



Embassy of the State of Eritrea

In the United Kingdom

Hoax News Story on Phantom “Eritrean Oil Tanker”

The Embassy of the State of Eritrea in London refers to reports carried by supposedly reputable news outlets including Reuters, AFP, BBC and others about the hijacking on 20 August 2026 off the coast of Yemen of what they wrongly claim to be an “Eritrean flagged” oil tanker.

This bizarre story is astounding on many counts:

1. The reports invariably cite the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) as the primary source of their “information”. The Eritrean Embassy in the UK wishes to clarify that in the first place, the report by UKMTO (UKMTO Hijack #118) makes no mention of the said ship being “Eritrean flagged”. UKMTO has re-iterated this fundamental fact to the Embassy in its response to its official request for clarification this week.
2. Furthermore, all the information in the public domain about this ship shows that it is not owned by, and has no links whatsoever with, Eritrea. This ship is part and parcel of the growing number of ships in what the IMO categorizes, in its parlance, as the “Shadow Fleet”.
3. Indeed, the IMO maintains that the ship (with Registration IMO 920476) is clearly categorized as being of “indeterminate ownership” in its official documents. Eritrea’s Permanent Mission to the IMO has confirmed that IMO records show that “the ship is flying a false Eritrean flag; i.e. as not owned or officially registered in Eritrea”.

These are the true facts. Yet, the usual culprits chose to abandon all semblance of journalistic standards to indulge and unleash another despicable campaign of disinformation on Eritrea.

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London, UK.