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Captain Seog Hae-gyun of the Republic of Korea almost lost his life protecting his ship and crew from pirates. Read his incredible story on p.24

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Years of opportunities, years of solutions

My appointment to the post of Secretary-General of IMO is a truly great honour, both for myself and for my country. I am aware that it carries heavy expectations and I hope it goes without saying that I intend to put my utmost effort into working to meet those expectations.

Who can doubt that the world is in a period of unusual difficulties? Or, that we are potentially on the verge of huge, even cataclysmic changes? Just as we seemed to be recovering from the financial crash of 2008 and the recession that followed, the European debt crisis has arrived to throw the financial foundations of our society into turmoil once again. The global population has passed 7 billion and is continuing to rise. Shortages of vital commodities such as oil, grain, rice and even water are looming on the horizon. Africa faces famine once again; and all this against a backdrop of global warming and climate change.

Needless to say, shipping, too, is facing huge challenges. The fortunes of the industry are interwoven with the state of global trade and the world economy. And shipping is also under pressure to play its part in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

What makes things worse is that the period immediately before the financial crisis of 2008 was one of great expansion. The huge investment in new ships during that time is now coming back to haunt the industry as over-capacity drives down freight rates and makes cost increases even harder to bear.

The industry is no stranger to difficulties. Seaborne trade experienced huge setbacks in the late 1970s and 1980s due to the oil crises of the 1970s. The circumstances of today’s problems may be radically different, but one underlying fact remains unchanged. The sustainable development and growth of the world’s economy will not be possible without similar sustainable growth in shipping and, therefore, in the entire maritime industry sector. And, despite the current global economic problems, growth seems inevitable in the longer term. If nothing else, the rising global population should ensure that is the case.

Looking closer to home, IMO also faces significant challenges:

• The introduction of the IMO audit scheme as a mandatory measure;
• Achieving a sustainable, long-term financial basis for the World Maritime University and ensuring it has a viable mode of operation for the future;
• Plus, of course, all the many and varied technical issues that arise as we strive constantly to improve the international regulatory structure that ensures shipping remains safe, secure, efficient and environment-friendly.

Underlying all of these is the need to make sure that shipping continues to be regulated by international standards, adopted by consensus where possible and applied universally. Regional or unilateral regulation of such a truly international industry is simply not in anyone’s interest.

If you take a positive outlook, as I do, then difficulties become challenges and challenges become opportunities. And I believe we have the opportunities to turn the difficult years ahead into years of solutions.

Governments turn to IMO to find solutions to technical and political problems. The fact that they do so is a tribute to the confidence they have in the Organization’s ability to get things done. And there is no doubt that the actions taken by IMO have helped to make shipping safer and to reduce pollution.

With regard to IMO itself, I believe it to be a well-organized organization; indeed, an excellent organization with good traditions and a first-rate track record of delivering the objectives set by its Members.

Hearing that said, I think that we must strive to further enhance the delivery mechanisms that underlie that performance, and development of the Organization’s human resources will be a crucial element in achieving that.

To this end, I have established an in-house mechanism called “Review & Reform”, with five sub-groups that will review, respectively: budget and expenditure; human resources; meeting support arrangements; technical co-operation; and information technology. All these are currently making progress and, in due course, I will provide a progress report to the IMO Council.

The real strength of IMO is that it provides a unique forum for the world’s best experts to come together to devise comprehensive solutions to problems and to agree on universal standards that are fair, practicable and, above all, effective. Throughout my tenure as Secretary-General, my aim will be to strive to ensure that this always remains the case.
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Rapid and full casualty investigation urged following Costa Concordia incident

IMO Secretary-General Koji Sekimizu has included an additional item on “Passenger Ship Safety” on the agenda of IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), which meets for its 90th session from 16-25 May this year. This will provide an opportunity for IMO Members in the MSC to consider any issues arising. He encouraged Member Governments and the industry to put forward any initiatives to improve safety to MSC 90.

Given that the safe operation of passenger ships is of major interest to the international community as a whole, Mr. Sekimizu has also urged all IMO Member States to ensure that their current national safety regulations and procedures are being implemented fully and effectively, including those aimed at ensuring safe operations on board.

