

Ship Finance International LTD
Form 424B2
August 28, 2009
PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT
(To Prospectus Dated May 6, 2009)

Filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2)
Registration No. 333-158162

Up to 1,802,748 shares

Common Stock

On August 20, 2009, Ship Finance International Limited, or the Company, declared a quarterly dividend with respect to the second quarter of 2009 in the amount of \$0.30 on each of its outstanding shares of common stock, or Common Shares, payable to shareholders of record as of August 31, 2009, which we refer to as the Record Date. The Company's outstanding Common Shares commenced trading ex-dividend on the New York Stock Exchange, or the NYSE, on August 27, 2009, and the dividend will be payable on or about October 16, 2009.

Shareholders will be paid a dividend on each outstanding Common Share in cash, or upon the election of the holder of such Common Share, may instruct the Company to retain the cash that would otherwise have been paid as such dividend in exchange for newly issued Common Shares of the Company in the manner set forth in this prospectus supplement. Any additional Common Shares issued in lieu of cash will be freely tradable on the NYSE upon their issuance. Shareholders electing to receive the dividend in newly issued Common Shares of the Company will receive 0.0233 Common Shares for each Common Share held by such shareholder on the Record Date, representing a value of \$0.30 based upon the volume-weighted average price of the Common Shares of \$13.54 on the NYSE during the three trading days ending August 26, 2009, less a five percent (5%) discount.

Each shareholder electing to receive the dividend in additional Common Shares will receive a number of additional Common Shares equal to 0.0233 multiplied by the aggregate number of Common Shares held by such shareholder on the Record Date, rounded down to the nearest whole Common Share. The amount in cash equal to the balance of the dividend to such shareholder that has not been applied to the issuance of additional Common Shares will be contributed by the Company to a charitable organization, as defined in Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, determined by the Company.

Holders that owned outstanding Common Shares as of the Record Date that were registered in their own name will receive by mail an election form to be completed and returned to the Company's transfer agent in accordance with the instructions contained in the election form. Holders that beneficially owned outstanding Common Shares as of the Record Date that were registered in the name of a broker, dealer or other nominee should contact the registered holder of such Common Shares as soon as possible and instruct such registered holder if they wish to elect to receive additional Common Shares in lieu of cash. All shareholder elections must be received by the Company or its agent not later than 5:00 p.m., New York City time, on October 7, 2009, which we refer to as the Shareholder Response Date. Shareholders are advised to contact their brokers, dealers or other nominees to ensure timely processing of their elections.

No action is required to be taken by shareholders wishing to receive a cash dividend.

Each shareholder is advised to carefully review this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein before making its decision of whether to elect to receive additional Common Shares of the Company.

The Company's principal shareholders, Hemen Holding Ltd. and Farahead Investment Inc., who collectively own approximately 42.1% of our Common Shares and are indirectly controlled by trusts affiliated with Mr. John

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Fredriksen, have informed us that they will elect to receive all of their dividends in additional Common Shares.

Our Common Shares are listed on the NYSE under the symbol "SFL." The last reported sale price of our Common Shares on the NYSE on August 26, 2009 was \$13.42 per share.

Investing in our Common Shares involves risks. For an in-depth discussion of these risks, please refer to the section entitled "Risk Factors" beginning on page S-1 of this prospectus supplement.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of the Common Shares or determined that this prospectus supplement or the attached prospectus is accurate or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus supplement is August 27, 2009.

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This document consists of two parts. The first part is this prospectus supplement, which describes the specific terms of this offering and the securities offered hereby, and also adds to and updates information contained in the accompanying base prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the base prospectus. The second part, the base prospectus, gives more general information and disclosure. When we refer only to the prospectus, we are referring to both parts combined, and when we refer to the accompanying prospectus, we are referring to the base prospectus.

If the description of this offering varies between this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, you should rely on the information in this prospectus supplement. This prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated into each by reference include important information about us, the Common Shares being offered and other information you should know before investing. You should read this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus together with the additional information described under the heading, "Where You Can Find Additional Information" before investing in our Common Shares.

We prepare our financial statements, including all of the financial statements included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, in U.S. dollars and in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States, or U.S. GAAP. We have a fiscal year end of December 31.

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. We have not authorized any other person to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We are not making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated into each by reference is accurate only as of their respective dates. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

CAUTIONARY STATEMENT REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Matters discussed in this prospectus supplement may constitute forward-looking statements. The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 provides safe harbor protections for forward-looking statements in order to encourage companies to provide prospective information about their business. Forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, statements concerning plans, objectives, goals, strategies, future events or performance, and underlying assumptions and other statements, which are other than statements of historical facts.

Ship Finance International Limited, or the Company, desires to take advantage of the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 and is including this cautionary statement pursuant to this safe harbor legislation. This prospectus supplement and any other written or oral statements made by us or on our behalf may include forward-looking statements, which reflect our current views with respect to future events and financial performance. The words "believe," "anticipate," "intend," "estimate," "forecast," "project," "plan," "potential," "may," "should," "expect" and similar expressions identify forward-looking statements.

The forward-looking statements in this document are based upon various assumptions, many of which are based, in turn, upon further assumptions, including, without limitation, management's examination of historical operating trends, data contained in our records and other data available from third parties. Although we believe that these assumptions were reasonable when made, because these assumptions are inherently subject to significant uncertainties and contingencies which are difficult or impossible to predict and are beyond our control, we cannot assure you that we will achieve or accomplish these expectations, beliefs or projections.

In addition to these important factors and matters discussed elsewhere herein, important factors that, in our view, could cause actual results to differ materially from those discussed in the forward-looking statements include the strength of world economies, fluctuations in currencies and interest rates, general market conditions including fluctuations in charterhire rates and vessel values, changes in demand in the markets in which we operate, changes in demand resulting from changes in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries' petroleum production levels and world-wide oil consumption and storage, developments regarding the technologies relating to oil exploration, changes in market demand in countries which import commodities and finished goods and changes in the amount and location of the production of those commodities and finished goods, increased inspection procedures and more restrictive import and export controls, changes in our operating expenses, including bunker prices, drydocking and insurance costs, performance of our charterers and other counterparties with whom we deal, timely delivery of vessels under construction within the contracted price, changes in governmental rules and regulations or actions taken by regulatory authorities, potential liability from pending or future litigation, general domestic and international political conditions, potential disruption of shipping routes due to accidents, piracy or political events, and other important factors described under the heading "Risk Factors" in this prospectus supplement, in the accompanying prospectus, and in our annual report on Form 20-F for the year ended December 31, 2008, as well as those described from time to time in the reports filed by us with the SEC.

This prospectus supplement may contain assumptions, expectations, projections, intentions and beliefs about future events. These statements are intended as forward-looking statements. We may also from time to time make forward-looking statements in our periodic reports that we will file with the SEC, in other information sent to our security holders, and in other written materials. We caution that assumptions, expectations, projections, intentions and beliefs about future events may and often do vary from actual results and the differences can be material.

We undertake no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statement contained in this prospectus supplement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except as required by law. In light of these risks, uncertainties and assumptions, the forward-looking events discussed in this prospectus supplement might not occur, and our actual results could differ materially from those anticipated in these forward-looking statements.

RISK FACTORS

An investment in our Common Shares involves a high degree of risk, including the risks we face described in the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein. Our business, financial condition, and results of operations could be materially and adversely affected by any of these risks. The trading price of our Common Shares could decline due to any of these risks, and you may lose all or part of your investment. This prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, and the documents incorporated by reference herein also contain forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties. Our actual results could differ materially from those anticipated in these forward-looking statements as a result of certain factors, including the risks we face described in the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein.

Before you decide to invest in our Common Shares, you should carefully consider the risks and the discussion of risks under the heading "Risk Factors" beginning on page 3 of the accompanying prospectus and in our annual report for the year ended December 31, 2008 on Form 20-F, filed with the SEC on March 24, 2009. In addition, you should also carefully consider the risk set forth below, as well as other information included in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents we have incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement that summarize the risks that may materially affect our business. Please refer to the section entitled "Where You Can Find Additional Information" in this prospectus supplement and in the accompanying prospectus for discussions of these other filings.

The market price of our Common Shares is volatile and may change significantly prior to the payment of the dividend.

The number of additional Common Shares that shareholders may receive in lieu of the \$0.30 cash dividend on each outstanding Common Share has been determined based on the volume-weighted average price of the Common Shares of \$13.54 on the NYSE during the three trading days ending August 26, 2009, less a five percent (5%) discount. The number of Common Shares that will be issued on or about October 16, 2009, the dividend payment date, will not be adjusted to reflect changes in the market price of the Company's Common Shares prior to the dividend payment date. The value of the Common Shares issued to shareholders electing to receive the dividend in Common Shares may be significantly less than or greater than the value of those Common Shares on the Record Date or the date of this prospectus supplement.

DIVIDEND POLICY

We seek to pay a regular quarterly dividend, the amount of which is based on our contracted revenues and growth prospects. Our goal is to increase our quarterly dividend as we grow the business, but the timing and amount of dividends, if any, is at the discretion of our board of directors and will depend upon our operating results, financial condition, cash requirements, restrictions in terms of financing arrangements and other relevant factors.

The Company has paid 21 consecutive quarterly dividends as of July 2009, and has declared a 22nd consecutive dividend that will be payable on or about October 16, 2009 with respect to the second quarter of 2009. The declaration and payment of dividends with respect to future quarters, if any, will be determined at the sole discretion of our board of directors.

