event.

Ten years ago the Lisbon Declaration, was issued at the end of three years of work by the Independent World Commission on the Ocean chaired by the former President of Portugal Dr. Mário Soares. In his words *"Given the scientific assessments of anthropogenic impacts on the environment, one of the most worrying of which is Climate Change, it is vital for us to move as fast as possible from talking to action, abandoning political rhetoric, which has frozen action in recent years, to adopt concrete measures"*. According to the Nobel awarded Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 82% of the total additional energy accumulated in the planet has been taken by the ocean that also absorbs annually 2.1 billion Tons of man-made CO₂. As a consequence the ocean is turning more acid, posing a huge threat to organisms with calcareous structures like coral reefs.

In this Commemorative Session a group of distinguished experts and high level representatives of Governments and International Institutions expressed a unanimous agreement with the principles contained in the Lisbon Declaration that called for **Governance in the ocean that is democratic, participatory with the aim of securing an equitable access to the services and resources it provides**. The Ocean remains a unique international space that under existing international law the international community bears special responsibility in regulating its uses and cooperating for preserving its benefits for future generations.

Despite hundreds of international agreements unanimously adopted, enforcement of these regulations is ineffective and wrong-doing is a prevalent behavior in many regions and activities, within areas under national jurisdiction and beyond, in the high seas. Fishing is in critical condition in many regions of the world, special natural habitats are being altered in an irreversible way, the current rate of biodiversity loss is not being abated, piracy and other types of organized crime such as illegal shipping of drugs, arms and people are increasing in the high seas.

Participants highlighted the need for National Governments to create and empower a single authority with sufficient powers to oversee the management of economic activities in the maritime spaces that were put under national jurisdiction by the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea. The meeting endorsed the **Lisbon Statement for Ocean Governance in the XXI Century**, calling for renewed efforts in this crucial area where the international community has special responsibility.

Stressing the importance of institutional reform to the highly fragmented system of national and international institutions that try to regulate activities in the Ocean, Mário Soares expressed: *"the conclusions drawn by the Report of the Independent World Commission on the Oceans on institutional aspects, are still standing still, floating on the doldrums of political will, despite the appeal made ten years ago to go forward with the process of reform and innovation in the UN system"*.

Representing the Prime Minister of Portugal José Sócrates, who could not attend the event since he participated in the summit of the European Union discussing the financial crisis and common energy policies, the Minister of National Defense and Ocean Affairs, Mr. Nuno Severiano Teixeira, closed the event reaffirming the will of the Portuguese Government to work together with other members of the international community and international organizations in this direction, avoiding that Ocean Governance, a crucial issue for the future for humanity drops between the cracks of the ongoing financial crisis and the negotiations on climate change.

LISBON, 12 December 2008. Mário Soares Foundation.