In the spirit of IMO’s continuing proactive approach to passenger ship safety, Mr. Sekimizu opened a channel of communication with passenger ship operators – through the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) – immediately following the Costa Concordia accident. CLIA has responded positively to Mr. Sekimizu’s request to hold meetings with him to discuss the safety of passenger ships in general and, in particular, any findings and recommendations from its own, internal, review of current practices and safety procedures in the operation of passenger ships.

Mr. Sekimizu urged Italy, the Flag State administration, to carry out the casualty investigation covering all aspects of this accident and provide the findings to IMO under the provisions of SOLAS as soon as possible. He expressed his gratitude that the Italian authorities had agreed to his request for IMO to be represented as an observer on the body overseeing the casualty investigation in order to monitor progress closely and remain abreast of emerging issues, as they arise.

These moves come against the background of a raft of safety measures already under review at IMO, including work going on in several sub-committees to further improve safety measures for ships, including passenger ships.

Piracy centres expand information network

The piracy information-sharing infrastructure covering Asia and the Indian Ocean has been significantly enhanced with the signing in November 2011 of an important agreement in Singapore.

The agreement, signed by the three Information Sharing Centres (ISCs) set up under the IMO-led Djibouti Code of Conduct and the Singapore-based ReCAAP ISC, establishes a set of standard operating procedures for communicating and exchanging piracy-related information and will result in a major expansion of the reporting area of such incidents.

Under the Djibouti Code of Conduct (The Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden, signed in Djibouti on 29 January 2009), three ISCs have been established, in Dar es Salaam (left), United Republic of Tanzania, Mombasa, Kenya and Sana’a, Yemen. The three ISCs were declared operational during the first half of 2011 and have since actively collected and disseminated piracy-related information.

ReCAAP (The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia) entered into force on 4 September 2006 and established the ReCAAP ISC in Singapore. The roles of the ReCAAP ISC include exchanging information among Contracting Parties on incidents of piracy and armed robbery, supporting the capacity-building efforts of Contracting Parties and facilitating cooperative arrangements.

The move to forge closer ties between the ISCs comes against the background of the continuing threat posed by piracy to maritime trade and the safe passage of ships through the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden. Piracy attacks have been reported close to the western coast of India, a ReCAAP Contracting Party, and many ships with flag or crews from ReCAAP Contracting Parties are being affected. Pooling resources between Djibouti Code of Conduct and ReCAAP ISCs will ensure vital piracy information can be shared across as wide an area as possible.

Continued dialogue between the ISCs is fully supported by IMO, as part of its wider aim to promote closer cross-regional collaboration through sharing best practices, information exchange and capacity-building efforts.
Operation of the International Data Exchange (IDE) for the Long Range Identification and Tracking of Ships (LRIT) has been successfully transferred to the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) in Lisbon, Portugal.

At the 10th session of the Ad Hoc LRIT Group established by IMO (31 October to 3 November 2011), the LRIT Operational governance body, composed of the chairman of the Ad Hoc LRIT Group, an IDE representative and a representative of the IMO Secretariat, authorized the operation of the IDE by EMSA.

The transfer of operations of the IDE to EMSA from its initial, interim operational base in the United States was satisfactorily completed on 18 October 2011 and the first message was routed via the EMSA IDE at 13:35 hours UTC on that day. The decision of the LRIT Operational governance body to authorize operation followed the satisfactory completion of integration testing and is subject to the final consideration and endorsement of by MSC 90 in May 2012.

The United States will continue to provide a disaster recovery site for the IDE, which could be activated to ensure the continuous and uninterrupted operation of the LRIT system in the case of a critical failure (for example sustained power outage, sustained network connectivity degradation, etc.) at the primary site in Portugal.

The obligations of ships to transmit LRIT information and the rights and obligations of SOLAS Contracting Governments and of search and rescue services to receive LRIT information are established in regulation V/19-1 of the 1974 SOLAS Convention. The IDE is one of the main components of the system, facilitating the exchange of LRIT information among LRIT Data Centres.

To ensure the timely establishment of the LRIT system, the United States developed and established the IDE, at its own expense (including its maintenance and operation), on an interim basis, from 16 December 2008 to 18 October 2011.

In 2010, the 87th session of the MSC agreed to a proposal for the establishment, maintenance and operation of the IDE by EMSA, at no cost either to SOLAS Contracting Governments or to IMO, for the years 2011, 2012 and 2013.

