

From Shipbreaking # 28

Letters to the Editor

From Antonio, Asturias, Spain, received June 26, 2012

Good day,

I have been following your work on ship breaking throughout these years, and i truly think it is amazing... however, I think we should also start looking at the work done at home to promote a better job outside the EU...

I show you here some pictures i just took in Sao Jacinto, Aveiro, Portugal of the dismantling of a navy vessel sold to the highest bidder...

I think we also need some help here to stop these kind of things from happening within the EU... if someone tries to do things right gets trapped in the administration, and then whoever does whatever and no one lifts a finger...

I have managed to stop a couple of similar jobs in Spain, but there is little i can do... however, with some publicity from environmental pressure groups... maybe we can also change things here...

The pictures taken are from an abandoned shipyard used eventually to dismantle vessels (many military)... it is located just by the natural dunes reserve of Sao Jacinto... i have many pictures and even some samples of likely asbestos left around the area in open bags, next to where local and weekend fishermen and their families hang around while trying to catch some fish... i just send you some, if you want more, i will send them too...

From Antonio, Asturias, Spain, received July 18, 2012

The pictures were taken at the Estaleiros Sao Jacinto (see attached pdfs)

I have several more pictures and actually a box with samples that I took on site (have not been able to analyse them thou). I will send them to you via dropbox if you want...

I searched for the vessel and found out its name (F484 *Augusto Castilho*). It was sold to a company whos owner is or was in jail due to tax or money laundering or something called "Dossier Face Oculta" (see attached pdf)...

It was sold together with another sister vessel yet to come for a crazy price of 1.6M€ (way more than they are worth...)

The amazing thing is that right on the other side of the river we are working on a project on shipdismantling for the EU (LIFE+ RECYSHIP) for which we had to go through a very large process to get permits to dismantle some small fishing vessels... we were not allowed breaking afloat, we had to be residue managers, we are constantly controlled from the harbour authorities and the environmental agencies, etc... and these guys were given permission to do that!!!

We presented this also to the authorities and seams they are now doing something about it... a bit too late... and surely will just let it fade away and let the next one in...

I can give you also details of a similar act in Pasajes, San Sebastian, Guipuzcoa, Spain... and several others...

I believe the EU should start looking at what is being done here too, instead of just considering that EU members are perfect... (...)

Response from Robin des Bois

Thank you for your mails and information. Like you, we are very critical towards the practices of some ship-breaking yards in Europe. The scrapping of this Portuguese Navy vessel is a particularly enlightening case; one must be objective and note that within the European Union many efforts have to be made and many scandals have to be reported.

So do we, and we complete your photo report with a picture of sisterships of F484 *Augusto de Castilho* laid up in Lisbon naval base and waiting for demolition.

The scrapping of the Portuguese corvette F484 *NRP Augusto de Castilho*,

The corvette F484 *NRP Augusto de Castilho* was one in a series of six vessels built for the Portuguese Navy for service in the African colonies. The *João Coutinho* class was designed by naval architect Rogério de Oliveira but the ships were built in Hamburg (Germany) by Blohm & Voss and in El Ferrol (Spain) by Empresa Nacional Bazán.

Augusto de Castilho was built in Spain in 1968, launched in July 1969 and entered service in November 1970 during the conflicts in the Portuguese colonies. After 1975, she was assigned to patrol duties in the Portuguese territorial waters. 84 m in length, served by 97 crewmen, she was decommissioned in 2003 and has been laid up in Lisbon naval base until the end of 2011.

Late 2011, she was sold under obscure conditions and for a sum five times her real value, along with a sistership, probably the F485 *Honorio Barreto* which is also officially decommissioned.

Augusto de Castilho was then towed to Sao Jacinto, in North Portugal and stripped down on a naval waste-land.



Satellite view of the ria de Aveiro (Portugal), of the São Jacinto Dunes Nature Reserve and localization of the ship-scraping yard on the former Estaleiros Sao Jacinto.



Bow view of the F 484 *Augusto de Castilho*



Stern view of the F484 *Augusto de Castilho*



Waste inside the F 484



Ripped big bags containing asbestos outside the ex shipyard.



Lisbon naval base, the F484 is waiting for demolition along with some sisterships one of which being the F 485 *Honorio Barreto*. The F481 is a frigate, *CDT Hermenegildo Capelo* built in 1966 in Nantes (France) by Ateliers et Chantiers de Bretagne, entered in service in 1968 and decommissioned in 2004 © **Hi5 Augusto de Castilho**

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