PRICE RANGE OF COMMON STOCK

Our Common Shares trade on the NYSE, under the symbol "SFL." The following table sets forth the high and low closing sale prices for our Common Shares since they commenced trading on the NYSE on June 17, 2004, as reported by the NYSE:

| For the Period | Sales Price | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|---------|
| | High | Low |
| 2009 | | |
| August (August 1 through August 26) | \$13.55 | \$12.02 |
| July | \$12.48 | \$9.60 |
| June | \$13.03 | \$10.14 |
| May | \$12.38 | \$9.27 |
| April | \$8.96 | \$6.75 |
| March | \$7.07 | \$4.05 |
| February | \$11.77 | \$8.36 |
| 2008 | \$32.43 | \$9.01 |
| Fourth quarter | \$20.53 | \$9.01 |
| Third quarter | \$29.74 | \$19.56 |
| Second quarter | \$32.43 | \$26.58 |
| First quarter | \$28.01 | \$23.54 |
| 2007 | \$31.54 | \$22.24 |
| Fourth quarter | \$28.46 | \$24.64 |
| Third quarter | \$31.54 | \$24.70 |
| Second quarter | \$31.42 | \$27.44 |
| First quarter | \$27.90 | \$22.24 |
| 2006 | \$23.80 | \$16.33 |
| 2005 | \$23.91 | \$16.89 |
| 2004 (June 17 to year-end) | \$25.75 | \$13.08 |

On August 26, 2009, the last reported closing sale price of our Common Shares on the NYSE was \$13.42 per share.

CAPITALIZATION

The following table sets forth our consolidated capitalization:

- on an actual basis as of March 31, 2009, including the issuance of Common Shares to those shareholders who elected to receive Common Shares on account of the dividend with respect to the fourth quarter of 2008; and
- on an as adjusted basis as of August 27, 2009, to give effect to (i) the payment on July 6, 2009, of the cash portion of the dividend with respect to the first quarter of 2009, (ii) the issuance of approximately one million Common Shares with respect to the first quarter 2009 dividend payment, (iii) the sale of approximately an additional 1.4 million Common Shares, and (iv) the declaration of a dividend with respect to the second quarter of 2009 based on 77,277,787 Common Shares then outstanding.

This table should be read in conjunction with the condensed consolidated financial statements and related notes included in our annual report for the year ended December 31, 2008 on Form 20-F (File No. 001-32199), filed with the SEC on March 24, 2009, and incorporated by reference herein.

There have been no significant changes to our capitalization since August 27, 2009, as so adjusted.

| | As of March 31, 2009 | |
|--|---|--|
| | Actual (in thousands of U.S. dollars) | As Adjusted (1) (in thousands of U.S. dollars) |
| Debt (Principal balance): | | |
| Current portion of long-term debt | 318,529 | 318,529 |
| Long-term debt, net of current portion | 2,155,560 | 2,155,560 |
| Total debt (2) | 2,474,089 | 2,474,089 |
| Shareholders' equity: | | |
| Common shares, \$1.00 par value; 125,000,000 shares authorized; 72,743,737 shares issued and outstanding as of March 31, 2009; 78,037,364 shares issued and outstanding as adjusted | 74,856 | 78,037 |
| Additional paid-in capital | 512,700 | 547,546 |
| Other comprehensive income (loss) | (130,406) | (130,406) |
| Retained earnings | 105,630 | 59,990 |
| Total shareholders' equity | 562,780 | 555,167 |
| Total capitalization | 3,036,869 | 3,029,256 |

(1) As adjusted to reflect the payment of the dividend with respect to the second quarter of 2009 in newly issued Common Shares in lieu of cash with respect to 32,560,546 Common Shares owned by Hemen Holding Ltd., or Hemen, and Farahead Investment Inc., or Farahead, and the payment of a cash dividend of \$0.30 per Common Share with respect to 44,717,241 Common Shares, assuming that Hemen and Farahead are the only shareholders to elect to receive Common Shares.

(2) Our long-term debt is guaranteed by our vessel owning subsidiaries and is secured by ship mortgages over our vessels and pledges of the share capital of our vessel owning subsidiaries.

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK

Please refer to the section entitled "Description of Capital Stock" on page 7 of the accompanying prospectus for a summary description of our Common Shares being offered hereby.

TAX CONSIDERATIONS

You should carefully read the discussion of the principal U.S. federal income tax, Bermuda and Liberian tax considerations associated with our operations and the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our Common Shares set forth in the section of our annual report on Form 20-F for the year ended December 31, 2008, entitled "Additional Information—Taxation," which provides certain additional information that may be relevant to an investment decision by U.S. Holders (as such term is defined in the discussion included in our annual report on Form 20-F). In the event the U.S. Internal Revenue Service were to find that we are or have been a Passive Foreign Investment Company for any taxable year, we intend to notify the investing public of such finding via a press release and to make pertinent tax information available via the "Tax Treatment" section of our public website <http://www.shipfinance.org>. This web address and the information contained on our website is provided as an inactive textual reference and does not constitute a part of this prospectus supplement.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

On August 20, 2009, the Company, declared a quarterly dividend with respect to the second quarter of 2009 in the amount of \$0.30 on each of its outstanding Common Shares, payable to shareholders as of the Record Date. The Company's outstanding Common Shares commenced trading ex-dividend on the NYSE on August 27, 2009, and the dividend will be payable on or about October 16, 2009.

Shareholders will be paid a dividend on each outstanding Common Share in cash, or upon the election of the holder of such Common Share, may instruct the Company to retain the cash that would otherwise have been paid as such dividend in exchange for newly issued Common Shares of the Company in the manner set forth in this prospectus supplement. Any additional Common Shares issued in lieu of cash will be freely tradable on the NYSE upon their issuance. Shareholders electing to receive the dividend in newly issued Common Shares of the Company will receive 0.0233 Common Shares for each Common Share held by such shareholder on the Record Date, representing a value of \$0.30 based upon the volume-weighted average price of the Common Shares of \$13.54 on the NYSE during the three trading days ending August 26, 2009, less a five percent (5%) discount.

Each shareholder electing to receive the dividend in additional Common Shares will receive a number of additional Common Shares equal to 0.0233 multiplied by the aggregate number of Common Shares held by such shareholder on the Record Date, rounded down to the nearest whole Common Share. The amount in cash equal to the balance of the dividend to such shareholder that has not been applied to the issuance of additional Common Shares will be contributed by the Company to a charitable organization, as defined in Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, determined by the Company.

Holders that owned outstanding Common Shares as of the Record Date that were registered in their own name will receive by mail an election form to be completed and returned to the Company's transfer agent in accordance with the instructions contained in the election form. Holders that beneficially owned outstanding Common Shares as of the Record Date that were registered in the name of a broker, dealer or other nominee should contact the registered holder

of such Common Shares as soon as possible and instruct such registered holder if they wish to elect to receive additional Common Shares in lieu of cash. All shareholder elections must be received by the Company or its agent not later than 5:00 p.m., New York City time, on the Shareholder Response Date. Shareholders are advised to contact their brokers, dealers or other nominees to ensure timely processing of their elections.

No action is required to be taken by shareholders wishing to receive a cash dividend.

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EXPENSES

The following are the estimated expenses of the issuance and distribution of the Common Shares being offered by this prospectus supplement, all of which will be paid by us.

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Legal fees and expenses | \$25,000 |
| Accounting fees and expenses | \$25,000 |
| Transfer agent and registrar | \$25,000 |
| Miscellaneous | \$25,000 |
| Total | \$100,000 |

LEGAL MATTERS

Certain legal matters regarding the Common Shares will be passed upon for the Company by Seward & Kissel LLP, New York, New York, as to matters of United States and New York law, and by Mello Jones & Martin, Hamilton, Bermuda, as to matters of Bermuda law.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of Ship Finance International Limited for the years ended December 31, 2006, 2007 and 2008, incorporated into this prospectus supplement by reference from the Company's annual report on Form 20-F for the year ended December 31, 2008, have been audited by MSPC, Certified Public Accountants and Advisors, A Professional Corporation, as set forth in their report therein, and incorporated by reference herein. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such report given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We have filed with the SEC a registration statement including exhibits and schedules thereto on Form F-3 under the Securities Act with respect to the Common Shares offered hereby. This prospectus supplement, which forms a part of the registration statement, does not contain all of the information in the registration statement, as permitted by SEC rules and regulations. For further information with respect to the Company and the Common Shares offered hereby, reference is made to the registration statement. In addition, we are subject to the periodic reporting requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, and file reports and other information with the SEC. You can read and copy any materials we file with the SEC at its Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. You can obtain information about the operation of the SEC's Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. The SEC also maintains a web site that contains information we file electronically, which you can access over the internet at <http://www.sec.gov>.

Information Incorporated by Reference

The SEC allows us to "incorporate by reference" information that we file with, or furnish to, it. This means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those filed documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be a part of this prospectus supplement, and information that we file later with the SEC before all of the securities offered by this prospectus are sold will also be considered to be part of this prospectus supplement and will automatically update and supersede previously filed information, including information contained in this document. Please see the section of the accompanying prospectus entitled "Where You Can Find Additional Information" for a list of the documents that we have filed with, or furnished to, the SEC and that are incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus:

We are also incorporating by reference all subsequent annual reports on Form 20-F that we file with the SEC and current reports on Form 6-K that we furnish to the SEC after the date of this prospectus supplement that state they are incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement until we file a post-effective amendment indicating that the offering of the securities made by this prospectus has been terminated. In all cases, you should rely on the later information over different information included in this prospectus or prospectus supplement.

We will provide without charge to each person to whom this prospectus is delivered a copy of any or all of the foregoing documents, and any other documents that are incorporated herein by reference (other than exhibits, unless those exhibits are specifically incorporated by reference into those documents) upon written or oral request. Requests for those documents should be directed to our principal executive office at the following address:

Ship Finance International Limited
Par la Ville Place, 4th Floor
14 Par la Ville Road
Hamilton HM 08, Bermuda
Tel: +1 800-715-6374
Email: ir@shipfinance.no
Attn: Investor Relations

Up to 1,802,748 shares

Common Stock

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

August 27, 2009

PROSPECTUS

\$500,000,000

Through this prospectus, we may periodically offer:

- (1) our common shares,
- (2) our preferred shares,
- (3) our debt securities, which may be guaranteed by one or more of our subsidiaries,
- (4) our warrants,
- (5) our purchase contracts, and
- (6) our units.