At its next session, in May 2012, the MSC will be invited to consider any offer for the continued operation of the IDE by EMSA and the disaster recovery site for the IDE by the United States beyond 2013, together with any associated new information on their maintenance, financing and operation.

**Durban conference acknowledges IMO’s climate change progress**

The United Nations Climate Change Conference concluded its seventeenth session (COP 17/CMP 7) in Durban, South Africa, meeting from 28 November to the early hours of 11 December 2011.

As anticipated, the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), serving also as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, focused more on rallying political will for action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (in particular, the issue of the second commitment period for emission reductions under the Kyoto Protocol and the establishment and making operational of the Green Climate Fund, as decided under the Cancún Agreements of 2010), rather than on pushing ahead with the preparation and adoption of a legally binding instrument to that effect.

As far as sectoral approaches are concerned, including international maritime transportation, the Conference noted the progress made by IMO in adopting, in July 2011, regulations on energy efficiency for ships under MARPOL Annex VI, as part of its three-pillar work plan to limit or reduce the emission of greenhouse gases from international shipping, as well as the Organization’s continuing work on market-based measures.

Although the question of what action needed to be taken on sectoral approaches was discussed at length, there was no suggestion that the reduction or limitation of greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping should not continue to be for IMO to consider and act upon. Indeed, IMO was invited to continue informing future Conferences and their subsidiary bodies of the Organization’s further progress on this issue.

Although the Durban Conference did not make specific decisions on the international transport sector, the progress thus far made by IMO has been widely acknowledged throughout the negotiating bodies of the UNFCCC process. In the meantime, the status quo of the Kyoto Protocol concerning the pursuance, through IMO, of efforts to reduce or limit GHG emissions from international shipping remains unaltered.

Against this background, IMO will continue, through the Marine Environment Protection Committee, its work to progress the debate on market-based measures so that it can bring its action plan on climate change to a completion in a reasonably short time. Such an outcome will enable the Organization to present further tangible results to the next UN Conference on Climate Change, scheduled to reconvene in Qatar in December 2012.
Study shows significant reductions in CO₂ emissions from IMO measures

An IMO-commissioned study into the impact of IMO’s mandatory energy efficiency measures for international shipping shows that their implementation will lead to significant reductions of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from ships, specifically reductions of carbon dioxide (CO₂), resulting from enhanced fuel efficiency.

The study found that, by 2020, an average of 151.5 million tonnes of annual CO₂ reductions are estimated from the introduction of the measures, a figure that, by 2030, will increase to an average of 330 million tonnes annually. CO₂ reduction measures will result in a significant reduction in fuel consumption, leading to a significant saving in fuel costs to the shipping industry.

The study, Assessment of IMO mandated energy efficiency measures for international shipping*, was launched on Monday, 14 November, ahead of the United Nations Climate Change Conference, in Durban, from 28 November to 9 December, 2011.

Amongst the key findings, the report (undertaken by Lloyd’s Register (LR) in partnership with Det Norske Veritas (DNV)) found that:

- By 2020, an average of 151.5 million tonnes of annual CO₂ reductions are estimated from the introduction of the EEDI for new ships and the SEEMP for all ships in operation, a figure that, by 2030, will increase to an average of 330 million tonnes annually.
- Compared with Business as Usual, the average annual reductions in CO₂ emissions and fuel consumed are estimated between 13% and 23% by 2020 and 2030 respectively.
- CO₂ reduction measures will result in a significant reduction in fuel consumption, leading to a significant saving in fuel costs to the shipping industry, although these savings require deeper investments in more efficient ships and more sophisticated technologies, as well as new practices.
- Significant reduction of CO₂ emissions from ships due to EEDI and SEEMP regulations is foreseen to 2050 with emission reduction due to SEEMP likely to be realised more rapidly than that for EEDI, as the effects of EEDI will occur only as and when older, less efficient, tonnage is replaced by new, more efficient tonnage.
- The estimated reductions in CO₂ emissions, for combined EEDI and SEEMP, from the world fleet translate into a significant annual fuel cost saving of about US$50 billion in 2020 and about US$200 billion by 2030, using fuel price increase scenarios that take into account the switch to low-sulphur fuel in 2020.
- Mandatory application of EEDI will drive more energy-efficient ship design and realise the CO₂ emission reduction potential associated with technical innovation and the use of lower or no carbon fuels.
- The mandatory use of SEEMP based on current IMO regulations will provide a procedural framework for shipping companies to recognise the importance of operational energy-saving activities. It will significantly boost the level of awareness and, if implemented properly, will lead to a positive cultural change.
- Investigations show that ship hydrodynamic and main engine optimisation will bring about energy-saving opportunities of up to around 10% with no significant additional cost of shipbuilding.
- The IMO regulations represent the first-ever mandatory energy efficiency measures for an international transport sector and their adoption followed several years of work on the matter. Work is now progressing on market-based measures, with intensive work to review a number of different proposals, submitted by Governments and observer organisations.

