



## WORLD MARITIME DAY 2017

### CONNECTING SHIPS, PORTS AND PEOPLE

#### Background paper

World Maritime Day is an official United Nations day. Every year, it provides an opportunity to focus attention on the importance of shipping and other maritime activities, and to highlight the significant contribution of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and its Member States to global efforts to improve the safety, security and efficiency of shipping and to protect the marine environment. It does this by emphasizing particular aspects of IMO's work.

Each World Maritime Day has its own theme. Often the theme will coincide with a particular anniversary. Themes may also reflect current events or wider United Nations initiatives.

The World Maritime Day themes for 2016 and 2017 are complementary and may be seen as a response to United Nations post-2015 sustainable development agenda and, in particular, the Sustainable Development Goals. For 2016, the theme was "Shipping: indispensable to the world" – chosen to focus on the critical link between shipping and the everyday lives of people all over the planet, and to raise awareness of the role of IMO as the global regulatory body for international shipping. One of the key messages was that the importance of shipping in supporting and sustaining today's global society gives IMO's work a significance that reaches far beyond the industry itself. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), around 80% of global trade by volume and over 70% of global trade by value are carried by sea and are handled by ports worldwide.

The theme for 2017 – "IMO – Connecting Ships, Ports and People" – builds on the 2016 theme. It focuses on helping Member States to develop and implement maritime strategies to invest in a joined-up, interagency approach that addresses a wide range of issues, including the facilitation of maritime transport, increasing efficiency, navigational safety,

protection of the marine environment, and maritime security. It encourages Member States, United Nations agencies, other organizations, and industry to work with developed and developing countries to promote best practices and to build bridges between the many diverse actors involved in these areas.

Key objectives include improving cooperation between port authorities and the shipping industry and developing a closer partnership between the two sectors; raising global standards and setting norms for the safety, security and efficiency of ports and for port and coastal State authorities; and standardizing port procedures through identifying and developing best practice guidance and training materials.

### The global challenge

We live in challenging times. The population of the world exceeds 7 billion and is increasing. The populations of many developing States are set to double by 2050. In addition to population increase the world today faces many, often related challenges: climate change; threats to the environment; unsustainable exploitation of natural resources; threats to food security; societal threats posed by organized criminals; and instability leading to mixed migration. All of these threaten the cohesion of societies and impact on developing countries' ability to trade and to grow.



To address these and other challenges, in September 2015, the 193 Member States of the United Nations (including 170 Member States of IMO) unanimously adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including 17 SDGs and 169 related targets. The SDGs apply to all countries and, through the adoption of the Agenda, States have committed to mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind – by 2030. The Agenda emphasizes the need to simultaneously consider the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development.

Although some may feel that the maritime contribution to many of the SDGs is peripheral, the truth is that the world relies on international shipping and benefits from its smooth operation, by which food, commodities, raw materials, energy and consumer goods are moved reliably and effectively around the globe at low cost. International shipping is, therefore, central to the functioning of global trade by connecting producers, manufacturers and consumers and, as such, provides a way for IMO Member States to enhance trade with one another. Indeed, this was reflected in the 2016 theme "Shipping: indispensable to the world".

As the 2030 Agenda and SDGs will be implemented principally at the State level, IMO will act to help Member States to develop and formulate innovative policies and strategies taking into account cross-cutting issues to respond to the needs of countries at the national, regional and global levels.

At the UN Ocean Conference in June this year, at which IMO had a strong presence, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres said that "Improving the health of our oceans is a test for multilateralism, and we cannot afford to fail," adding, "The conservation and sustainable use of marine resources are two sides of the same coin."

This dovetails neatly with sentiments expressed by IMO Secretary-General, Mr. Kitack Lim, when talking about this year's World Maritime Day theme: "Ultimately, more efficient shipping, working in partnership with the port sector supported by governments, will be a major driver towards global stability and sustainable development for the good of all people."

## **Enhancing efficiency**

Ships, their crew members and the goods and passengers that they carry across borders are subject to a range of government controls, both on arrival and departure. These controls address a wide range of issues including ensuring public health, revenue protection, security, immigration, enforcing controls on importing and exporting prohibited and restricted items, and sanctions enforcement.

Some of these controls may be specific to the ship itself, some to crew members, some to passengers, some to the cargoes carried, and some to more than one of these categories.

However, in addition to the regulatory controls traditionally associated with customs, immigration, law enforcement and security, there are also a range of practical procedures and processes that must be followed in relation to the enhancement of maritime safety as well as to the provision of general port services to ships. As with the regulatory controls,

these may be due to national requirements or may be mandated by international conventions and agreements.

All these controls and procedures, be they local, national or international, regulatory or commercial, have features in common – they all require provision of information to a range of different agencies and entities, they require action to be taken by ships, crews and ports, there are consequences if they are not followed, they take time and, if not coordinated, cost far more than they need to.

## Facilitating maritime traffic

The process by which these myriad regulations, requirements and procedures are harmonized is known as "facilitation". If every country and every port within each country has different requirements for ships, cargoes and people, chaos and inefficiency will ensue. The need for standardization and cutting of red tape was recognized by IMO's Maritime Safety Committee very early on in the life of what was then called the Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) – now IMO – through the development of the Convention on the Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic, 1965, as amended (the FAL Convention).