The aggregate offering price of all securities issued under this prospectus may not exceed \$500,000,000.

The prices and other terms of the securities that we will offer will be determined at the time of their offering and will be described in a supplement to this prospectus.

Our common shares are currently listed on The New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "SFL."

The securities issued under this prospectus may be offered directly or through underwriters, agents or dealers. The names of any underwriters, agents or dealers will be included in a supplement to this prospectus.

An investment in these securities involves risks. See the section entitled "Risk Factors" beginning on page 3 of this prospectus and in our Form 20-F for the year ended December 31, 2008, and other risk factors contained in the applicable prospectus supplement and in the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is May 6 , 2009

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Unless otherwise indicated, all dollar references in this prospectus are to U.S. dollars and financial information presented in this prospectus that is derived from financial statements incorporated by reference is prepared in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States.

This prospectus is part of a registration statement we filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, or the Commission, using a shelf registration process. Under the shelf registration process, we may sell the common shares, preferred shares, debt securities (and related guarantees), warrants, purchase contracts and units described in this prospectus in one or more offerings up to a dollar amount of \$500,000,000. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we offer securities, we will provide you with a prospectus supplement that will describe the specific amounts, prices and terms of the offered securities. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change the information contained in this prospectus. You should read carefully both this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, together with the additional information described below.

This prospectus does not contain all the information provided in the registration statement that we filed with the Commission. For further information about us or the securities offered hereby, you should refer to that registration statement, which you can obtain from the Commission as described below under “Where You Can Find Additional Information.”

PROSPECTUS SUMMARY

Unless we otherwise specify, when used in this prospectus, the terms “Ship Finance International Limited,” “Ship Finance,” “Company,” “we,” “us,” and “our” refer to Ship Finance International Limited and its subsidiaries. Our functional currency is in the U.S. dollar as all of our revenues are received in U.S. dollars and a majority of our expenditures are made in U.S. dollars. All references in this prospectus to “\$” or “dollars” are to U.S. dollars.

Our Company

We are a leading international ship-owning company with one of the largest and most diverse asset bases across the maritime and offshore industries. As of May 4, 2009, our tanker and drybulk operating assets consisted of 44 vessels, including 33 crude-oil tankers, eight oil/bulk/ore carriers, or OBOs, one drybulk carrier and two chemical tankers. In the container sector we own eight container vessels, and in the offshore energy sector we own six offshore supply vessels, two jack-up drilling rigs, one ultra-deepwater drillship, and two ultra-deepwater semi-submersible drilling rigs. We also have an order-book of two Suezmax tankers, which we have agreed to sell upon delivery from the shipyard, and five container vessels.

We are a holding company incorporated under the laws of Bermuda. We operate through our vessel owning and other subsidiaries incorporated in Bermuda, Liberia, Norway, Cyprus, Singapore, Malta, the Marshall Islands and the United States. Our principal offices are maintained at Par-la-Ville Place, 14 Par-la-Ville Road, Hamilton, HM 08, Bermuda. Our telephone number at that address is +1 (441) 295-9500.

The Securities We May Offer

We may use this prospectus to offer up to \$500,000,000 of our:

common shares,

preferred shares,

debt securities, which may be guaranteed by one or more of our subsidiaries,

warrants,

purchase contracts, or

units.

We may also offer securities of the types listed above that are convertible or exchangeable into one or more of the securities listed above.

Our debt securities may be guaranteed by our subsidiaries.

A prospectus supplement will describe the specific types, amounts, prices, and detailed terms of any of these offered securities and may describe certain risks in addition to those set forth below associated with an investment in the

securities. Terms used in the prospectus supplement will have the meanings described in this prospectus, unless otherwise specified.

RISK FACTORS

An investment in our securities involves a high degree of risk. In addition to the risk factor set forth below, you should carefully consider the risks and the discussion of risks under the heading “Risk Factors” in our annual report for the year ended December 31, 2008 on Form 20-F, filed with the Commission on March 24, 2009, and the documents we have incorporated by reference in this prospectus that summarize the risks that may materially affect our business before making an investment in our securities. Please see the section in this prospectus entitled “Where You Can Find Additional Information – Information Incorporated by Reference.” In addition, prospective U.S. Holders of our common shares (as such term is defined in the discussion of “Taxation” in our annual report on Form 20-F for the year ended December 31, 2008) should consider the significant U.S. tax consequences relating to the ownership of our common shares as discussed in the section of this prospectus entitled “Tax Considerations.” Furthermore, you should also consider carefully the risks set forth under the heading “Risk Factors” in any prospectus supplement before investing in any securities offered by this prospectus. The occurrence of one or more of those risk factors could adversely impact our results of operations or financial condition.

CAUTIONARY STATEMENT REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Matters discussed in this prospectus may constitute forward-looking statements. The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 provides safe harbor protections for forward-looking statements in order to encourage companies to provide prospective information about their business. Forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, statements concerning plans, objectives, goals, strategies, future events or performance, and underlying assumptions and other statements, which are other than statements of historical facts.

Ship Finance International Limited, or the Company, desires to take advantage of the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 and is including this cautionary statement pursuant to this safe harbor legislation. This prospectus and any other written or oral statements made by us or on our behalf may include forward-looking statements, which reflect our current views with respect to future events and financial performance. The words “believe,” “anticipate,” “intend,” “estimate,” “forecast,” “project,” “plan,” “potential,” “may,” “sh” and similar expressions identify forward-looking statements.

The forward-looking statements in this document are based upon various assumptions, many of which are based, in turn, upon further assumptions, including without limitation, management’s examination of historical operating trends, data contained in our records and other data available from third parties. Although we believe that these assumptions were reasonable when made, because these assumptions are inherently subject to significant uncertainties and contingencies which are difficult or impossible to predict and are beyond our control, we cannot assure you that we will achieve or accomplish these expectations, beliefs or projections.

In addition to these important factors and matters discussed elsewhere herein, important factors that, in our view, could cause actual results to differ materially from those discussed in the forward-looking statements include the strength of world economies, fluctuations in currencies and interest rates, general market conditions including fluctuations in charterhire rates and vessel values, changes in demand in the markets in which we operate, changes in demand resulting from changes in the petroleum production levels of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, or OPEC, and world wide oil consumption and storage, developments regarding the technologies relating to oil exploration, changes in market demand in countries which import commodities and finished goods and changes in the amount and location of the production of those commodities and finished goods, increased inspection procedures and more restrictive import and export controls, changes in our operating expenses, including bunker prices, drydocking and insurance costs, performance of our charterers and other counterparties with whom we deal, timely delivery of vessels under construction within the contracted price, changes in governmental rules and regulations or actions taken by regulatory authorities, potential liability from pending or future litigation, general domestic and international political conditions, potential disruption of shipping routes due to accidents, piracy or political events, and other important factors described under the heading “Risk Factors” in this prospectus, in any applicable prospectus supplement and in our annual report on Form 20-F for the year ended December 31, 2008, as well as those described from time to time in the reports filed by the Company with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

This prospectus contains assumptions, expectations, projections, intentions and beliefs about future events. These statements are intended as forward-looking statements. We may also from time to time make forward-looking statements in our periodic reports that we will file with the Securities and Exchange Commission, other information sent to our security holders, and other written materials. We caution that assumptions, expectations, projections, intentions and beliefs about future events may and often do vary from actual results and the differences can be material.

We undertake no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements contained in this prospectus, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except as required by law. In light of these risks,

uncertainties and assumptions, the forward-looking events discussed in this prospectus might not occur, and our actual results could differ materially from those anticipated in these forward-looking statements.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES

The following table sets forth our unaudited ratio of earnings to fixed charges for each of the preceding five fiscal years.

| (Dollars in thousands) | For the years ended December 31, | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 |
| Earnings | | | | | |
| Net income | \$ 181,611 | 167,707 | 180,798 | 209,546 | 262,659 |
| Add: Fixed charges | 128,795 | 131,525 | 113,588 | 111,935 | 95,933 |
| | 310,406 | 299,232 | 294,386 | 321,481 | 358,592 |
| Less: Interest capitalized | 1,603 | 1,124 | - | - | - |
| Total earnings | \$ 308,803 | 298,108 | 294,386 | 321,481 | 358,592 |
| Fixed charges | | | | | |
| Interest expensed and capitalized | \$ 125,018 | 128,167 | 110,519 | 95,411 | 86,448 |
| Amortization and write-off of capitalized expenses relating to indebtedness | 3,777 | 3,358 | 3,069 | 16,524 | 9,485 |
| Total fixed charges | \$ 128,795 | 131,525 | 113,588 | 111,935 | 95,933 |
| Ratio of earnings to fixed charges | 2.40 | 2.27 | 2.59 | 2.87 | 3.74 |

For purposes of computing the consolidated ratio of earnings to fixed charges, earnings consist of net income available to common shareholders plus interest expense and any amortization and write-off of capitalized expenses relating to indebtedness. Fixed charges consist of interest expense and capitalized interest, the interest portion of rental expense and amortization and write-off of capitalized expenses relating to indebtedness.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless we specify otherwise in any prospectus supplement, we will use the net proceeds from the sale of securities offered by this prospectus for capital expenditures, repayment of indebtedness, working capital, to make vessel or other acquisitions and for general corporate purposes.

CAPITALIZATION

Each prospectus supplement will include information on the Company's consolidated capitalization.

ENFORCEMENT OF CIVIL LIABILITIES

Ship Finance International Limited is a Bermuda exempted company and our executive offices are located outside of the U.S. in Hamilton, Bermuda. A majority of our directors, officers and the experts named in the prospectus reside outside the U.S. In addition, a substantial portion of our assets and the assets of our directors, officers and experts are located outside of the U.S. As a result, you may have difficulty serving legal process within the U.S. upon us or any of these persons. You may also have difficulty enforcing, both in and outside the U.S., judgments you may obtain in U.S. courts against us or these persons in any action, including actions based upon the civil liability provisions of U.S. federal or state securities laws.

