



Media Note
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The U.S. and the Republic of Malta Proliferation Security Initiative Shipboarding Agreement

On Thursday, March 15, 2007, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Maltese Foreign Minister Michael Frendo signed a bilateral Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) shipboarding agreement. This is the seventh such agreement signed by the United States.

This agreement is an important indication of [Malta's](#) commitment to combating the proliferation trade and its readiness to ensure that its more than 1,200 maritime vessels are not abused by proliferators. The PSI shipboarding agreement will facilitate cooperation between the United States and Malta to prevent illicit shipments by sea of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems, or related materials by establishing procedures to board and search vessels suspected of carrying such items that are located in international waters. If a U.S. or Malta flagged vessel is suspected of carrying proliferation-related cargo, either Party to this agreement can request the other to confirm the nationality of the ship in question and, if needed, to authorize the boarding, search, and possible detention of the vessel and its cargo.

More than 80 countries on six continents are PSI participants, having endorsed the PSI Statement of Interdiction Principles. For more information on the Proliferation Security Initiative, please see the State Department's website: <http://www.state.gov/t/isn/c10390.htm>.

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