



## United Nations poised to begin transfer of 1 million barrels of oil from decaying tanker in Red Sea

*The vessel that will take on the oil in ship-to-ship transfer sailed today from Djibouti*

**Hodeidah, Yemen – 15 July** – The UN-led project to prevent a massive oil spill from the decaying FSO Safer supertanker off Yemen’s Red Sea coast took a major step forward today when the replacement vessel Nautica sailed from Djibouti en route to the Safer site. All technical preparations and agreements have been finalized.

The *Safer*, which holds an estimated 1 million barrels of oil, has been at risk of breaking up or exploding for years. A major spill from the vessel would result in an environmental and humanitarian catastrophe.

Once the replacement vessel arrives, the oil aboard the *Safer* will be pumped out in a ship-to-ship transfer that is expected to take about two weeks to complete. The leading marine salvage company SMIT, a subsidiary of Boskalis, stabilized the *Safer* since arriving at the site on 30 May. The UN Development Programme (UNDP), which contracted SMIT, is implementing the operation to remove the oil.

UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner said: “With the *Nautica* now en route, we expect the removal of oil from the *Safer* to begin in the next week. Removing the threat the *Safer* poses will be a huge achievement for the many people who have worked tirelessly on this complex and difficult project over months and years to bring us to this point. We will not rest until that threat is gone, and today we are close to beginning the operation.”

Speaking from aboard the *Nautica*, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen, David Gressly, said: “The ship-to-ship transfer of the oil is an important milestone, but not the end of the operation. The next critical step is the installation of a CALM buoy to which the replacement vessel will be safely moored. I thank donors, private companies and the general public for providing the funds that have brought us so far.”

Mr Gressly has led UN system-wide efforts on the Safer since September 2021.

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*The United Nations thanks donors for the generous support*



We also thank the HSA Group, the International Association of Oil & Gas Producers, the Trafigura Foundation, Octavia Energy/Calvalley Petroleum, and generous individuals that have contributed to the UN crowdfunding campaign.

For more information on the project, visit: <https://www.un.org/en/StopRedSeaSpill>

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