

COUNCIL
36th extraordinary session
18 and 19 March 2026

C/ES.36/WP.1
19 March 2026
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DRAFT SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

1 INTRODUCTION AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (agenda item 1)

1.1 The thirty-sixth extraordinary session of the Council was held in person at the IMO Headquarters, supported by hybrid facilities for remote participation, on Wednesday, 18 March and Thursday, 19 March 2026, and was chaired by Mr. Victor Jiménez of Spain. The Vice-Chair, Ms. Amane Fethallah of Morocco, was also present.

1.2 The extraordinary session was held upon request made to the Secretary-General by the requisite number of Council Members in accordance with rule 3 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council, to address the impacts on shipping and seafarers of the situation in the Arabian Sea, the Sea of Oman, and the Gulf Region, particularly in and around the Strait of Hormuz.

1.3 The Members, non-members and observers listed in document C/ES.36/INF.1 participated in the session.

Opening of the session

1.4 The Council agreed to invoke rule 58, in line with waiver proposals made by Member States that had requested the extraordinary session, thereby suspending:

- .1 the requirement in rule 3 for the Secretary-General to notify Members of the Organization at least one month in advance of the holding of a session of the Council; and

- .2 rule 15 requiring the Secretary-General to communicate the provisional agenda and supporting documents to Members of the Council at least one month before the session.

1.5 Pursuant to rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council and in accordance with the *Criteria and procedures for live-streaming to the public of IMO Council plenary meetings* (resolution C.79(133)), the session was live-streamed to the public in the six official languages via the IMO streaming platform available on the IMODOCS landing page and the IMO YouTube channel.

1.6 The Council granted requests for various representatives of the media to attend the session of the Council, in accordance with rule 12.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council and the *Terms and conditions of media attendance at meetings of IMO Assembly, Council, committees and their subsidiary bodies*.

Expressions of condolences and solidarity

1.7 The Council conveyed its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his leadership and prompt attention to the issue, and to the Secretariat for the efforts to safeguard seafarers, the safety and security of navigation, the marine environment and global trade.

1.8 The Council conveyed its condolences to the families and loved ones of the seafarers who have perished as a result of attacks on ships in the region, and reiterated that seafarers confined in the affected area should not be collateral victims of conflict. The Council expressed its appreciation to all Member States and organizations that have made efforts to save and support affected seafarers.

1.9 The Council called for the de-escalation of tensions and the exercise of restraint, and urged all parties to engage in constructive diplomacy and refrain from acts that hinder navigation.

Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

1.10 The Council noted documents C/ES.36/1, C/ES.36/1/1 (Russian Federation) and C/ES.36/1/2 (Islamic Republic of Iran), as well as comments made thereon, and adopted the agenda as contained in document C/ES.36/1.

Reference documents: C/ES.36/1, C/ES.36/1/1, C/ES.36/1/2, Rules of Procedure of the Council (COUNCIL.1/Circ.1/Rev.1) and resolution C.79(133)

Audio files: Wednesday, 18 March 2026: a.m. and p.m.

2 REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON CREDENTIALS (agenda item 2)

2.1 The Council noted the report of the Secretary-General that the credentials of all Members of the Council were received and found to be in order.

Reference document: C/ES.36/2

Audio file: Wednesday, 18 March 2026: p.m.

3 IMPACTS ON SHIPPING AND SEAFARERS OF THE SITUATION IN THE ARABIAN SEA, SEA OF OMAN, AND THE GULF REGION, PARTICULARLY IN AND AROUND THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ (agenda item 3)

3.1 The Council noted the information set out in documents C/ES.36/3 (Albania et al.), C/ES.36/3/1 (Islamic Republic of Iran), C/ES.36/3/2 (Bahrain et al.), C/ES.36/3/3 (ICS et al.), C/ES.36/3/4 (Bahrain et al.) and C/ES.36/INF.2 on the impacts on shipping and seafarers of the situation in the Arabian Sea, the Sea of Oman, and the Gulf region, particularly in and around the Strait of Hormuz.

3.2 The Council agreed with the proposals: in paragraph 5 on a set of decisions by the Council in document C/ES.36/3 submitted by Albania et al.; paragraph 7 in document C/ES.36/3/2 submitted by Bahrain et al. on ensuring the well-being of seafarers; and paragraph 11 on the steps to be taken to alleviate the impacts on seafarers in document C/ES.36/3/3 submitted by ICS et al., and declared as follows:

Declaration

General Principles

The Council:

- .1 reaffirmed its commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and all relevant international conventions and agreements related to maritime safety, security and environmental protection;
- .2 recalled the purposes of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) as set forth in Article 1 of the IMO Convention, and the mission in the Strategic Plan of IMO to promote safe, secure and environmentally sound, efficient and sustainable shipping through cooperation;
- .3 recalled that United Nations Security Council resolution 2817 (2026), inter alia, condemned in the strongest terms the egregious attacks by the Islamic Republic of Iran against the territories of the Member States of the Gulf Cooperation Council and Jordan, determining that such acts constitute a breach of international law, and further condemned any actions or threats by the Islamic Republic of Iran aimed at closing, obstructing, or otherwise interfering with international navigation through the Strait of Hormuz, or threatening maritime security in the Bab Al Mandab, and affirmed that any attempt to impede lawful transit passage or freedom of navigation in these waterways constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security;
- .4 further recalled United Nations Security Council resolution 552 (1984), which took into consideration the importance of the Gulf region to international peace and security and its vital role to the stability of the world economy;
- .5 recalled the statements of the IMO Secretary-General of 1 March 2026 and 6 March 2026, which expressed his deep concern about reports of fatalities and the injuries to seafarers stemming from attacks in the Strait of Hormuz and underlined that all parties must ensure the protection of seafarers and the freedom of navigation;

