

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE ON WORLD MARITIME DAY
29 September 2016

Everybody in the world benefits from shipping, yet few people realise it. We ship food, technology, medicines, and memories. As the world's population continues to grow, particularly in developing countries, low-cost and efficient maritime transport has an essential role to play in growth and sustainable development.

Shipping helps ensure that the benefits of trade and commerce are more evenly spread. No country is entirely self-sufficient, and every country relies on maritime trade to sell what it has and buy what it needs. Much of what we use and consume in our everyday lives either has been or will be transported by sea, in the form of raw materials, components or finished articles.

Maritime transport is the backbone of global trade and the global economy.

The jobs and livelihoods of billions of people in the developing world, and standards of living in the industrialized and developed world, depend on ships and shipping. The shipping industry has played an important part in the dramatic improvements in global living standards that have taken millions of people out of acute poverty in recent years. It will be just as critical for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the plan agreed by all global leaders last year for people, peace, planet prosperity and partnership.

Yet the vast majority of people are unaware of the key role played by the shipping industry, which is largely hidden from view.

This is a story that needs to be told. And that is why the theme for World Maritime Day 2016 is "Shipping: indispensable to the world."

The theme focuses on the critical link between shipping and the everyday lives of people all over the planet. The International Maritime Organization plays a vital role as the international regulatory body for an industry that spans the globe.

The importance of shipping in supporting and sustaining today's global society makes it indispensable to the world, and to meeting the challenge of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.