



INTERNATIONAL
OIL POLLUTION
COMPENSATION
FUND 1992

FONDS INTERNATIONAL
D'INDEMNISATION DE 1992
POUR LES DOMMAGES DUS À
LA POLLUTION PAR LES
HYDROCARBURES

FONDO INTERNACIONAL
DE INDEMNIZACIÓN DE
DAÑOS DEBIDOS A LA
CONTAMINACIÓN POR
HIDROCARBUROS 1992

Translation from French

Press communiqué

The IOPC Fund condemns the attack on the *Erika* Claims Handling Office in Lorient.

In the morning of Saturday 15 December an attack was carried out against the *Erika* Claims Handling Office in Lorient, set up by the IOPC Fund and the Steamship Mutual Underwriting Association, insurer of the owner of the *Erika*. Using a construction vehicle, an individual deliberately damaged the façade and the inside of the Office, where nearly 6 000 claims for compensation are being handled, causing considerable damage to property.

The IOPC Fund (International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund) condemns in the strongest terms this criminal attack and reserves the right to press charges.

Since the sinking of the *Erika* and the setting-up of a mechanism for the handling of claims in January 2000, the *Erika* Claims Handling Office has received 5 826 claims (of which more than two-thirds have been received during the last 12 months) from 4 639 victims. As of today, 80% of the claims have been assessed. Ninety-seven per cent of the claims in the maritime sector and 71% of the claims in the tourism sector have been assessed. Payments have been made in respect of more than 60% of the claims.

Under no circumstances is this new attack in the interest of the victims of the oil pollution incident. On the contrary, it has resulted in the provisional suspension of the operations of the Office until the premises and equipment have been repaired. However the IOPC Fund, together with the Claims Handling Office in Lorient and the experts, will make every effort to continue to carry out the task of the Fund which is to provide compensation to the victims of the *Erika* oil spill.

The IOPC Fund reiterates its invitation to those victims who have not already done so to prepare their claims without delay and to submit them as soon as this is again possible.

Paris, 15 December 2001

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Statement to the press by Mr Måns Jacobsson
Director of the IOPC Funds
17 December 2001, Lorient

Good afternoon

As Director of the IOPC Fund I came to Lorient as soon as possible after the attack carried out against the Claims Handling Office on Saturday. My presence here in Lorient is witness to my personal support for all the members of staff of the Lorient office who I know have been particularly shocked by the attack carried out by Mr Malardé. I join the Prefet in expressing my unreserved condemnation of this criminal act.

Over and above the damage to property, it is the claimants who are the innocent victims of this aggression. I am most anxious to reassure them that their files have not been damaged and that the handling of their claims for compensation will therefore recommence as soon as possible, that is to say as soon as the necessary repairs have been carried out to the office.

I would remind you that as of today, the *Erika* Claims Handling Office has received 5 820 claims of which more than two-thirds have been received within the last 12 months. Eighty per cent of the claims have been assessed and payments have been made in respect of about 60% of them.

I note that once again Mr Malardé's actions are to the detriment of claimants. I invite those victims who have not yet presented claims for compensation to do so and to submit them to the Lorient Office as soon as it is operational again. I hope that the resumption of the work of the Office will take place as quickly as possible in order that the IOPC Fund can fulfil its mission with respect to the victims of the *Erika* incident.

Finally I would like to thank all those who have expressed their sympathy after this attack.

Thank you.