Furthermore, there is uncertainty as to whether the courts of Bermuda would enter judgments in original actions brought in those courts predicated on U.S. federal or state securities laws.

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

The following is a description of the material terms of our amended Memorandum of Association and Bye-laws.

Purpose

The Memorandum of Association of the Company has previously been filed as Exhibit 3.1 to Ship Finance International Limited's Registration Statement on Form F-4 (File No. 333-115705), filed on May 21, 2004 with the Securities and Exchange Commission and is incorporated by reference herein.

The purposes and powers of the Company are set forth in Items 6(1) and 7(a) through (h) of our Memorandum of Association and in the Second Schedule of the Bermuda Companies Act of 1981. These purposes include exploring, drilling, moving, transporting and refining petroleum and hydro-carbon products, including oil and oil products; acquiring, owning, chartering, selling, managing and operating ships and aircraft; the entering into of any guarantee, contract, indemnity or suretyship to assure, support, secure, with or without the consideration or benefit, the performance of any obligations of any person or persons; and the borrowing and raising of money in any currency or currencies to secure or discharge any debt or obligation in any manner.

Our Bye-laws

At the 2007 Annual General Meeting of the Company, the shareholders voted to amend the Company's Bye-laws to ensure conformity with recent revisions to the Bermuda Companies Act 1981, as amended. These amended Bye-laws of the Company, as adopted by the Company's shareholders on September 28, 2007 have been filed as Exhibit 1 to the Company's 6-K filed on October 22, 2007, and are hereby incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

Bermuda law permits the Bye-laws of a Bermuda company to contain provisions excluding personal liability of a director, alternate director, officer, member of a committee authorized under Bye-law 98, resident representative or their respective heirs, executors or administrators to the company for any loss arising or liability attaching to him by virtue of any rule of law in respect of any negligence, default, breach of duty or breach of trust of which the officer or person may be guilty. Bermuda law also grants companies the power generally to indemnify directors, alternate directors and officers of the Company and any members authorized under Bye-law 98, resident representatives or their respective heirs, executors or administrators if any such person was or is a party or threatened to be made a party to a threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding by reason of the fact that he or she is or was a director, alternate director or officer of the Company or member of a committee authorized under Bye-law 98, resident representative or their respective heirs, executors or administrators or was serving in a similar capacity for another entity at the company's request.

Our shareholders have no pre-emptive, subscription, redemption, conversion or sinking fund rights. Shareholders are entitled to one vote for each share held of record on all matters submitted to a vote of our shareholders. Shareholders have no cumulative voting rights. Shareholders are entitled to dividends if and when they are declared by our Board of Directors, subject to any preferred dividend right of holders of any preference shares. Directors to be elected by shareholders require a simple majority of votes cast at a meeting at which a quorum is present. For all other matters, unless a different majority is required by law or our Bye-laws, resolutions to be approved by shareholders require approval by a simple majority of votes cast at a meeting at which a quorum is present.

Upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, shareholders will be entitled under Bermuda law to receive, ratably, our net assets available after the payment of all our debts and liabilities and any preference amount owed to any preference shareholders. The rights of shareholders, including the right to elect directors, are subject to the rights of any series of preference shares we may issue in the future.

Under our Bye-laws, annual meetings of shareholders will be held at a time and place selected by our Board of Directors each calendar year. Special meetings of shareholders may be called by our Board of Directors at any time and, pursuant to Bermuda law, special meetings must be called at the request of shareholders holding at least 10% of our paid-up share capital carrying the right to vote at general meetings. Under our Bye-laws, five days' notice of an annual meeting or any special meeting must be given to each shareholder entitled to vote at that meeting. Under Bermuda law, accidental failure to give notice will not invalidate proceedings at a meeting. Our Board of Directors may set a record date at any time before or after any date on which such notice is dispatched.

Special rights attaching to any class of our shares may be altered or abrogated with the consent in writing of not less than 75% of the issued shares of that class or with the sanction of a resolution passed at a separate general meeting of the holders of such shares voting in person or by proxy.

Our Bye-laws do not prohibit a director from being a party to, or otherwise having an interest in, any transaction or arrangement with the Company or in which the Company is otherwise interested. Our Bye-laws provide our Board of Directors the authority to exercise all of the powers of the Company to borrow money and to mortgage or charge all or any part of our property and assets as collateral security for any debt, liability or obligation. Our directors are not required to retire because of their age, and our directors are not required to be holders of our common shares. Directors serve for one year terms, and shall serve until re-elected or until their successors are appointed at the next annual general meeting.

Our Bye-laws provide that no director, alternate director, officer, person or member of a committee authorized under Bye-law 98, if any, resident representative, or his heirs, executors or administrators, which we refer to collectively as an indemnitee, is liable for the acts, receipts, neglects, or defaults of any other such person or any person involved in our formation, or for any loss or expense incurred by us through the insufficiency or deficiency of title to any property acquired by us, or for the insufficiency or deficiency of any security in or upon which any of our monies shall be invested, or for any loss or damage arising from the bankruptcy, insolvency, or tortuous act of any person with whom any monies, securities, or effects shall be deposited, or for any loss occasioned by any error of judgment, omission, default, or oversight on his part, or for any other loss, damage or misfortune whatever which shall happen in relation to the execution of his duties, or supposed duties, to us or otherwise in relation thereto. Each indemnitee will be indemnified and held harmless out of our funds to the fullest extent permitted by Bermuda law against all liabilities, loss, damage or expense (including but not limited to liabilities under contract, tort and statute or any applicable foreign law or regulation and all reasonable legal and other costs and expenses properly payable) incurred or suffered by him as such director, alternate director, officer, committee member or resident representative in his reasonable belief that he has been so appointed or elected notwithstanding any defect in such appointment or election. In addition, each indemnitee shall be indemnified against all liabilities incurred in defending any proceedings, whether civil or criminal, in which judgment is given in such indemnitee's favor, or in which he is acquitted. We are authorized to purchase insurance to cover any liability an indemnitee may incur under the indemnification provisions of our Bye-laws.

Authorized Capitalization

Under our amended Memorandum of Association, our authorized capital consists of 125,000,000 common shares, which may include related purchase rights for our common or preferred shares, having a par value of \$1.00 each, of which 74,856,341 are issued and outstanding as of May 4, 2009.

Share History

We were formed in October of 2003 with an authorized share capital of \$12,000, divided into shares of \$1.00 each. In connection with our partial spin-off from Frontline in June 2004, our authorized share capital was increased to 125,000,000 shares, each having a par value of \$1.00, of which 73,925,837 were issued and outstanding immediately after the partial spin-off. In July 2004, we issued 1,600,000 common shares in a private placement for the price of \$15.75 per share. Immediately following the issuance of these shares our total outstanding shares were 75,525,837. Between November 2004 and January 2006 the Company purchased and cancelled 2,782,100 shares, leaving issued share capital of 72,743,737 common shares at December 31, 2007 and 2006.

In November 2006, the Board of Directors approved the Ship Finance International Limited Share Option Scheme (the "Option Scheme"). The Option Scheme permits the Board of Directors, at its discretion, to grant options to employees and directors of the Company or its subsidiaries. The fair value cost of options granted is recognized in the statement of operations, with a corresponding amount credited to contributed surplus.

In October 2007, the Board of Directors of the Company approved a share repurchase program of up to seven million shares. Initially the program is to be financed through the use of Total Return Swap, or TRS, transactions indexed to the Company's own shares, whereby the counterparty acquires shares in the Company, and the Company carries the risk of fluctuations in the share price of the acquired shares. The settlement amount for each TRS transaction will be (A) the proceeds on sale of the shares plus all dividends received by the counterparty while holding the shares, less (B) the cost of purchasing the shares and the counterparty's financing costs. Settlement will be either a payment from or to the counterparty, depending on whether A is more or less than B. There is no obligation for the Company to purchase any shares from the counterparty and this arrangement has been recorded as a derivative transaction, with the fair value of each TRS recognized as an asset or liability and changes in fair values recognized in the consolidated statement of operations. The Company did not repurchase any common shares for cancellation in 2008.

In February 2009, we declared a quarterly dividend with respect to the quarter ended December 31, 2008 in the amount of \$0.30 on each of our outstanding common shares payable to shareholders of record as of March 9, 2009. Shareholders of record were paid a dividend on each outstanding common share in cash, or upon the election of the holder of such common share, in newly issued common shares. As a result of the elections to receive such dividend in additional common shares, on April 17, 2009, we issued an additional 2,112,604 common shares.

Common Shares

Each outstanding common share entitles the holder to one vote on all matters submitted to a vote of shareholders. Subject to preferences that may be applicable to any outstanding preferred shares, holders of common shares are entitled to receive ratably all dividends, if any, declared by our Board of Directors out of funds legally available for dividends. Upon our dissolution or liquidation or the sale of all or substantially all of our assets, after payment in full of all amounts required to be paid to creditors and to the holders of preferred shares having liquidation preferences, if any, the holders of our common shares will be entitled to receive pro rata our remaining assets available for distribution. Holders of common shares do not have conversion, redemption or preemptive rights to subscribe to any of our securities. The rights, preferences and privileges of holders of common shares are subject to the rights of the holders of any preferred shares which we may issue in the future.

Preferred Shares

The material terms of any series of preferred shares that we offer through a prospectus supplement will be described in that prospectus supplement. Our Board of Directors is authorized to provide for the issuance of preferred shares in one or more series with designations as may be stated in the resolution or resolutions providing for the issue of such preferred shares. At the time that any series of our preferred shares is authorized, our Board of Directors will fix the dividend rights, any conversion rights, any voting rights, redemption provisions, liquidation preferences and any other rights, preferences, privileges and restrictions of that series, as well as the number of shares constituting that series and their designation. Our Board of Directors could, without shareholder approval, cause us to issue preferred stock which has voting, conversion and other rights that could adversely affect the holders of our common shares or make it more difficult to effect a change in control. Our preferred shares could be used to dilute the share ownership of persons seeking to obtain control of us and thereby hinder a possible takeover attempt which, if our shareholders were offered a premium over the market value of their shares, might be viewed as being beneficial to our shareholders. In addition, our preferred shares could be issued with voting, conversion and other rights and preferences which would

adversely affect the voting power and other rights of holders of our common shares.

