AMVER *50th anniversary*

Press Release

Date: February 15, 2008

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GREEK AMVER CARGO SHIP RESCUES 14 NEAR THE PHILIPPINES

81 PASSENGERS FEARED DEAD AS BOAT CAPSIZES IN SULU SEA

NEW YORK – A routine voyage from Malaysia to Tawi Tawi turned deadly for 81 Philippine passengers whose boat capsized in rough weather. Fortunately the Amver vessel Ioannis K was in the vicinity and rescued 14 survivors.

The Ioannis K, a Greek owned bulk carrier, was sailing towards another Philippine port when they came across the hapless survivors. Men, women, and children were clinging to pieces of wreckage in the Sulu Sea. The Ioannis K quickly reported this distress to the Amver system and commenced search operations.

Amver, sponsored by the United States Coast Guard, is a unique, computer-based, and voluntary global ship reporting system used worldwide by search and rescue authorities to arrange for assistance to persons in distress at sea.

Captain Mitzelas, skipper of the dry cargo carrier, said his crew observed six people in the water around 2:40 pm local time on February 11. "We immediately commenced search and rescue operations finding another eight survivors at sea" he added. Three of the survivors were children. There were no apparent injuries.

"The survivors said there were originally 95 people in their party, sailing for three days from Malaysia to Tawi Tawi in three wooden boats when they capsized in bad weather" Captain Mitzelas stated. The Ioannis K continued to search for survivors coming to the stark realization that there were none. At 5:30 the captain resumed passage to Villanueva, Philippines with the survivors on board.

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The crew of the Ioannis K provided medical attention and food until they arrived in Villanueva, Philippines where the survivors were met by local Philippine officials and taken off the ship.

With Amver, rescue coordinators can identify participating ships in the area of distress and divert the best-suited ship or ships to respond.

Prior to sailing, participating ships send a sail plan to the Amver computer center. Vessels then report every 48 hours until arriving at their port of call. This data is able to project the position of each ship at any point during its voyage. In an emergency, any rescue coordination center can request this data to determine the relative position of Amver ships near the distress location. On any given day there are over 3,200 ships available to carry out search and rescue services. Visit http://www.amver.com to learn more about this unique worldwide search and rescue system.

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