- .6 underscored the paramount importance of preserving the security of international shipping and the maritime community, as well as the energy and humanitarian supply chains; and also emphasized the need to preserve the marine environment and marine biodiversity;
- .7 strongly condemned the egregious attacks by the Islamic Republic of Iran against the territories, including the territorial waters, of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Jordan, which constitute a breach of international law;
- .8 strongly condemned the threats and attacks against vessels and purported closure of the Strait of Hormuz by the Islamic Republic of Iran, adversely affecting merchant and commercial vessels and threatening the safety and welfare of seafarers, which is contrary to the purposes of IMO as set forth in Article 1 of the Convention, and represents a grave danger to life and serious risk to the safety of navigation and the marine environment;
- .9 demanded that the Islamic Republic of Iran immediately refrain, in accordance with international law, from any actions or threats aimed at closing, obstructing or otherwise interfering with international navigation through the Strait of Hormuz or against merchant or commercial vessels in and around the Strait of Hormuz, to ensure the safety and welfare of seafarers and the security of international shipping and the marine environment, and to respect its obligations under international law; and
- .10 reaffirmed that the exercise of navigational rights and freedoms by merchant and commercial vessels, in accordance with international law, must be respected.

Protection, safety and welfare of seafarers

The Council, expressing deep concern for the safety of seafarers:

- .11 urged that all attacks on ships affecting innocent civilian seafarers be halted immediately;

- .12 underscored the paramount importance of preserving the safety and welfare of seafarers;
- .13 called upon Member States to take measures to secure the adequate provision of water, food, fuel and other essential supplies to ships currently unable to leave the region, and encouraged States to facilitate, when required, crew change and crew renewal operations in accordance with international standards, in order to safeguard the health, safety and well-being of the seafarers affected by this situation, further ensuring that their communication with their families and friends can be maintained and that stores and provisions remain adequate for their needs; and
- .14 called for a coordinated international approach to the safety of navigation that takes into account the fatigue and pressure of those on board, the master's overriding authority, as well as the risks associated with transiting the area while Global Navigation Satellite Systems suffer extensive jamming and spoofing.

Actions requested of the IMO organs and Secretariat

The Council

- .15 urged the IMO Committees to consider ways to enhance the efforts of Member States and observer organizations in supporting affected seafarers and commercial vessels, as well as the implications of this situation for the implementation of the Organization's instruments, take appropriate action, and report back to the Council, at its next session;
- .16 requested the Secretariat to keep Member States regularly informed of the status of seafarers and of international shipping in and around the Strait of Hormuz; and
- .17 also requested the Chair of the Council and the Secretary-General to convey to all Member States and to the public its decisions, and to continue

to closely monitor the situation in relation to threats and attacks to ships and seafarers operating in and around the Strait of Hormuz.

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Further decisions by the Council

3.3 The Council, considering the proposal in document C/ES.36/3/2 submitted by Bahrain et al. (requesting that an extraordinary session of the Assembly be convened as soon as possible to further address the impacts on shipping and seafarers of the situation in the Arabian Sea, Sea of Oman and the Gulf Region, particularly in and around the Strait of Hormuz), agreed that the proposal could be revisited at the next ordinary session of the Council in July, taking into account the administrative and budgetary implications and noting the Council invitation to IMO committees to consider ways to enhance efforts to address the implications of the current situation within their mandate.

3.4 In respect of the proposal for the encouragement of the establishment of a framework to facilitate the safe evacuation of merchant ships in document C/ES.36/3/4 submitted by Bahrain et al., the Council, taking into account the significant number of merchant vessels that remain stranded in the region, encouraged the establishment, as a provisional and urgent measure, of a framework such as a safe maritime corridor to facilitate the safe evacuation of merchant ships from the high-risk and affected areas to a safe place, with particular attention to those currently confined within the Gulf region through peaceful means and on a voluntary basis. This measure aims to protect the lives of seafarers and ensure the mobilization and commercial navigation of vessels intending to use this framework by avoiding military attacks and protecting and securing the maritime domain. The Council also invited the Secretary-General to collaborate with the relevant parties and take necessary immediate actions to initiate the establishment of the framework and keep Member States informed of developments, and to report to a future session of the Council.

3.5 The Council also noted concerns expressed by some delegations about the wording of some elements of the declaration, which in its present form, was deemed not balanced, inclusive and constructive.

Reference documents: C/ES.36/3, C/ES.36/3/1, C/ES.36/3/2, C/ES.36/3/3, C/ES.36/3/4 and C/ES.36/INF.2

Audio files: Wednesday, 18 March 2026: p.m. and Thursday, 19 March 2026: a.m. and p.m.

[4 SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA ITEMS, IF ANY (agenda item 4)

4.1 No documents were submitted under this agenda item.

Reference documents: None

Audio file: Thursday, 19 March 2026: p.m.]
