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ALL JAPAN SEAMEN'S UNION (JSU)
AN AFFILIATE OF INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT
WORKERS' FEDERATION (ITF)

東京都港区六本木7丁目15-26 海員ビル

15-26, Roppongi 7-chome, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0032, JAPAN
Phone: 03-5410-8323 Telefax: 03-5410-8336 E-mail: fisheries-ajs@jsu.jp

**OPENING STATEMENT
TO THE 64th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE IWC**

**2-5 July 2012, Panama
All Japan Seamen's Union**

On the opening of the 64th Annual Meeting of the IWC, All Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) would like to express its basic standpoint on the whaling issue. We strongly request the chairperson of the plenary and distinguished delegates from governments around the world to respect the principles of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW) with excluding any politics issues and emotions from the discussions, and to hold the meetings fairly and rationally, solely based on scientific evidence.

Since a moratorium on commercial whaling was adopted in 1982, many JSU members who had been living on whaling have lost their jobs. Those members, however, have been carrying on the tradition of their skills to the next generation for over thirty years, preparing for the day when they can start commercial whaling again. We are now ready to resume commercial whaling at any moment without yielding to pressure of the vicious anti-whaling groups.

Under the provisions of Article VIII of the ICRW, the government of Japan has carried out the Research Program in the Antarctic as well as in the North Pacific and has reported all the survey results to the IWC Scientific Committee every year. All the crew members of those research vessels who work in the severe conditions of the ocean are our union members. Without the valuable scientific data painstakingly acquired and collected by their researches and surveys over a number of years, the committee would have nothing to rely on for making their decisions.

Despite of these legitimate researches, the environmental terrorists' group, Sea Shepherd, has repeatedly obstructed the "Nisshin Maru" fleet. This year, in 2012, as well, they have used their two boats to carry out dangerous obstructing acts again and again. It is nothing but sheer luck that no one has been seriously injured by these obstruction activities instructed by the accompanying TV crew members who have no knowledge of severe environmental conditions of the Antarctic Ocean. We, the JSU reproach these terrorist activities by the anti-whaling groups and request both the Netherlands and Australia whose flags are carried by the terrorists' boats, and Australia who supports these groups as their homeport, to take responsible attitudes as members of the international community. We firmly denounce any groups and organizations that threaten the safety of our JSU members as well as countries that support those groups who try to change other country's policies by force.

We hope that at the 64th annual meeting of the IWC, constructive discussion for the IWC's normalization will be carried out by all the member countries. If its outcome, however, should be a proposal to hamper the resumption of commercial whaling in the end, we would not accept it. If the IWC cannot proceed with the normalization on its own, we would ask the government of Japan to aim as early as possible for the resumption of commercial whaling which is now under consideration in our country.

On behalf of Japanese fisheries, we here declare that we are proud of our food culture, will pass the traditional whaling skills down to the next generation for our people and will continue whaling in whatever situation we may be.