

RESOLUTION A.655(16)

*Adopted on 19 October 1989
Agenda item 10*

USE OF HALONS AS FIRE-EXTINGUISHING MEDIA ON BOARD SHIPS

THE ASSEMBLY,

NOTING Article 15(j) of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization concerning the functions of the Assembly in relation to regulations and guidelines concerning maritime safety,

ALSO NOTING that the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has drawn attention to the high ozone-depleting potential of halons used as fire-extinguishing media on board ships,

FURTHER NOTING that the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, 1987, which entered into force on 1 January 1989, stipulates in article 2, paragraph 2, that, within three years of the Montreal Protocol's entry into force, the consumption of halon-1211, halon-1301 and halon-2402 should not exceed its 1986 levels,

RECOGNIZING that halon-1211, halon-1301 and halon-2402 were identified by the diplomatic Conference in Montreal which adopted the Montreal Protocol as ozone-depleting substances with the ozone-depleting potential (ODP) even higher than the ODP for the other ozone-depleting substances also controlled by the Montreal Protocol, namely chlorofluorocarbons (CFC-11, CFC-12, CFC-113, CFC-114 and CFC-115), and that the ODP for halon-1211 is 3.0, for halon-1301 is 10.0 and for halon-2402 is 6.0, which is three to ten times more than the highest ODP for CFCs,

RECOGNIZING ALSO that when the Montreal Protocol is fully implemented halons will be less readily available for use on board ships,

RECOGNIZING FURTHER that the Governments and the European Communities represented at the first meeting of the Parties to the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol agreed, in the Helsinki Declaration on the protection of the ozone layer, that the use of halons should be phased out,

AGREEING that the maritime community should co-operate in the global effort to reduce the ozone depletion and that for the time being no new requirements should be developed which could lead to an increase in the use of halons on board ships, pending further information on the levels of contribution by the maritime use of halons to the overall ozone depletion,

1. URGES Governments:

- (a) to limit the use of halons on board ships for fire-extinguishing purposes;
- (b) to restrict the amount of halons released to the atmosphere during the testing of existing halon-based fire equipment during inerting processes and fire drills, and when demolishing ships;

- (c) to consider alternative arrangements which do not rely on halon-based fire-extinguishing media;
2. REQUESTS the Maritime Safety Committee:
- (a) to continue its efforts to reduce the use of halons as fire-fighting media on board ships and to monitor the work of the United Nations Environment Programme in this field and other related developments;
 - (b) to develop a plan for an early phasing out of the use of halons.