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Circular Letter No.3874
31 August 2018

To: IMO Member States and other Governments
United Nations and specialized agencies
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status

Subject: **World Maritime Day, 2018**

Further to [Circular Letter No.3829](#) of 7 March 2018, which included the text of the Secretary-General's message on this year's theme "IMO 70: Our Heritage – Better Shipping for a Better Future", the Secretary-General has the honour to enclose herewith background talking points for World Maritime Day 2018. This year the Day will be celebrated at IMO Headquarters on 27 September 2018, when the traditional diplomatic reception will take place.

The background talking points will be available for downloading in the Organization's three working languages (English, French and Spanish). These talking points, in a new format, are promulgated to assist Member States in drafting their own communications for use in observing World Maritime Day.

It would be appreciated if this material could be forwarded, as soon as possible, to authorities responsible for organizing the celebrations of World Maritime Day this year. In order to promote the Day more widely, the Secretary-General encourages the authorities concerned to organize, wherever possible, suitable events throughout the year to celebrate the Day, and inform the Secretariat of any such activities, which will be included in a report to be prepared for submission to the Council, at its one hundred and twenty-first session in November 2018. Social media participation is also encouraged (via Twitter, by using the tag line #IMO70). Photographs of the events can be sent to media@imo.org.

ANNEX
WORLD MARITIME DAY 2018
IMO 70: OUR HERITAGE – BETTER SHIPPING FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Background bullet points

Introduction to World Maritime Day

- Official United Nations day
- Focuses attention on shipping, maritime activities and work of IMO
- Each World Maritime Day has unique theme – determined by IMO Council
- Member States encouraged to celebrate with their own in-country events
- One official "parallel event" held in a selected Member State each year.

2018 theme

- "IMO 70: Our heritage – better shipping for a better future"
- IMO celebrates two major anniversaries: 70 years since IMO Convention was adopted and 60 years since it entered into force
- Theme looks both at the past and into the future
- Opportunity to reflect and showcase how IMO has developed and adapted while retaining overall mission – to promote safe, secure, environmentally sound, efficient and sustainable shipping.

Part one – our heritage

Early years

- IMO Convention adopted 1948
- IMO Convention entered into force 1958
- Organization originally known as the Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization, or IMCO
- Post WWII it was recognised that common approach to rules for shipping was needed to:
 - ensure seamless flow of traffic
 - promote safety in shipping operations worldwide
- Before IMO, countries had different standards
- Safety-minded shipowners could be at an economic disadvantage to their competitors
- IMO – only recognized international body to address such concerns
- First attempts at such a common approach pre-date IMO
- From the mid-19th century, several international maritime agreements adopted
- Titanic disaster of 1912 spawned the first Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS)
 - still the most important international instrument addressing maritime safety today
 - completely modified and updated
 - nowadays the responsibility of IMO.

IMO's developing role

- Since its formation, IMO's main task has been to develop and maintain a comprehensive regulatory framework for international shipping
- Original mandate limited to safety-related issues
- Subsequently expanded to include
 - environmental considerations
 - legal matters
 - technical cooperation
 - overall efficiency of shipping
 - piracy and armed robbery against ships
 - maritime security

IMO's output

- Comprehensive body of more than 50 international conventions
- Supported by hundreds of guidelines and recommendations
- IMO measures fall into five categories:
 - preventing accidents, casualties and environmental damage from ships – e.g. ship design, construction, equipment, operation and crewing
 - Ensuring the security of ships at sea and the port facilities on which they call, whilst facilitating an uninterrupted flow of maritime commerce through the ship – port interface
 - mitigating negative effects of accidents – e.g. distress and safety communications, search and rescue facilities, oil spill clean-up and response mechanisms;
 - establishing mechanisms for victim compensation; and
 - education and training of seafarers, including their needs and wellbeing

Technical cooperation

- IMO Members collectively lack equal ability to implement IMO measures
- IMO has therefore established extensive technical cooperation programme, matching needs among certain Member countries with offers of help and assistance from others
- Typically this might involve:
 - arranging training
 - workshops and seminars
- IMO has also founded educational establishments in Sweden (World Maritime University) and Malta (IMLI) which offer advanced level education in maritime subjects to students from less developed countries
- Fostering and enhancing partnerships and resource mobilization.

Part two – better shipping for a better future

Importance of shipping to global trade

- Shipping has low public profile yet affects almost everybody on planet
- Modern world relies on ships to transport:
 - raw materials
 - component parts
 - finished goods
 - fuel
 - foodstuffs
- Shipping carries more than 80% of world trade.

IMO role in today's world

- IMO provides shipping with comprehensive and detailed global regulations and standards which enable it to function, day to day
- Shipping under continuous pressure to improve in environmental, sustainability, safety and security performance
- Equally strong pressure from within to cut costs, to achieve economic sustainability
- By driving technology and encouraging innovation, IMO's global regulatory framework enables shipping industry to thrive while still serving society's changing demands and expectations
- IMO's work sets directions for investment decisions, research and development as shipping moves towards a more sustainable future.
- Promote communication and collaboration among stakeholders.

A better future – sustainable development

- Global focus today on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs, for a better world
- SDGs were agreed and adopted by the nations of the world in 2015
- The SDGs are the most far-sighted and important goals that mankind has ever conceived
- Clear targets to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all
- Shipping helps lift millions out of poverty by:
 - providing improved access to basic materials, goods and products
 - facilitating commerce
 - helping create prosperity among nations and peoples
 - creating millions of jobs in the maritime sector
- An effective, worldwide maritime transport system will be essential to delivery of the SDGs
- IMO, through its diverse range of activities, is making active contribution to all 17 SDGs – to make the world a better place for all its citizens.

A sustainable future for shipping

- A new generation of energy-efficient ships and promoting trade by sea can both drive and support a growing economy
- The maritime sector, which includes shipping and ports, can and should play a significant role in creating conditions for increased employment, prosperity and stability
- IMO will continue steering the shipping industry, through regulation, to being ever safer, greener and cleaner, and sustainable
- This is exactly the kind of shipping that IMO strives to create
- IMO's global regulations create a level playing-field so that ship operators cannot cut corners by compromising on safety, security and environmental performance.
- This approach also encourages innovation and efficiency.

The importance of technology

- Technology holds the key to most challenges the world faces today
- In shipping, developments can both improve environmental performance and cut operating costs at the same time, for example:
 - renewable and alternative energy sources
 - enhanced hull design
 - improved operational procedures
 - better use of digital technology to optimize performance
- IMO's role includes helping creating the conditions and capacities that allow technologies to be developed and nurtured.

Conclusion

- IMO has grown from small beginnings to present day – when 174 Member States make global policy decisions concerning one of the world's truly vital industries
- IMO's actions have an impact far beyond the ships that it regulates
- IMO represents collective views and decisions of its Member governments; and they represent billions of ordinary people who rely on shipping every day of their lives
- IMO works to ensure that people of the world continue to benefit from shipping in a way that meets the needs of the global economy, but also changing expectations about safety, environmental protection and social responsibility
- For 70 years, IMO has developed and adapted while staying true to its overall mission – to promote safe, secure, environmentally sound, efficient and sustainable shipping
- Our challenge for the future remains the same: to work in partnership with all stakeholders to create better shipping – for a better future.