Further work will be carried out on market-based measures in 2012. Such measures would place a price on greenhouse gas emissions, thereby providing both an economic incentive for the maritime industry to invest in more fuel-efficient ships and technologies and to operate ships in a more energy-efficient manner and a mechanism to offset growing ship emissions in other sectors. In addition, these measures can generate funds that could be used, for example, for projects to mitigate climate change in developing countries.
Madagascar commissioning enhances African SAR coverage

A further key link in the plan to provide effective search and rescue (SAR) coverage off the coast of Africa has been established, with the commissioning of a sub-centre that will operate in conjunction with the regional Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) in Cape Town, South Africa.

The sub-centre, at Antananarivo, Madagascar, was commissioned on 11 December 2011. The inauguration of the new facility, which will operate as a joint maritime and aeronautical centre, marks an important step in a process that began at a conference on Search and Rescue and the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System, convened by IMO in Florence, Italy, in October 2000. African Governments represented at the Conference agreed on a regional approach to the provision of SAR services in western, southern and eastern parts of the continent as well as in island States around Africa. To that effect, they adopted a resolution inviting the African countries bordering the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, as well as the nearby Atlantic and Indian Ocean Island States, to establish five regional centres and 25 sub-centres to cover their entire coastline for SAR coordination purposes.

The establishment of appropriate SAR facilities off the coast of Africa was seen as a key component in the implementation of the Global SAR Plan, the final part of which had been agreed in 1998 at an IMO Conference in Fremantle, Australia.

The commissioning of the Antananarivo facility brings the number of sub-centres in operation to 15. In March 2011, the fifth and final African MRCC was established in Rabat, Morocco, joining those previously commissioned in Mombasa, Kenya (2006); Cape Town, South Africa (2007); Lagos, Nigeria (2008); and Monrovia, Liberia (2009).

With the completion of the five regional MRCCs, IMO is now using the experience gained in the successful establishment and operation of these centres in Africa as an example for other regions to follow. The Organization is currently embarking on a similar project for seven countries in Central America, involving the creation of two regional MRCCs, covering areas of the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea respectively, together with five associated sub-centres.

Manila seafarer training amendments enter into force on 1 January 2012

Major revisions to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (the STCW Convention), and its associated Code entered into force on 1 January 2012, with a five-year transitional period until 1 January 2017.

The “Manila Amendments” were adopted at a Diplomatic Conference in Manila, the Philippines, held in June 2010, and are aimed at ensuring that the necessary global standards will be in place to train and certify seafarers to operate technologically-advanced ships for some time to come.

The important changes to each chapter of the Convention and Code include the following:

- Improved measures to prevent fraudulent practices associated with certificates of competency and strengthen the evaluation process (monitoring of Parties’ compliance with the Convention)
- Revised requirements on hours of work and rest and new requirements for the prevention of drug and alcohol abuse, as well as updated standards relating to medical fitness standards for seafarers
- New certification requirements for able seafarers
- New requirements relating to training in modern technology such as electronic charts and information systems (ECDIS)
- New requirements for marine environment awareness training and training in leadership and teamwork
- New training and certification requirements for electro-technical officers
- Updating of competence requirements for personnel serving on board all types of tankers, including new requirements for personnel serving on liquefied gas tankers
- New requirements for security training, as well as provisions to ensure that seafarers are properly trained to cope if their ship comes under attack by pirates
- Introduction of modern training methodology including distance learning and web-based learning
- New training guidance for personnel serving on board ships operating in polar waters
- New training guidance for personnel operating Dynamic Positioning Systems.
Positional changes at IMO Secretariat

New IMO Secretary-General Mr. Koji Sekimizu took office on 1 January 2012 and immediately announced a number of changes in the structure of the IMO Secretariat.