Warrants

We may issue warrants to purchase our debt or equity securities or securities of third parties or other rights, including rights to receive payment in cash or securities based on the value, rate or price of one or more specified commodities, currencies, securities or indices, or any combination of the foregoing. Warrants may be issued independently or together with any other securities and may be attached to, or separate from, such securities. Each series of warrants will be issued under a separate warrant agreement to be entered into between us and a warrant agent. The terms of any warrants to be issued and a description of the material provisions of the applicable warrant agreement will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the following terms of any warrants in respect of which this prospectus is being delivered:

the title of such warrants;

the aggregate number of such warrants;

the price or prices at which such warrants will be issued;

the currency or currencies, in which the price of such warrants will be payable;

the securities or other rights, including rights to receive payment in cash or securities based on the value, rate or price of one or more specified commodities, currencies, securities or indices, or any combination of the foregoing, purchasable upon exercise of such warrants;

the price at which and the currency or currencies, in which the securities or other rights purchasable upon exercise of such warrants may be purchased;

the date on which the right to exercise such warrants shall commence and the date on which such right shall expire;

if applicable, the minimum or maximum amount of such warrants which may be exercised at any one time;

if applicable, the designation and terms of the securities with which such warrants are issued and the number of such warrants issued with each such security;

if applicable, the date on and after which such warrants and the related securities will be separately transferable;

information with respect to book-entry procedures, if any;

if applicable, a discussion of any material United States federal income tax considerations; and

any other terms of such warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of such warrants.

DESCRIPTION OF OTHER SECURITIES

Debt Securities

We may issue debt securities from time to time in one or more series, under one or more indentures, each dated as of a date on or prior to the issuance of the debt securities to which it relates. We may issue senior debt securities and subordinated debt securities pursuant to separate indentures, a senior indenture and a subordinated indenture, respectively, in each case between us and the trustee named in the indenture. These indentures will be filed either as exhibits to an amendment to this Registration Statement or to a prospectus supplement, or as an exhibit to a Securities Exchange Act of 1934, or the Exchange Act, report that will be incorporated by reference to the Registration Statement or a prospectus supplement. We will refer to any or all of these reports as “subsequent filings”. The senior indenture and the subordinated indenture, as amended or supplemented from time to time, are sometimes referred to individually as an “indenture” and collectively as the “indentures”. Each indenture will be subject to and governed by the Trust Indenture Act. The aggregate principal amount of debt securities which may be issued under each indenture will be unlimited and each indenture will contain the specific terms of any series of debt securities or provide that those terms must be set forth in or determined pursuant to, an authorizing resolution, as defined in the applicable prospectus supplement, and/or a supplemental indenture, if any, relating to such series.

Certain of our subsidiaries may guarantee the debt securities we offer. Those guarantees may or may not be secured by liens, mortgages, and security interests in the assets of those subsidiaries. The terms and conditions of any such subsidiary guarantees, and a description of any such liens, mortgages or security interests, will be set forth in the prospectus supplement that will accompany this prospectus.

Our statements below relating to the debt securities and the indentures are summaries of their anticipated provisions, are not complete and are subject to, and are qualified in their entirety by reference to, all of the provisions of the applicable indenture and any applicable United States federal income tax considerations as well as any applicable modifications of or additions to the general terms described below in the applicable prospectus supplement or supplemental indenture.

General

Neither indenture limits the amount of debt securities which may be issued. The debt securities may be issued in one or more series. The senior debt securities will be unsecured and will rank on a parity with all of our other unsecured and unsubordinated indebtedness. Each series of subordinated debt securities will be unsecured and subordinated to all present and future senior indebtedness. Any such debt securities will be described in an accompanying prospectus supplement.

You should read the subsequent filings relating to the particular series of debt securities for the following terms of the offered debt securities:

the designation, aggregate principal amount and authorized denominations;

the issue price, expressed as a percentage of the aggregate principal amount;

the maturity date;

the interest rate per annum, if any;

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if the offered debt securities provide for interest payments, the date from which interest will accrue, the dates on which interest will be payable, the date on which payment of interest will commence and the regular record dates for interest payment dates;

the date, if any, after which and the price or prices at which the offered debt securities may be optionally redeemed or must be mandatorily redeemed and any other terms and provisions of optional or mandatory redemptions;

any events of default not set forth in this prospectus;

the currency or currencies, including composite currencies, in which principal, premium and interest will be payable, if other than the currency of the United States of America;

whether interest will be payable in cash or additional securities at our or the holder's option and the terms and conditions upon which the election may be made;

any restrictive covenants or other material terms relating to the offered debt securities, which may not be inconsistent with the applicable indenture;

whether the offered debt securities will be issued in the form of global securities or certificates in registered or bearer form;

any terms with respect to subordination;

any listing on any securities exchange or quotation system; and

the applicability of any guarantees.

Subsequent filings may include additional terms not listed above. Unless otherwise indicated in subsequent filings with the Commission relating to the indenture, principal, premium and interest will be payable and the debt securities will be transferable at the corporate trust office of the applicable trustee. Unless other arrangements are made or set forth in subsequent filings or in a supplemental indenture, principal, premium and interest will be paid by checks mailed to the holders at their registered addresses.

Unless otherwise indicated in subsequent filings with the Commission, the debt securities will be issued only in fully registered form without coupons, in denominations of \$1,000 or any integral multiple thereof. No service charge will be made for any transfer or exchange of the debt securities, but we may require payment of a sum sufficient to cover any tax or other governmental charge payable in connection with these debt securities.

Some or all of the debt securities may be issued as discounted debt securities, bearing no interest or interest at a rate which at the time of issuance is below market rates, to be sold at a substantial discount below the stated principal amount. United States federal income tax consequences and other special considerations applicable to any discounted securities will be described in subsequent filings with the Commission relating to those securities.

We refer you to applicable subsequent filings with respect to any deletions or additions or modifications from the description contained in this prospectus.

Senior Debt

We will issue senior debt securities under the senior debt indenture. These senior debt securities will rank on an equal basis with all our other unsecured debt except subordinated debt.

Subordinated Debt

We will issue subordinated debt securities under the subordinated debt indenture. Subordinated debt will rank subordinate and junior in right of payment, to the extent set forth in the subordinated debt indenture, to all our senior debt (both secured and unsecured).

In general, the holders of all senior debt are first entitled to receive payment of the full amount unpaid on senior debt before the holders of any of the subordinated debt securities are entitled to receive a payment on account of the principal or interest on the indebtedness evidenced by the subordinated debt securities in certain events.

If we default in the payment of any principal of, or premium, if any, or interest on any senior debt when it becomes due and payable after any applicable grace period, then, unless and until the default is cured or waived or ceases to exist, we cannot make a payment on account of or redeem or otherwise acquire the subordinated debt securities.

If there is any insolvency, bankruptcy, liquidation or other similar proceeding relating to us or our property, then all senior debt must be paid in full before any payment may be made to any holders of subordinated debt securities.

Furthermore, if we default in the payment of the principal of and accrued interest on any subordinated debt securities that is declared due and payable upon an event of default under the subordinated debt indenture, holders of all our senior debt will first be entitled to receive payment in full in cash before holders of such subordinated debt can receive any payments.

Senior debt means:

the principal, premium, if any, interest and any other amounts owing in respect of our indebtedness for money borrowed and indebtedness evidenced by securities, notes, debentures, bonds or other similar instruments issued by us, including the senior debt securities or letters of credit;

all capitalized lease obligations;

all hedging obligations;

all obligations representing the deferred purchase price of property; and

all deferrals, renewals, extensions and refundings of obligations of the type referred to above;

but senior debt does not include:

subordinated debt securities; and

any indebtedness that by its terms is subordinated to, or ranks on an equal basis with, our subordinated debt securities.

Covenants

Any series of offered debt securities may have covenants in addition to or differing from those included in the applicable indenture which will be described in subsequent filings prepared in connection with the offering of such securities, limiting or restricting, among other things:

the ability of us or our subsidiaries to incur either secured or unsecured debt, or both;

the ability to make certain payments, dividends, redemptions or repurchases;

our ability to create dividend and other payment restrictions affecting our subsidiaries;

our ability to make investments;

mergers and consolidations by us or our subsidiaries;

sales of assets by us;

our ability to enter into transactions with affiliates;

our ability to incur liens; and

sale and leaseback transactions.

Modification of the Indentures

Each indenture and the rights of the respective holders may be modified by us only with the consent of holders of not less than a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of all series under the respective indenture affected by the modification, taken together as a class. But no modification that:

- (1) changes the amount of securities whose holders must consent to an amendment, supplement or waiver;
- (2) reduces the rate of or changes the interest payment time on any security or alters its redemption provisions (other than any alteration to any such section which would not materially adversely affect the legal rights of any holder under the indenture) or the price at which we are required to offer to purchase the securities;
- (3) reduces the principal or changes the maturity of any security or reduce the amount of, or postpone the date fixed for, the payment of any sinking fund or analogous obligation;
- (4) waives a default or event of default in the payment of the principal of or interest, if any, on any security (except a rescission of acceleration of the securities of any series by the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the outstanding securities of that series and a waiver of the payment default that resulted from such acceleration);
- (5) makes the principal of or interest, if any, on any security payable in any currency other than that stated in the security;
- (6) makes any change with respect to holders' rights to receive principal and interest, the terms pursuant to which defaults can be waived, certain modifications affecting shareholders or certain currency-related issues; or
- (7) waives a redemption payment with respect to any security or change any of the provisions with respect to the redemption of any securities

will be effective against any holder without his consent. In addition, other terms as specified in subsequent filings may be modified without the consent of the holders.

