We are approaching a crucial waypoint on the route to a sustainable and responsible future with the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20, taking place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from 20 to 22 June 2012.

The two main themes of Rio+20 are the green economy and the institutional framework for sustainable development.

I strongly believe that establishing a sustainable maritime transportation sector is essential to the development and growth of the world’s economy. But it will require a coordinated and integrated approach to maritime policy to achieve it.

Energy efficiency, new technology and innovation, maritime education and training, maritime security, maritime traffic management and the development of maritime infrastructure are key elements of sustainable shipping, but these must be underpinned by global standards – standards developed and maintained by IMO.

We belong to a generation that has grown familiar with the image of our planet as seen from space; an image that instantly conveys the message that ours is a blue planet. And if our planet is to sustain “blue growth”, such growth must be coordinated, integrated and inclusive. I look forward to Rio+20 and I am sure that IMO’s participation together with the shipping industry will make a significant contribution towards the success of this year’s conference in Rio.
From Rio to Rio: 20 years of IMO action