Mr. Sekimizu transferred Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Andrew Winbow, from the Administrative Division to the Maritime Safety Division, as its Director. Mr. Sekimizu further transferred Mr. Jo Espinoza-Ferrey from the Marine Environment Division to head the Administrative Division as its Director, and consequentially promoted Mr. Stefan Micallef to the post of Director of the Marine Environment Division.

To ensure that the Organization makes further progress dealing with piracy, Mr. Sekimizu appointed Mr. Hartmut Hesse as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Maritime Security and Anti-Piracy Programmes. Mr. Hesse will be taking responsibility for the implementation of the Djibouti Code of Conduct and will also act as the IMO representative to conferences and meetings dealing with piracy issues.

In order to prepare for the successful introduction of the mandatory Member State Audit Scheme and to provide ample resources for these activities, Mr. Sekimizu has reorganized the Sub-Division for Implementation and Coordination of the Maritime Safety Division into a Department for Member State Audit and Implementation Support in the Maritime Safety Division. Mr. Laurence Barchue was appointed as Head of the new Department.

Finally, the Secretary-General also decided to strengthen the functions dealing with internal audit and matters of ethics and appointed Mr. K-R. Min as the Senior Deputy Director in charge of the Internal Oversight and Ethics Office.
PIRACY – PROGRESS MADE, MORE TO BE DONE

IMO’s wide-ranging anti-piracy campaign in 2011 enjoyed considerable success, but more work remains to be done. 2012 will see the campaign stepped up, and moving into new areas.

The 2011 World Maritime Day theme of “Piracy: orchestrating the response” was central to the work of IMO last year. As we move into 2012, the Organization can look back on 12 months of good progress that have laid the foundations for cautious optimism about the future.

Throughout 2011, IMO engaged at the political level (through the UN Security Council) to bring about a solution to the piracy problem and thus facilitate and expedite the release of seafarers and any other persons held hostage. In addition, the Organization intensified its work to strengthen the protection of persons (including seafarers, fishers and passengers), ships and cargoes in piracy-infested areas and also preserve the integrity of shipping lanes of strategic importance and significance, such as the Gulf of Aden.

Improvements were made to the accessibility and distribution of IMO guidelines and industry best management practice guidance; steps were taken to ensure that ships’ crews are aware of how to access naval protection and implement effectively the preventive, evasive and defensive measures recommended by IMO and the industry. The Organization also addressed the issue of carriage of privately contracted armed security personnel aboard ships and developed guidelines on the subject for flag, port and coastal States.

IMO helped promote greater levels of coordination among navies, and further co-operation between and among States, regions and organizations. Information sharing and the development and implementation of regional initiatives, such as the IMO-led Djibouti Code of Conduct, were at the heart of the Organization’s work. The establishment of information sharing centres in Dar es Salaam, Mombasa and Sana’a and the laying of the foundation stone of the building set to house a regional training centre in Djibouti were significant, tangible steps towards building regional capability to counteract pirate activities.

Working with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and other organizations, IMO also undertook initiatives to build the capacity of States, in piracy-affected regions and elsewhere, to deter, interdict and bring to justice those who commit acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships, working to enhance maritime law enforcement and the safety of life at sea. Helping States develop their maritime law enforcement capacities and protect their maritime resources was another key element of IMO’s work during 2011.

During the year, IMO maintained close co-operation with the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) and communicated with the Executive Head of the World Food Programme (WFP) concerning the potential for chartering bigger, faster ships to deliver food aid to Somalia, and shortening the distances they are required to run through pirate-infested waters.

In 2012, one of the first actions of incoming IMO Secretary-General Koji Sekimizu was to create the new position of Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Maritime Security and Anti-Piracy Programmes, to which Mr. Hartmut Hesse has been appointed. Mr. Hesse has taken responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Djibouti Code of Conduct and will also act as the Secretary-General’s representative to conferences and meetings dealing with piracy issues.