Events of Default

Each indenture defines an event of default for the debt securities of any series as being any one of the following events:

default in any payment of interest when due which continues for 30 days;

default in any payment of principal or premium when due;

default in the deposit of any sinking fund payment when due;

default in the performance of any covenant in the debt securities or the applicable indenture which continues for 60 days after we receive notice of the default;

default under a bond, debenture, note or other evidence of indebtedness for borrowed money by us or our subsidiaries (to the extent we are directly responsible or liable therefor) having a principal amount in excess of a minimum amount set forth in the applicable subsequent filing, whether such indebtedness now exists or

is hereafter created, which default shall have resulted in such indebtedness becoming or being declared due and payable prior to the date on which it would otherwise have become due and payable, without such acceleration having been rescinded or annulled or cured within 30 days after we receive notice of the default; and

events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization.

An event of default of one series of debt securities does not necessarily constitute an event of default with respect to any other series of debt securities.

There may be such other or different events of default as described in an applicable subsequent filing with respect to any class or series of offered debt securities.

In case an event of default occurs and continues for the debt securities of any series, the applicable trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in aggregate principal amount of the debt securities then outstanding of that series may declare the principal and accrued but unpaid interest of the debt securities of that series to be due and payable. Any event of default for the debt securities of any series which has been cured may be waived by the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the debt securities of that series then outstanding.

Each indenture requires us to file annually after debt securities are issued under that indenture with the applicable trustee a written statement signed by two of our officers as to the absence of material defaults under the terms of that indenture. Each indenture provides that the applicable trustee may withhold notice to the holders of any default if it considers it in the interest of the holders to do so, except notice of a default in payment of principal, premium or interest.

Subject to the duties of the trustee in case an event of default occurs and continues, each indenture provides that the trustee is under no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under that indenture at the request, order or direction of holders unless the holders have offered to the trustee reasonable indemnity. Subject to these provisions for indemnification and the rights of the trustee, each indenture provides that the holders of a majority in principal amount of the debt securities of any series then outstanding have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee or exercising any trust or power conferred on the trustee as long as the exercise of that right does not conflict with any law or the indenture.

Defeasance and Discharge

The terms of each indenture provide us with the option to be discharged from any and all obligations in respect of the debt securities issued thereunder upon the deposit with the trustee, in trust, of money or U.S. government obligations, or both, which through the payment of interest and principal in accordance with their terms will provide money in an amount sufficient to pay any installment of principal, premium and interest on, and any mandatory sinking fund payments in respect of, the debt securities on the stated maturity of the payments in accordance with the terms of the debt securities and the indenture governing the debt securities. This right may only be exercised if, among other things, we have received from, or there has been published by, the United States Internal Revenue Service a ruling to the effect that such a discharge will not be deemed, or result in, a taxable event with respect to holders. This discharge would not apply to our obligations to register the transfer or exchange of debt securities, to replace stolen, lost or mutilated debt securities, to maintain paying agencies and hold moneys for payment in trust.

Defeasance of Certain Covenants

The terms of the debt securities provide us with the right to omit complying with specified covenants and that specified events of default described in a subsequent filing will not apply. In order to exercise this right, we will be required to deposit with the trustee money or U.S. government obligations, or both, which through the payment of interest and principal will provide money in an amount sufficient to pay principal, premium, if any, and interest on, and any mandatory sinking fund payments in respect of, the debt securities on the stated maturity of such payments in accordance with the terms of the debt securities and the indenture governing such debt securities. We will also be required to deliver to the trustee an opinion of counsel to the effect that the deposit and related covenant defeasance

should not cause the holders of such series to recognize income, gain or loss for United States federal income tax purposes.

A subsequent filing may further describe the provisions, if any, of any particular series of offered debt securities permitting a discharge defeasance.

Subsidiary Guarantees

Certain of our subsidiaries may guarantee the debt securities we offer. In that case, the terms and conditions of the subsidiary guarantees will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Unless we indicate differently in the applicable prospectus supplement, if any of our subsidiaries guarantee any of our debt securities that are subordinated to any of our senior indebtedness, then the subsidiary guarantees will be subordinated to the senior indebtedness of such subsidiary to the same extent as our debt securities are subordinated to our senior indebtedness.

Global Securities

The debt securities of a series may be issued in whole or in part in the form of one or more global securities that will be deposited with, or on behalf of, a depository identified in an applicable subsequent filing and registered in the name of the depository or a nominee for the depository. In such a case, one or more global securities will be issued in a denomination or aggregate denominations equal to the portion of the aggregate principal amount of outstanding debt securities of the series to be represented by the global security or securities. Unless and until it is exchanged in whole or in part for debt securities in definitive certificated form, a global security may not be transferred except as a whole by the depository for the global security to a nominee of the depository or by a nominee of the depository to the depository or another nominee of the depository or by the depository or any nominee to a successor depository for that series or a nominee of the successor depository and except in the circumstances described in an applicable subsequent filing.

We expect that the following provisions will apply to depository arrangements for any portion of a series of debt securities to be represented by a global security. Any additional or different terms of the depository arrangement will be described in an applicable subsequent filing.

Upon the issuance of any global security, and the deposit of that global security with or on behalf of the depository for the global security, the depository will credit, on its book-entry registration and transfer system, the principal amounts of the debt securities represented by that global security to the accounts of institutions that have accounts with the depository or its nominee. The accounts to be credited will be designated by the underwriters or agents engaging in the distribution of the debt securities or by us, if the debt securities are offered and sold directly by us. Ownership of beneficial interests in a global security will be limited to participating institutions or persons that may hold interest through such participating institutions. Ownership of beneficial interests by participating institutions in the global security will be shown on, and the transfer of the beneficial interests will be effected only through, records maintained by the depository for the global security or by its nominee. Ownership of beneficial interests in the global security by persons that hold through participating institutions will be shown on, and the transfer of the beneficial interests within the participating institutions will be effected only through, records maintained by those participating institutions. The laws of some jurisdictions may require that purchasers of securities take physical delivery of the securities in certificated form. The foregoing limitations and such laws may impair the ability to transfer beneficial interests in the global securities.

So long as the depository for a global security, or its nominee, is the registered owner of that global security, the depository or its nominee, as the case may be, will be considered the sole owner or holder of the debt securities represented by the global security for all purposes under the applicable indenture. Unless otherwise specified in an applicable subsequent filing and except as specified below, owners of beneficial interests in the global security will not be entitled to have debt securities of the series represented by the global security registered in their names, will not receive or be entitled to receive physical delivery of debt securities of the series in certificated form and will not be considered the holders thereof for any purposes under the indenture. Accordingly, each person owning a beneficial interest in the global security must rely on the procedures of the depository and, if such person is not a participating

institution, on the procedures of the participating institution through which the person owns its interest, to exercise any rights of a holder under the indenture.

The depository may grant proxies and otherwise authorize participating institutions to give or take any request, demand, authorization, direction, notice, consent, waiver or other action which a holder is entitled to give or take under the applicable indenture. We understand that, under existing industry practices, if we request any action of holders or any owner of a beneficial interest in the global security desires to give any notice or take any action a holder is entitled to give or take under the applicable indenture, the depository would authorize the participating institutions to give the notice or take the action, and participating institutions would authorize beneficial owners owning through such participating institutions to give the notice or take the action or would otherwise act upon the instructions of beneficial owners owning through them.

Unless otherwise specified in an applicable subsequent filings, payments of principal, premium and interest on debt securities represented by global security registered in the name of a depository or its nominee will be made by us to the depository or its nominee, as the case may be, as the registered owner of the global security.

We expect that the depository for any debt securities represented by a global security, upon receipt of any payment of principal, premium or interest, will credit participating institutions' accounts with payments in amounts proportionate to their respective beneficial interests in the principal amount of the global security as shown on the records of the depository. We also expect that payments by participating institutions to owners of beneficial interests in the global security held through those participating institutions will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices, as is now the case with the securities held for the accounts of customers registered in street names, and will be the responsibility of those participating institutions. None of us, the trustees or any agent of ours or the trustees will have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of the records relating to or payments made on account of beneficial interests in a global security, or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to those beneficial interests.

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable subsequent filings, a global security of any series will be exchangeable for certificated debt securities of the same series only if:

the depository for such global securities notifies us that it is unwilling or unable to continue as depository or such depository ceases to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act and, in either case, a successor depository is not appointed by us within 90 days after we receive the notice or become aware of the ineligibility;

we in our sole discretion determine that the global securities shall be exchangeable for certificated debt securities; or

there shall have occurred and be continuing an event of default under the applicable indenture with respect to the debt securities of that series.

Upon any exchange, owners of beneficial interests in the global security or securities will be entitled to physical delivery of individual debt securities in certificated form of like tenor and terms equal in principal amount to their beneficial interests, and to have the debt securities in certificated form registered in the names of the beneficial owners, which names are expected to be provided by the depository's relevant participating institutions to the applicable trustee.

In the event that the Depository Trust Company, or DTC, acts as depository for the global securities of any series, the global securities will be issued as fully registered securities registered in the name of Cede & Co., DTC's partnership nominee.

DTC is a limited purpose trust company organized under the New York Banking Law, a “banking organization” within the meaning of the New York Banking Law, a member of the Federal Reserve System, a “clearing corporation” within the meaning of the New York Uniform Commercial Code, and a “clearing agency” registered pursuant to the provisions of Section 17A of the Exchange Act. DTC holds securities that its participating institutions deposit with DTC. DTC also facilitates the settlement among participating institutions of securities transactions, such as transfers and pledges, in deposited securities through electronic computerized book-entry changes in participating institutions’ accounts, thereby eliminating the need for physical movement of securities certificates. Direct participating institutions include securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations and other organizations. DTC is owned by a number of its direct participating institutions and by the New York Stock Exchange, Inc., the American Stock Exchange, Inc. and the National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc. Access to the DTC system is also available to others, such as securities brokers and dealers and banks and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a direct participating institution, either directly or indirectly. The rules applicable to DTC and its participating institutions are on file with the Commission.

