

Russians sink Fairhaven-based company's cargo vessel "Azburg" in Ukraine deemed the "lowest of lows"

"The Commonwealth of Dominica Maritime Administration reports that motor vessel AZBURG IMO number 9102899 Call Sign J7BG6 MMSI number 325116200 was indiscriminately attacked, sank and completely destroyed while at berth in Mariupol, Ukraine.

The vessel was struck by two missile shells while at berth in the port of Mariupol, Ukraine on 3rd of April 2022 at 11:36 UTC. On 4th April 2022, around 22:40 LT the vessel was heavily fired upon by Russian armed forces after intentionally shelling the vessel twice a day earlier. Specific characteristics of firing on the vessel remain unknown, crew reported shelling, bombing and repeated hits by missiles, causing a fire in engine room. Further reports of heavy fighting and intensive shelling in the port area by Russian armed forces were received by the Administration.



Vesselfinder.com photo.

On 4th April 2022, the Commonwealth of Dominica Maritime Administration received information that as a result of the attack and spreading fire, m.v. AZBURG sank at berth 16 in the port of Mariupol Port, Ukraine.

According to the Border Guard, the captain of the vessel, the 9,085 dwt Azburg issued a distress call reporting that his vessel was on fire after being shelled. He said the bridge of the vessel was destroyed and that they had been hit in the engine room and were taking on water. He was ordering the crew to abandon ship.

Ukraine's maritime border guard reportedly assisted the wounded and evacuated the crew to safety. They however reported that the fire was spreading on the ship as it continued to sink in the harbor. Due to the unsafe conditions with the ongoing shelling of the city, they said it was impossible to conduct a rescue operation for the vessel.



Facebook photo.

The Commonwealth of Dominica Maritime Administration urges the Russian Federation to withdraw its forces from Ukraine and respect its obligations under relevant international treaties and conventions. The immediate evacuation of all civilians from the port of Mariupol, including the entire crew of mv Azburg, should be organized with the highest degree of priority and urgency.

The Commonwealth of Dominica Maritime Administration furthermore wishes to emphatically point out the current risks the crew and the environment is facing. People are facing the risk and reality of loss of life and/or serious injury and are likely to be deeply traumatized by the current events. On top of that, current events are seriously damaging the marine environment. Normal safety requirements and (port) emergency response plans are currently not fully operational or completely absent. Medical emergencies, firefighting operations, oil spill response, abandon ship and safe navigation is currently not sufficient or not possible at all.

We urgently call upon all relevant UN, governmental and

industry bodies to take immediate and direct action to address this serious issue for health and well-being of humans, the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution by ships.



Facebook photo.

All efforts to speed up establishing humanitarian corridors, as decided upon during the thirty-fifth extraordinary session of the Council, should be taken and executed with the highest degree of priority and urgency. Resulting in enabling the safety of seafarers by allowing them to leave the conflict zone immediately.

Eric R. Dawicki, Deputy Administrator of Maritime Affairs of the Commonwealth of Dominica Maritime Administration states: "An act of war is an act of cowards, bullies and fragile men. The indiscriminate shelling of a merchant vessel with a civilian crew with no place to seek refuge is the lowest of lows. It is an act of war against all of humanity and basic human rights.

This Administration deplores these attacks on a Commonwealth

of Dominica flagged vessel and insists that the emotionally and intellectually stunted men behind this heinous act look themselves closely in the mirror and discover how to end such senseless motives. There is nothing good that comes out of war – NOTHING!’-Commonwealth of Dominica Maritime Administration.