The FAL Convention was the first international convention developed by IMCO/IMO. The Maritime Safety Committee started work on drafting it in 1961; it was adopted on 9 April 1965 and entered into force on 5 March 1967. It is currently binding on 118 Contracting Governments to the Convention and aims "to promote measures to bring about uniformity and simplicity in the documentary requirements and procedures associated with the arrival, stay and departure of ships engaged in international voyages".

The FAL Convention sets out internationally agreed "Standards" and "Recommended Practices" in respect of the arrival, stay and departure of ships, persons and cargoes and includes provisions in respect of stowaways, public health, and quarantine. In this context, "Standards" are internationally-agreed measures, the uniform application of which is "necessary and practicable in order to facilitate international maritime traffic" and "Recommended Practices" are measures, the application of which is "desirable". Put more simply, Standards are what Contracting Governments must do, Recommended Practices are what Contracting Governments should do. The FAL Convention also assists in the reduction of red tape through standardized documentation known as "FAL Forms".

As with all IMO conventions, the FAL Convention evolves to take into account new developments and technologies worldwide. A series of amendments to the FAL Convention will enter into force on 1 January 2018. These include new systems for the electronic

exchange of information for the clearance of ships, cargo, crew and passengers by 8 April 2019. IMO is also working on development of so-called maritime 'single window' systems, in which all the many agencies and authorities involved exchange data via a single point of contact, using harmonized and standardized data reporting formats.

The vehicle for the evolution of the FAL Convention is the IMO Facilitation Committee, a body that meets annually. Membership of the FAL Committee includes all IMO Member States, Contracting Governments to the Convention and observers from organizations in Consultative Status with IMO.



As well as good facilitation being the key to connecting ships, ports and people, another core message of the 2017 World Maritime Day theme is that, for the FAL Committee to function effectively, all stakeholders, both government and industry, should be represented in national and observer delegations and participate actively in its meetings, exchanging views and best practices on more efficient measures and promoting their harmonization and standardization. It is also important to increase the representation of the port sector, border control authorities and related organizations at other IMO meetings, to foster better understanding of the implications and impact of IMO regulations on the port sector (and vice versa). Examples could include the need for ports to provide efficient and environmentally sound facilities and procedures for disposal of ships' waste, and to develop procedures for complying with the need to verify containers' weight.

### **Sustainability and security**

For the connections between ships, ports and people to be sustainable, they must also be secure. To that end, IMO helps Member States enhance maritime security, focussing on

what the civil maritime industry, embracing both the shipping and port sectors, can do to protect itself and to assist governments to protect global maritime trade. Through its work on the facilitation of international maritime traffic IMO also has an interest in mixed migration by sea, prevention of drug smuggling, cybersecurity and prevention of stowaways.

Many countries view ports as critical infrastructure and their security as a facet of national security. However, without clear national and local legislation, policies and direction coordinating the activities of all key stakeholders, security responses in port facilities may be fragmented.

A well-coordinated, risk-based preventive strategy is critical to the success of port and port facility security regimes, and this is a vital element in IMO's efforts to connect ships, ports and people.

In a broader context, coordination and cooperation between ships and ports is vital for many other IMO measures to be effectively implemented. Whether it is providing reception facilities for shipboard waste, providing alternative power supplies for ships in port, ensuring that the proper navigational infrastructure of buoys, channel markers and so on is in place, the actions of ports cannot be separated from the ability of the shipping sector to perform its function cleanly and efficiently.

### **Investing in the future**

Investment, growth and improvement in the shipping and ports sectors is a clear indication of a country or a region that is enjoying success in the present and planning for more success in the future.

By promoting trade by sea, nurturing national shipping lines and promoting seafaring as a career; by improving port infrastructure and efficiency, by developing and strengthening intermodal links and hinterland connections; by managing and protecting fisheries, exploring offshore energy production and even by fostering tourism – maritime activity can both drive and support a growing national economy.

Improved economic development, supported by sustainable maritime development and underpinned by good maritime security, will support the Post-2015 Development Agenda and complement United Nations initiatives by addressing some of the stress factors that lead to instability, insecurity and uncontrolled mixed migration.

IMO's 2017 theme "Connecting Ships, Ports and People" was chosen to provide an opportunity to focus on the many diverse actors involved in the shipping and logistics areas.

The maritime sector, which includes shipping, ports and the people that operate them, can and should play a significant role helping Member States to create conditions for increased employment, prosperity and stability ashore through promoting trade by sea; enhancing the port and maritime sector as wealth creators both on land and, through developing a sustainable blue economy, at sea.

For this to succeed, the full support of the port sector will be needed. A port sector supported by government, able to streamline procedures and remove excessive barriers to trade, to embrace new technologies, to root out corruption and to treat safety, security and reputation as both desirable and marketable, will be a major driver towards stability and sustainable development.

Over the past half-century, IMO has had a huge beneficial impact on shipping and this has been felt by all those who rely on the industry. Looking ahead, the positive benefits of IMO's work should be felt further, throughout the supply chain. IMO can, and should, be the catalyst for dialogue and communication – not just at the governmental level but within and throughout the shipping industry, the transport industry and the logistics industry – in short, the entire global supply chain and everything that affects it.

The search for synergies and the promotion of partnerships across the maritime and logistics sectors are worthy objectives. Ultimately, more efficient shipping, working in partnership with a port sector supported by governments, will be a major driver towards global stability and sustainable development for the good of all people.

---