To facilitate subsequent transfers, the debt securities may be registered in the name of DTC’s nominee, Cede & Co. The deposit of the debt securities with DTC and their registration in the name of Cede & Co. will effect no change in beneficial ownership. DTC has no knowledge of the actual beneficial owners of the debt securities. DTC’s records reflect only the identity of the direct participating institutions to whose accounts debt securities are credited, which may or may not be the beneficial owners. The participating institutions remain responsible for keeping account of their holdings on behalf of their customers.

Delivery of notices and other communications by DTC to direct participating institutions, by direct participating institutions to indirect participating institutions, and by direct participating institutions and indirect participating institutions to beneficial owners of debt securities are governed by arrangements among them, subject to any statutory or regulatory requirements as may be in effect.

Neither DTC nor Cede & Co. consents or votes with respect to the debt securities. Under its usual procedures, DTC mails a proxy to the issuer as soon as possible after the record date. The proxy assigns Cede & Co.’s consenting or voting rights to those direct participating institution to whose accounts the debt securities are credited on the record date.

If applicable, redemption notices shall be sent to Cede & Co. If less than all of the debt securities of a series represented by global securities are being redeemed, DTC’s practice is to determine by lot the amount of the interest of each direct participating institution in that issue to be redeemed.

To the extent that any debt securities provide for repayment or repurchase at the option of the holders thereof, a beneficial owner shall give notice of any option to elect to have its interest in the global security repaid by us, through its participating institution, to the applicable trustee, and shall effect delivery of the interest in a global security by causing the direct participating institution to transfer the direct participating institution’s interest in the global security or securities representing the interest, on DTC’s records, to the applicable trustee. The requirement for physical delivery of debt securities in connection with a demand for repayment or repurchase will be deemed satisfied when the ownership rights in the global security or securities representing the debt securities are transferred by direct participating institutions on DTC’s records.

DTC may discontinue providing its services as securities depository for the debt securities at any time. Under such circumstances, in the event that a successor securities depository is not appointed, debt security certificates are required to be printed and delivered as described above.

We may decide to discontinue use of the system of book-entry transfers through the securities depository. In that event, debt security certificates will be printed and delivered as described above.

The information in this section concerning DTC and DTC's book-entry system has been obtained from sources that we believe to be reliable, but we take no responsibility for its accuracy.

Purchase Contracts

We may issue purchase contracts for the purchase or sale of:

debt or equity securities issued by us or securities of third parties, a basket of such securities, an index or indices of such securities or any combination of the above as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement;

currencies; or

commodities.

Each purchase contract will entitle the holder thereof to purchase or sell, and obligate us to sell or purchase, on specified dates, such securities, currencies or commodities at a specified purchase price, which may be based on a formula, all as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. We may, however, satisfy our obligations, if any, with respect to any purchase contract by delivering the cash value of such purchase contract or the cash value of the property otherwise deliverable or, in the case of purchase contracts on underlying currencies, by delivering the underlying currencies, as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. The applicable prospectus supplement will also specify the methods by which the holders may purchase or sell such securities, currencies or commodities and any acceleration, cancellation or termination provisions or other provisions relating to the settlement of a purchase contract.

The purchase contracts may require us to make periodic payments to the holders thereof or vice versa, which payments may be deferred to the extent set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, and those payments may be unsecured or prefunded on some basis. The purchase contracts may require the holders thereof to secure their obligations in a specified manner to be described in the applicable prospectus supplement. Alternatively, purchase contracts may require holders to satisfy their obligations thereunder when the purchase contracts are issued. Our obligation to settle such pre-paid purchase contracts on the relevant settlement date may constitute indebtedness. Accordingly, pre-paid purchase contracts will be issued under either the senior indenture or the subordinated indenture.

Units

As specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may issue units consisting of one or more purchase contracts, warrants, debt securities, preferred shares, common shares or any combination of such securities. The applicable prospectus supplement will describe:

the terms of the units and of the purchase contracts, warrants, debt securities, preferred shares and common shares comprising the units, including whether and under what circumstances the securities comprising the units may be traded separately;

a description of the terms of any unit agreement governing the units; and

a description of the provisions for the payment, settlement, transfer or exchange of the units.

TAX CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to the information set forth below, you should carefully read the discussion of the principal U.S. federal income tax, Bermuda and Liberian tax considerations associated with our operations and the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our common shares set forth in the section of our annual report on Form 20-F for the year ended December 31, 2008, entitled “Additional Information—Taxation,” which provides certain additional information that may be relevant to an investment decision by United States Holders (as such term is defined in the discussion included in our annual report on Form 20-F). In the event the U.S. Internal Revenue Service were to find that we are or have been a Passive Foreign Investment Company for any taxable year, we intend to notify the investing public of such finding via a press release and to make pertinent tax information available via the “Tax Treatment” Section of our public website <http://www.shipfinance.org>. This web address is provided as an inactive textual reference and does not constitute a part of this prospectus.

Passive Foreign Investment Company Status and Significant Tax Consequences

Special U.S. federal income tax rules apply to a U.S. Holder that holds stock in a foreign corporation classified as a PFIC for U.S. federal income tax purposes. In general, we will be treated as a PFIC with respect to a U.S. Holder if, for any taxable year in which such holder held our common stock, either at least 75% of our gross income for such taxable year consists of passive income (e.g. dividends, interest, capital gains and rents derived other than in the active conduct of a rental business), or at least 50% of the average value of the assets held by the corporation during such taxable year produce, or are held for the production of, passive income.

For purposes of determining whether we are a PFIC, we will be treated as earning and owning our proportionate share of the income and assets, respectively, of any of our subsidiary corporations in which we own at least 25% of the value of the subsidiary's stock. Income earned, or deemed earned, by us in connection with the performance of services would not constitute passive income. By contrast, rental income would generally constitute "passive income" unless we were treated under specific rules as deriving our rental income in the active conduct of a trade or business.

Although there is no legal authority directly on point, our U.S. tax counsel believes that, for purposes of determining whether we are a PFIC, the gross income we derive or are deemed to derive from the time-chartering activities of our wholly-owned subsidiaries more likely than not constitutes services income, rather than rental income. Correspondingly, we believe that such income does not constitute passive income, and the assets that we or our wholly-owned subsidiaries own and operate in connection with the production of such income, in particular, the vessels, do not constitute passive assets for purposes of determining whether we are a PFIC.

Consequently, based upon our current method of operations and upon representations made by us, our U.S. tax counsel believes that it is more likely than not that we will not be treated as a PFIC for our taxable years ending December 31 2008 and December 31 2009. This position is principally based upon the positions that (1) our time charter income will constitute services income, rather than rental income, and (2) Frontline Management, which provides services to most of our time-chartered vessels, will be respected as a separate entity from the Frontline Charterers, with which it is affiliated.

For taxable years after 2009, depending upon the relative amount of income we derive from our various assets as well as their relative fair market values, we may be treated as a PFIC. For example, the bareboat charters of our drillrigs may produce passive income and such drillrigs may be treated as assets held for the production of "passive income." In such a case, depending upon the amount of income so generated and the fair market value of the drillrigs, we may be treated as a PFIC for any taxable year after 2009.

We note that there is no direct legal authority under the PFIC rules addressing our current and proposed method of operation. We believe there is substantial legal authority supporting our position consisting of case law and Internal Revenue Service pronouncements concerning the characterization of income derived from time charters and voyage charters as services income for other tax purposes. However, we note that there is also authority which characterizes time charter income as rental income rather than services income for other tax purposes. In addition, there is no legal authority addressing the situation where the charterer of a majority of the vessels in a company's fleet is affiliated with the technical management provider for a majority of the company's vessels. Although we intend to conduct our affairs in a manner to avoid being classified as a PFIC with respect to any taxable year, we cannot assure you that the nature of our operations will not change in the future. Accordingly, no assurance can be given that the IRS or a court of law will accept our position, and there is a significant risk that the IRS or a court of law could determine that we are a PFIC.

As discussed more fully below, if we were to be treated as a PFIC for any taxable year, a U.S. Holder would be subject to different taxation rules depending on whether the U.S. Holder makes an election to treat us as a “Qualified Electing Fund”, which election we refer to as a “QEF election.” As an alternative to making a QEF election, a U.S. Holder should be able to make a “mark-to-market” election with respect to our common stock, as discussed below.

Taxation of U.S. Holders Making a Timely QEF Election

If a U.S. Holder makes a timely QEF election, which U.S. Holder we refer to as an “Electing Holder,” the Electing Holder must report each year for U.S. federal income tax purposes his pro rata share of our ordinary earnings and our net capital gain, if any, for our taxable year that ends with or within the taxable year of the Electing Holder, regardless of whether or not distributions were received from us by the Electing Holder. The Electing Holder’s adjusted tax basis in the common stock will be increased to reflect taxed but undistributed earnings and profits. Distributions of earnings and profits that had been previously taxed will result in a corresponding reduction in the adjusted tax basis in the common stock and will not be taxed again once distributed. A U.S. Holder would make a QEF election with respect to any year that we are a PFIC by filing one copy of IRS Form 8621 with his U.S. federal income tax return. An Electing Holder would generally recognize capital gain or loss on the sale, exchange or other disposition of our common stock.

Taxation of U.S. Holders Making a “Mark-to-Market” Election

Alternatively, if we were to be treated as a PFIC for any taxable year and, as we anticipate, our stock is treated as “marketable stock,” a U.S. Holder would be allowed to make a “mark-to-market” election with respect to our common stock, provided the U.S. Holder completes and files IRS Form 8621 in accordance with the relevant instructions and related Treasury Regulations. If that election is made, the U.S. Holder generally would include as ordinary income in each taxable year the excess, if any, of the fair market value of the common stock at the end of the taxable year over such holder’s adjusted tax basis in the common stock. The U.S. Holder would also be permitted an ordinary loss in respect of the excess, if any, of the U.S. Holder’s adjusted tax basis in the common stock over its fair market value at the end of the taxable year, but only to the extent of the net amount previously included in income as a result of the mark-to-market election. A U.S. Holder’s tax basis in his common stock would be adjusted to reflect any such income or loss amount. Gain realized on the sale, exchange or other disposition of our common stock would be treated as ordinary income, and any loss realized on the sale, exchange or other disposition of the common stock would be treated as ordinary loss to the extent that such loss does not exceed the net mark-to-market gains previously included by the U.S. Holder.

