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NOTE VERBALE 67/438, 16 FEBRUARY 2012

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EMBASSY OF ITALY
NEW DELHI

Note Verbale 67/438

The Embassy of Italy presents its compliments to the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, and has the honour to refer to the incident involving the Italian ship Enrica Lexie.

The Italian merchant ship Enrica Lexie was yesterday attacked by a pirate vessel in international waters, about 30 nautical miles off the South West coast of India. The Italian Navy personnel on board (Vessel Protection Detachment), following international protocols, after repeated warnings and after ascertaining with binoculars that the pirates were armed, fired gradually some warning shots and the pirates withdrew. The Italian Navy team has photographic evidence of the pirate vessel during the attack. Later, the master of the Italian ship was contacted by the Indian coast guard and requested to direct towards the Kochi harbour, in order to offer information on the pirate attack. The master agreed and the ship is now in the Kochi harbour. In the meanwhile, news in the Indian press related a different version of the episode and this Embassy has been informed that the Indian police intends to board the Italian vessel this morning.

The Embassy of Italy has the honour to recall that the Italian Navy detachment is exclusively answerable to the Italian judicial Authorities, under article 97 of the UN Convention on the High Seas. A note in this respect is hereby attached, prepared by Italian relevant Authorities. While Italian Authorities are the sole competent judicial Authorities under article 97 of the UN Convention on the High Seas, they shall be ready to share with competent Indian Authorities all information available in order to fully clarify the case

The Embassy of Italy has the honour to request the assistance of the esteemed Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India in liaising with competent Indian Authorities, namely the Kochi Coast Guard and Police, in order to avoid misunderstandings.

The Embassy of Italy, New Delhi, avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, the assurances of its highest consideration.

New Delhi, 16 FEB 2012

AMBASCIATA D'ITALIA NEW DELHI

Ministry of External Affairs
Government of India
- Europe West Division
- UNP Division
New Delhi