

Statement of Concern

As lawyers specialised in international law of the sea and related disciplines, we are deeply concerned by reports that Russian authorities plan to bring piracy charges against 30 Greenpeace International activists in relation to a peaceful protest at the oil rig *Prirazlomnaya* on the Russian continental shelf in the Arctic.

Piracy, as defined in Article 101 of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, applies when illegal acts of violence, detention or depredation are committed against a ship or aircraft for private ends. It does not apply to non-violent protests against offshore installations undertaken with the aim of informing public opinion.

Offshore oil production in the Arctic is a matter of legitimate public concern in light of climate change and the severe difficulties involved in disaster response in the region. Characterising protesters as '*hostis humani generis*' - the enemy of mankind, as pirates have traditionally been considered - is inappropriate and undermines the efforts of the international community to combat genuine piracy by diluting the international consensus on the definition of this offence.

We accordingly urge the Russian Federation to suspend its piracy investigation immediately.

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Signatures as of 11 October 2013.

If you are a specialist in law of the sea and would like to sign, please send an e-mail to sofia.grivet.brancot@greenpeace.org stating your name and title.