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December 27, 2011

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## **Re: Rescue Work for the Russian vessel "SPARTA" stranded in the Antarctic Ocean**

Dear Mr. Andrew Wright:

With reference to your letter of December 20, 2011, we would like to share information on Korea's rescue work for the Russian fishing vessel, SPARTA.

As the vessel had hit ice in the Antarctic Ocean and put a 30 cm hole in the hull on December 18, 2011, the Rescue Coordination Center New Zealand requested South Korea to offer assistance through icebreaker Araon in repairing the damaged parts of the vessel and leading it toward an ice free zone.

The South Korean icebreaker Araon reached Sparta on December 25. Since then the safety of the crew on Sparta has been secured and the vessel is currently being repaired. Since the hole in the hull is 1.5 m below the water line, 103 tons of Sparta's fuel was first shifted to Araon so that the area with the hole could float above the water for repair. After enabling Sparta to sail on its own, Araon will lead the vessel to an ice free zone.

The rescue work of Araon is expected to last three days: two days for repair, one day for convoy to an ice free zone. Thus Sparta is likely to reach an ice free zone around midnight on December 28.

We are glad to inform all Members of the Commission that all the crew members of Sparta is safe and the vessel is likely to be safely rescued.

Best Regards,

*H. Kwon*

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