

29 July 2010

Mr. Ban Ki-Moon  
Secretary-General  
United Nations  
New York, NY 10017  
United States of America

Dear Mr. Ban,

We write to advise you that the IMO Council, being gravely concerned about the persisting occurrence of acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships in various parts of the world – and, in particular, in the western Indian Ocean waters off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden – decided, last month, that the theme for World Maritime Day 2011 and, thus, the thematic priority for the Organization and the shipping industry throughout next year, should be **"Piracy: orchestrating the response"**.

This decision was made notwithstanding the various and multi-faceted efforts made to address the scourge of piracy (including by the United Nations, IMO, UNODC, the European Union, NATO, individual Governments and the shipping industry) and the relative success they are having, especially with respect to averting attacks on cargo ships chartered by the World Food Programme to carry humanitarian aid to Somalia. The IMO Council has recognized that much work still remains to be done if our ultimate goal of consigning piracy to the realms of history is to be achieved. Accordingly, it chose the aforementioned theme for World Maritime Day 2011 in order to galvanize, throughout the year and beyond, further action aligned to a number of key objectives, including:

- increasing pressure at the political level to secure the immediate release of all hostages being held by pirates;
- providing care for those attacked or hijacked by pirates and for their families;
- improving guidance to the industry and promoting full compliance by ships with all recommended preventive, evasive and defensive measures;
- promoting greater levels of support from navies;
- promoting anti-piracy coordination and co-operation between and among States, regions and organizations; and
- building capacity in affected States to deter, interdict and bring to justice those who commit acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships.

With a view to identifying specific deliverables for 2011 in pursuit of these objectives, representatives of our respective organizations met at the IMO Headquarters on 14 July 2010. We were joined by Mr. Marianito Roque, until recently Secretary of the Department of Labor and



Employment in the Government of the Republic of the Philippines – a country that supplies approximately 25% of the world's seafarers and whose nationals have been the principal victims of acts of piracy and consequent hostage-taking, particularly in waters off the coast of Somalia.

The meeting reviewed a comprehensive programme of activities enabling IMO – in concert with the United Nations, other partners from within the System, as well as relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations – to orchestrate an effective response to the global scourge of piracy, while continuing and enhancing its strategic efforts in this respect. Such a response would be a further demonstration of the commitment of IMO and the shipping industry to support the world's seafarers – as exemplified in the theme for this year's World Maritime Day of "2010: Year of the Seafarer" – and their continuing commitment to the success of the World Food aid programme for Somalia.

We recognize, of course, that the root causes of piracy in Somalia are to be found on land and that increased activity at the political level (foremost through the Security Council) is fundamental to enable the country to reach a land-based, political solution that will have a beneficial impact on crimes committed at sea, and facilitate and expedite the release of hostages.

We should, therefore, be most grateful if you would draw the attention of the Security Council (possibly through your next regular report on piracy or in any other manner you may deem appropriate) to the unacceptable plight of the 395 hostages – seafarers, in the main – currently being held by pirates in Somalia and seek to develop a dynamic approach that might secure their release.

Any action you may decide to take in the context of this joint appeal will certainly contribute towards bringing the 2011 World Maritime Day theme of "Piracy: **orchestrating the response**" to the attention of other relevant entities of the UN System – in particular, those that may be in a position to contribute to the aforementioned goals and the related activities we will be undertaking throughout next year.

We are convinced that the authority of your Office and your personal support for the action outlined above will add considerable gravity and impetus to our efforts to eradicate piracy and armed robbery against ships.

In this, the Year of the Seafarer, your early positive response to our requests will be greatly appreciated by the world's seafarers and the international maritime community.

With highest regards,

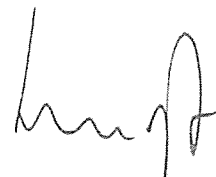
Yours sincerely,



Efthimios.E. Mitropoulos  
Secretary-General, IMO



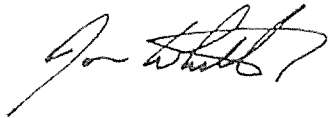
Spyros Polemis  
Chairman, International Chamber of Shipping  
and President, International Shipping  
Federation



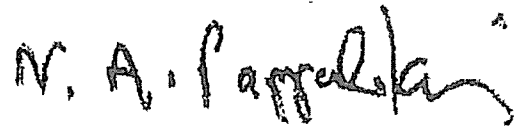
Robert Lorenz-Meyer  
President, BIMCO



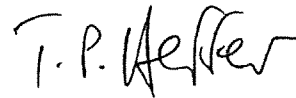
Graham Westgarth  
Chairman, International Association of  
Independent Tanker Owners



Jon Whitlow  
Secretary, Seafarers' Section, International  
Transport Workers' Federation



Nicos A. Pappadakis  
Chairman, International Association of Dry  
Cargo Shipowners



The Revd. Tom Heffer  
Secretary General  
The Mission to Seafarers