



INTERNATIONAL
MARITIME
ORGANIZATION

E

4 ALBERT EMBANKMENT
LONDON SE1 7SR
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7735 7611

Circular Letter No.5158
24 March 2026

To: All IMO Member States
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO

Subject: **Communication from the Islamic Republic of Iran**

1 The Islamic Republic of Iran has sent the attached communication, dated 22 March 2026, with the request that it be circulated by the Organization.

ANNEX



سفارت جمهوری اسلامی ایران - لندن

Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran

**Communiqué by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran on
the Principled Position of the Islamic Republic of Iran Regarding the Safety and
Security of Maritime Navigation in the Strait of Hormuz**

Tehran, Iran—22 March 2026

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a responsible State firmly committed to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, has consistently upheld the freedom of navigation and the safety and security of maritime activities. For decades, Iran has actively safeguarded these principles across the region's maritime domains, including the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Gulf of Oman. The effective realization of these principles in practice—including passage through the Strait of Hormuz—is inseparable from full respect for the sovereignty and sovereign rights of the coastal State.

Following the military aggression by the United States and the Israeli regime against Iran on 28 February 2026—constituting a flagrant violation of Article 2(4) of the Charter of the United Nations and of the peremptory norm prohibiting the use of force—a dangerous and destabilizing situation has been imposed on the Persian Gulf region and the Strait of Hormuz. The consequences of this aggression have directly and adversely affected the safety and security of maritime navigation.

In the exercise of its inherent right of self-defence, the Islamic Republic of Iran has, in addition to targeting U.S. military bases and facilities in the region, taken necessary and proportionate measures to prevent the aggressors and their supporters from exploiting the Strait of Hormuz to advance hostile operations against Iran. As the coastal State bordering the Strait, the Islamic Republic of Iran, in full conformity with established principles and rules of international law, has restricted the passage of vessels belonging to or associated with the aggressors and those participating in their acts of aggression.

Concurrently, and in a responsible effort to mitigate risks to vessels and seafarers in the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Gulf of Oman, the Islamic Republic of Iran has implemented a set of precautionary measures aimed at preserving maritime safety and security.

Accordingly, and as repeatedly emphasized, the Strait of Hormuz remains open, and maritime traffic has not been suspended. Navigation continues, subject to compliance with the necessary measures referenced above and the realities arising from the ongoing conflict.

16 PRINCES GATE, LONDON, SW7 1PT TEL:02072254200 EMAIL:IRANEMB.LON@MFA.GOV.IR



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It is further underscored that vessels, equipment, and any assets belonging to the aggressor parties—namely, the United States and the Israeli regime—as well as other participants in the aggression, do not qualify for innocent or non-hostile passage. Within the legal framework governing armed conflict, such assets will be addressed in accordance with the decisions and measures adopted by the competent authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Non-hostile vessels, including those belonging to or associated with other States, may—provided that they neither participate in nor support acts of aggression against Iran and fully comply with the declared safety and security regulations—benefit from safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz in coordination with the competent Iranian authorities.

Responsibility for any disruption, insecurity, or escalation of risks in this critical waterway and its surrounding region rests squarely with the United States and the Israeli regime. By waging an unlawful and destabilizing war against Iran, they have gravely endangered regional peace and stability and exposed international shipping to unprecedented threats.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates that any arrangements, initiatives, or mechanisms concerning the safety and security of maritime navigation in the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Gulf of Oman must fully respect the rights and legitimate interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran, be undertaken in full coordination with its competent authorities, and take due account of the realities arising from the aggression and the ongoing conflict. The full restoration of security and sustainable stability in the Strait is contingent upon the cessation of military aggression and threats, the end of destabilizing actions by the United States and the Israeli regime, and full respect for Iran's legitimate interests.

16 PRINCES GATE, LONDON, SW7 1PT TEL:02072254200 EMAIL:IRANEMB.LON@MFA.GOV.IR