

**Lloyd's List – 30 juillet 2009**

# **French maritime bodies in broad support of Sarkozy**

jeudi 30 juillet 2009

*From Francis Vallat,*

SIR, As a reader of your newspaper for more than 30 years, I feel obliged to express my great disappointment at your distorted presentation of the positions of the French Maritime Cluster and Institut Français Maritime following President Nicolas Sarkozy's excellent speech on French maritime strategy ('Sarkozy sparks outcry with policy omissions', Lloyd's List, July 22).

Even though the article's author took the precaution of saying at the start that the IFM and FMC "expressed satisfaction with most of the speech", the combination of the imbalance of the article and the inappropriate tone of its headline, which catchy though it may have been, was facile and totally contrary to the spirit of our communique, oblige me to break silence.

Our opinions on most of the subjects dealt with by President Sarkozy, which were all commented on in detail in our communique, were highly favourable. The criticisms we did make were few and, even if expressed forthrightly, were proffered calmly and constructively.

I would add that a number of our members and your readers, to whom we sent the full communique or to whom we sent it following publication of your article, were extremely surprised, not to say shocked, by the way you dealt with it.

Two London colleagues even called me to warn me that the article had created some incomprehension among senior figures in the great maritime centre which is London.

*Francis Vallat Chairman, French Maritime Cluster and Institut Français de la Mer*