Taxation of U.S. Holders Not Making a Timely QEF or Mark-to-Market Election

Finally, if we were to be treated as a PFIC for any taxable year, a U.S. Holder who does not make either a QEF election or a “mark-to-market” election for that year, whom we refer to as a “Non-Electing Holder,” would be subject to special rules with respect to (1) any excess distribution (i.e. the portion of any distributions received by the Non-Electing Holder on our common stock in a taxable year in excess of 125 % of the average annual distributions received by the Non-Electing Holder in the three preceding taxable years, or, if shorter, the Non-Electing Holder’s holding period for the common stock), and (2) any gain realized on the sale, exchange or other disposition of our common stock. Under these special rules:

- the excess distribution or gain would be allocated ratably over the Non-Electing Holders’ aggregate holding period for the common stock;

- the amount allocated to the current taxable year and any taxable years before the Company became a PFIC would be taxed as ordinary income; and

- the amount allocated to each of the other taxable years would be subject to tax at the highest rate of tax in effect for the applicable class of taxpayer for that year, and an interest charge for the deemed deferral benefit would be

imposed with respect to the resulting tax attributable to each such other taxable year.

These penalties would not apply to a pension or profit sharing trust or other tax-exempt organization that did not borrow funds or otherwise utilize leverage in connection with its acquisition of our common stock. If we were a PFIC, and a Non-Electing Holder who is an individual died while owning our common stock, such holder's successor generally would not receive a step-up in tax basis with respect to such stock.

EXPENSES

The following are the estimated expenses of the issuance and distribution of the securities being registered under the Registration Statement of which this prospectus forms a part, all of which will be paid by us.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|----|
| SEC registration fee | \$27,900 | * |
| Blue sky fees and expenses | \$ | ** |
| Printing and engraving expenses | \$ | ** |
| Legal fees and expenses | \$ | ** |
| Rating agency fees | \$ | ** |
| Accounting fees and expenses | \$ | ** |
| Indenture trustee fees and expenses | \$ | ** |
| Miscellaneous | \$ | ** |
| Total | \$ | ** |

* Pursuant to Rule 457(p) under the Securities Act, the Company applied the filing fee associated with unsold securities under its registration statement on Form F-3, initially filed on December 5, 2008 and amended on March 24, 2009 (File No. 333-155975) (the "Prior Registration Statement"), against the fee that would otherwise be due in connection with the initial filing of the Registration Statement on March 24, 2009. The Prior Registration Statement registered securities for a maximum offering price of \$500,000,000. Because the Company did not sell any securities of that amount, no additional registration fee was paid with respect to this registration statement.

** To be provided by a prospectus supplement or as an exhibit to a Report on Form 6-K that is incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the securities offered by this prospectus will be passed upon for us by Mello, Jones & Martin, Hamilton, Bermuda, as to matters of Bermuda law.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell or distribute the securities included in this prospectus and may sell our common shares through underwriters, through agents, to dealers, in private transactions, at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to the prevailing market prices, or at negotiated prices.

In addition, we may sell some or all of our common shares included in this prospectus through;

a block trade in which a broker-dealer may resell a portion of the block, as principal, in order to facilitate the transaction;

purchases by a broker-dealer, as principal, and resale by the broker-dealer for its account; or

ordinary brokerage transactions and transactions in which a broker solicits purchasers.

In addition, we may enter into option or other types of transactions that require us or them to deliver common shares to a broker-dealer, who will then resell or transfer the common shares under this prospectus. We may enter into hedging transactions with respect to our securities. For example, we may:

enter into transactions involving short sales of the common shares by broker-dealers;

sell common shares short ourselves and deliver the shares to close out short positions;

enter into option or other types of transactions that require us to deliver common shares to a broker-dealer, who will then resell or transfer the common shares under this prospectus; or

loan or pledge the common shares to a broker-dealer, who may sell the loaned shares or, in the event of default, sell the pledged shares.

We may enter into derivative transactions with third parties, or sell securities not covered by this prospectus to third parties in privately negotiated transactions. If the applicable prospectus supplement indicates, in connection with those derivatives, the third parties may sell securities covered by this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, including in short sale transactions. If so, the third party may use securities pledged by us or borrowed from us or others to settle those sales or to close out any related open borrowings of stock, and may use securities received from us in settlement of those derivatives to close out any related open borrowings of stock. The third party in such sale transactions will be an underwriter and, if not identified in this prospectus, will be identified in the applicable prospectus supplement (or a post-effective amendment). In addition, we may otherwise loan or pledge securities to a financial institution or other third party that in turn may sell the securities short using this prospectus. Such financial institution or other third party may transfer its economic short position to investors in our securities or in connection with a concurrent offering of other securities.

Any broker-dealers or other persons acting on our behalf may be deemed to be underwriters and any commissions received or profit realized by them on the resale of the securities may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act.

At the time that any particular offering of securities is made, to the extent required by the Securities Act, a prospectus supplement will be distributed, setting forth the terms of the offering, including the aggregate number of securities being offered, the purchase price of the securities, the initial offering price of the securities, the names of any underwriters, dealers or agents, any discounts, commissions and other items constituting compensation from us and any discounts, commissions or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers.

Underwriters or agents could make sales in privately negotiated transactions and/or any other method permitted by law, including sales deemed to be at-the-market offerings as defined in Rule 415 promulgated under the Securities Act, which includes sales made directly on or through the New York Stock Exchange, the existing trading market for our common shares, or sales made to or through a market maker other than on an exchange. At-the-market offerings, if any, may be conducted by underwriters acting as principal or agent of Ship Finance, who may also be third party sellers of our securities as discussed above.

We will bear costs relating to all of the securities being registered under this Registration Statement.

As a result of requirements of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA), formerly the National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc. (NASD), the maximum commission or discount to be received by any FINRA member or independent broker/dealer may not be greater than eight percent (8%) of the gross proceeds received by us for the sale of any securities. If more than 10% of the net proceeds of any offering of common shares made under this prospectus will be received by FINRA members participating in the offering or affiliates or associated persons of such FINRA members, the offering will be conducted in accordance with NASD Conduct Rule 2710(h).

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of Ship Finance International Limited appearing in the Company's annual report on Form 20-F for the year ended December 31, 2008, have been audited by MSPC, Certified Public Accountants and Advisors, A Professional Corporation, as stated in their report thereon, included therein, and incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such report given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

As required by the Securities Act, we filed a registration statement relating to the securities offered by this prospectus with the Commission. This prospectus is a part of that registration statement, which includes additional information.

Government Filings

We file annual and special reports within the Commission. You may read and copy any document that we file and obtain copies at prescribed rates from the Commission's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. You may obtain information on the operation of the Public Reference Room by calling 1 (800) SEC-0330. The Commission maintains a website (<http://www.sec.gov>) that contains reports, proxy and information statements and other information regarding issuers that file electronically with the Commission. In addition, you can obtain information about us at the offices of the New York Stock Exchange, 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005. Further information about our company is available on our website at <http://www.shipfinance.bm>. This web address is provided as an inactive textual reference only. Information on our website does not constitute part of this prospectus.

Information Incorporated by Reference

The Commission allows us to "incorporate by reference" information that we file with it. This means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those filed documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be a part of this prospectus, and information that we file later with the Commission prior to the termination of this offering will also be considered to be part of this prospectus and will automatically update and supersede previously filed information, including information contained in this prospectus.

We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and any future filings made with the Commission under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act:

Current report on Form 6-K filed with the Commission on March 26, 2009, containing our press release announcing the filing of our annual report on Form 20-F for the year ended December 31, 2008.

Annual report on Form 20-F for the year ended December 31, 2008, filed with the Commission on March 24, 2009, which contains audited consolidated financial statements for the most recent fiscal year for which those statements have been filed.

The description of our dividend reinvestment and direct stock purchase plan (and no other information contained therein) contained in our Registration Statement on Form F-3, (File No. 333-150125), filed with the Commission on April 7, 2008 and any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating that description.

We are also incorporating by reference all subsequent annual reports on Form 20-F that we file with the Commission and current reports on Form 6-K that we furnish to the Commission after the date of this prospectus that state they are incorporated by reference into this prospectus until we file a post-effective amendment indicating that the offering of the securities made by this prospectus has been terminated. In all cases, you should rely on the later information over different information included in this prospectus or the prospectus supplement.

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement. We have not authorized any other person to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We are not making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement as well as the information we previously filed with the Commission and incorporated by reference, is accurate as of the dates on the front cover of those documents only. Our business, financial condition and results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

You may request a free copy of the above mentioned filing or any subsequent filing we incorporated by reference to this prospectus by writing or telephoning us at the following address:

Ship Finance International Limited
Par la Ville Place, 4th Floor
14 Par la Ville Road
Hamilton HM 08, Bermuda
Tel: +1 800-715-6374
Email: ir@shipfinance.no
Attn: Investor Relations

Information Provided by the Company

We will furnish holders of our common shares with annual reports containing audited financial statements and a report by our independent registered public accounting firm. The audited financial statements will be prepared in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. As a “foreign private issuer,” we are exempt from the rules under the Securities Exchange Act prescribing the furnishing and content of proxy statements to shareholders. While we furnish proxy statements to shareholders in accordance with the rules of the New York Stock Exchange, those proxy statements do not conform to Schedule 14A of the proxy rules promulgated under the Securities Exchange Act. In addition, as a “foreign private issuer,” our officers and directors are exempt from the rules under the Securities Exchange Act relating to short swing profit reporting and liability.

