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INFORMAL WORKING GROUP ON EMERGENCY PAYMENTS

Note by the United Kingdom delegation

1 During the 52nd session of the Executive Committee of the International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund 1971 (1971 Fund), the United Kingdom chaired an informal discussion on the possibility of making emergency payments to eligible claimants facing financial difficulty.

2 A report (document 71FUND/A/ES.3/INF.1) of this discussion was circulated by the chairman of the informal working group at the 3rd extraordinary session of the 1971 Fund Assembly.

3 In that paper, the United Kingdom delegation summarised the discussion at the working group as follows:

- Those present were encouraged to write to the United Kingdom delegation in response to the questionnaire on emergency payments.
- There was little support for the present Conventions being amended to institutionalise an emergency payment regime.
- Methods for improving the payment of claims should be examined.
- Further information on the effectiveness of various national regimes was requested.

4 Since that session of the Assembly, no responses have been received. It is therefore impossible to bring forward further proposals on the development of an emergency payments procedure at this stage.

5 The United Kingdom delegation therefore again requests that delegations from States which have national regimes providing for emergency payments share the fruits of their experience with other delegations. Not only would this allow further discussions to take place within the IOPC Fund framework, it would also enable other States to consider whether to adopt a similar approach as part of their national contingency arrangements.

6 It should be also be noted that the IOPC Fund's present system of handling claims is being examined by external consultants. In the light of any recommendations made by these consultants, and any other relevant developments, further work may be required by the Assembly. The United Kingdom remains willing to co-ordinate any future action on this important issue.
