



Joint statement calling on all Governments to immediately recognize seafarers as key workers, and to take swift and effective action to eliminate obstacles to crew changes, so as to address the humanitarian crisis faced by the shipping sector, ensure maritime safety and facilitate economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic

10 September 2020

The maritime shipping sector faces a humanitarian crisis

The maritime shipping sector moves more than 80 per cent of global trade and is a crucial component of the global economy. As a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic this sector, and in particular the seafarers who drive it, are facing severe challenges in making the necessary crew changes of seafarers. This is due, among others reasons, to restrictions on travel, embarkation or disembarkation in ports; quarantine measures; reductions in available flights; and limits on the issuing on visas and passports.

It is because of the sacrifices of the seafarers, who have continued working after their contracts have expired, that ports have remained open for trade, so allowing cargo operations to be carried out in a timely manner and goods to continue to circulate smoothly. The world owes a great debt to seafarers for maintaining supply chains throughout the pandemic.

Actions taken for many governments that limit or prevent ships operators for conducting crew changes in the single most pressing maritime operational challenge to the safe and efficient movement of global trade. This has created a humanitarian crisis, with approximately 300,000 seafarers trapped working aboard ships who cannot be repatriated, and an equal number of unemployed seafarers ashore because they are unable to board ships. Those on board have had their contract extended, sometimes beyond 17 months, and are facing fatigue and physical and mental health issues, leading to fears of self-harm and suicide. The International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Labour Organization (ILO) and International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) have received thousands of urgent calls for help from seafarers and their families.

The rights of seafarers, as enshrined in the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC 2006), as amended, and other international instruments, have not fully respected by all government, notably their rights to shore leave, annual leave, a maximum period of service on board (11 months), repatriation, and access to medical care onboard and ashore.



MINISTERIO
DE TRANSPORTES, MOVILIDAD
Y AGENDA URBANA

TRIBUNAL DE OPOSICIONES
CUERPO ESPECIAL
FACULTATIVO DE MARINA CIVIL

**ISSUES IN RELATION TO SEAFARERS IN CASES OF
ABANDONED SHIPS AT PORT**

*No escriba en este folio.
Use el formato oficial autocopiativo.*