



**World Maritime Day 2017**

**Connecting Ships, Ports and People**

**A message from IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim**

Against a background of increasingly complex global challenges, the United Nations has established 17 Sustainable Development Goals which, together, have the potential to transform our world into a better place for us all.

As a UN agency, IMO has a strong commitment to helping achieve the aims of the Sustainable Development Goals. Shipping and ports can play a significant role in helping to create conditions for increased employment, prosperity and stability through promoting maritime trade. The port and maritime sectors can be wealth creators, both on land and at sea.



To highlight this potential, our theme for this year is "Connecting Ships, Ports and People". It will enable us to shine a spotlight on the existing cooperation between ports and ships to maintain and enhance a safe, secure and efficient maritime transportation system.

We will help our Member States to develop and implement maritime strategies that address a wide range of issues, including the facilitation of maritime transport, and increasing efficiency, navigational safety, protection of the marine environment, and maritime security.

Throughout the year, we will highlight the importance of ‘joined-up’ maritime development across all sectors, both from a policy and a practical perspective. The benefits of a free and efficient flow of goods and trade extend far beyond the ships and ports themselves – and we will show how an effective interface between them can improve the lives of people everywhere, especially in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals.

IMO’s role as the global regulator of the shipping industry can enhance this integration – as consistent, uniform regulation facilitates the free flow of commerce.



But, to be sustainable, human activities have to be balanced with the oceans' capacity to remain healthy and diverse in the long term. The so-called 'blue economy' is a large and growing industrial sector; and, as it grows, it must remain safe and secure and not threaten the environment. IMO needs to ensure that shipping continues to make its contribution to the global economy without upsetting that delicate balance.

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.

This year, with our theme of “Connecting ships, ports and people” we aim to make a strong contribution towards these objectives – and I hope that you will join us, with your own activities and initiatives under this World Maritime Day theme for 2017.

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