



# General Assembly

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## Seventy-fifth session

Agenda item 76 (a)

**Oceans and the law of the sea: oceans and the law of the sea**

### **Letter dated 22 December 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Oman to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 8 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General concerning a maritime notice issued by the Ra's al-Khaimah Port Authority ([A/74/1007](#)).

On the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a note verbale dated 21 December 2020 from the Foreign Ministry of the Sultanate of Oman in response to the note verbale from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated to Member States and issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 76 (a).

(*Signed*) Mohamed **Al Hassan**  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative



**Annex to the letter dated 22 December 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Oman to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

[Original: Arabic]

**Note verbale dated 21 December 2020 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman presents its compliments to the United Nations Secretariat and would like to refer to the letter dated 8 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/74/1007), to which was annexed a note verbale dated 1 September 2020 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates concerning maritime notice No. 10/2018 issued by the Ra's al-Khaymah Port Authority on 7 May 2018. That letter was sent in response to the note verbale dated 5 June 2020 from the Sultanate of Oman concerning this matter.

In response to the aforementioned note verbale of the United Arab Emirates, which is not consistent with either international law or the status quo, Oman would like to stress the following:

1. Based on the boundary agreement of 22 June 2002 between the Sultanate of Oman and the United Arab Emirates concerning the border sectors from the east of Uqaydat to Darah, and out of its desire to establish relations with neighbouring States on sound and solid foundations, the Government of Oman did indeed invite the United Arab Emirates to enter into negotiations to demarcate the maritime boundary between the two countries, and did its utmost to reach a constructive outcome based on international maritime law. Unfortunately, as is pointed out in the aforementioned note verbale of the United Arab Emirates, agreement could not even be reached on criteria for negotiation. That was because the United Arab Emirates refused to be guided by international maritime law. The above-mentioned maritime notice is just one of several examples of that attitude, which persists despite successive memorandums sent by our Ministry – to no avail – to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates calling on it to respect the sovereignty of the Sultanate over its territorial waters in accordance with international instruments and the principles of good neighbourliness.

2. The aforementioned note verbale of the United Arab Emirates is merely an attempt to justify the issuance the aforementioned maritime notice, which is devoid of any basis in international maritime law or even the national law of the United Arab Emirates. It ignores the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, article 15, which states as follows: “Where the coasts of two States are opposite or adjacent to each other, neither of the two States is entitled, failing agreement between them to the contrary, to extend its territorial sea beyond the median line every point of which is equidistant from the nearest points on the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial seas of each of the two States is measured”. The United Arab Emirates similarly ignores its own Act No. 19 (1993), article 23, paragraph 2, concerning the demarcation of the maritime zones of the United Arab Emirates, which states as follows: “Where there is no agreement between the United Arab Emirates and another opposite or adjacent State, the outer boundaries of the adjacent area, continental shelf and exclusive economic zone shall be demarcated by the median line every point of which is equidistant from the nearest points on the baselines”. Therefore, under both international maritime law and its own national law, the United Arab Emirates may not use any means to extend its territorial sea beyond the median line on the pretext

of creating an anchorage area, as it did with the aforementioned notice, not to mention endanger lives at sea by routing vessels to anchorage through sea lanes that violate the sovereignty of another State.

3. The Sultanate of Oman stresses that the Omani anchorage area provided for in maritime notice No. 13/2015 at the coordinates contained in the aforementioned note verbale of the United Arab Emirates is located directly off the Omani coast and falls within the Omani territorial sea under the principles of international maritime law. Oman, acting through the United Nations, reiterates its previous call on all States to direct their flagged ships to ignore the attempt by the United Arab Emirates to impose its control over the Omani territorial sea in violation of the law and the status quo.

Lastly, the Sultanate of Oman considers the present note verbale to be an official document and requests that the United Nations Secretariat take the necessary steps to circulate it to the delegations of Member States in accordance with established procedures.

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