In January, Mr Sekimizu held talks with United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, at UN Headquarters in New York, on cooperation between the UN and IMO to combat Somalia-based piracy.

It was the first time the two had met after Mr. Ban’s reappointment as Secretary-General of the United Nations and Mr. Sekimizu taking the office of Secretary-General of IMO.
The meeting followed the endorsement of IMO’s work in this area, reiterated in November 2011 by the Security Council and a recent report (S/2011/662 of 25 October 2011), in which the UN Secretary-General encouraged UN Member States and multinational organizations to consider how they could contribute further to address the root causes of piracy, including through developing land-based initiatives to strengthen Somali and regional maritime and law enforcement capacity.

Mr. Ban agreed with the view of Mr. Sekimizu that capacity building in Somalia and neighbouring countries should be enhanced through cooperation between IMO and the UN, UN specialized agencies and other relevant international organizations, building on IMO’s existing capacity-building activities under the Djibouti Code of Conduct, funded by the Djibouti Code Trust Fund.

IMO is organizing a conference on Capacity building to Counter Piracy, on 15 May at IMO Headquarters, as well as a high-level policy debate on arms on board, to take place on the first day of the 90th session of the Maritime Safety Committee on 16 May.

**Background**

At the start of 2011, IMO adopted an anti-piracy action plan with six specific objectives, namely:

1. Increase pressure at the political level to secure the release of all hostages being held by pirates;
2. Review and improve the IMO guidelines to Administrations and seafarers and promote compliance with industry best management practices and the recommended preventive, evasive and defensive measures ships should follow;
3. Promote greater levels of support from, and coordination with, navies;
4. Promote anti-piracy coordination and co-operation procedures between and among States, regions, organizations and industry;
5. Assist States to build capacity in pirate-infested regions of the world, and elsewhere, to deter, interdict and bring to justice those who commit acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships;
6. Provide care for those attacked or hijacked by pirates and for their families.
Among the multitude of activities successfully undertaken against each of these objectives, several highlights stand out:

**Against objective 1:**
- A high-profile event to launch the year’s theme and action plan was organized. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the Executive Heads of the UNODC and the WFP, along with heads of several shipping industry and seafarers’ organizations were present to lend their support to the initiative.
- IMO contributed to the UN Secretary-General’s report on piracy off Somalia, and the UN Security Council noted with appreciation the efforts of the IMO and invited IMO to continue its contribution to prevent and suppress piracy (resolution S/RES 2020 (2011)).
- Throughout the year, IMO actively facilitated and participated in the work of the CGPCS.
- The IMO Assembly adopted a resolution (A.1044(27)) on piracy and armed robbery against ships in waters off the coast of Somalia in which, among other things, it expressed deep sympathy for the loss of seafarers, while in captivity; for their plight while held hostage in appalling conditions, often for long periods of time; and for their families, and appealed to all relevant parties, to take action, within the provisions of international law, to ensure that any hijacked ships, seafarers serving on them and any other persons on board such ships are immediately and unconditionally released and that no harm is caused to them.

**Against objective 2:**
- A circular letter (No.3164) was issued to inform all IMO Members, the United Nations and specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO that naval forces operating in the region off the coast of Somalia had reported an unacceptably high proportion of ships transiting the Gulf of Aden and western Indian Ocean were not registered with the appropriate authorities, showed no visible deterrent measures and were not acting on navigational warnings to shipping promulgating details of pirate attacks and suspect vessels.
- Assembly resolution A.1044(27) strongly urges Governments to ensure that ships entitled to fly their flag comply with the preventive, evasive and defensive measures detailed in the best management practice guidance. It also urges Governments to decide, taking into account the interim recommendations and guidance developed by the Organization, as a matter of national policy, whether ships entitled to fly their flag should be authorized to carry privately contracted armed security personnel and, if so, under which conditions.

**Against objective 3:**
- In February, IMO convened a meeting at IMO Headquarters to promote greater levels of support from, and coordination with, navies. Throughout the year, IMO participated in several civil/military fora, including the Shared Awareness and Deconfliction (SHADE) process through which anti-piracy operations are coordinated.
- The three information sharing centres (ISCs) being funded by IMO participated in counter-piracy exercise Cutlass Express to enhance interoperability as well as civil/military cooperation.
- IMO participated in a number of workshops on piracy including those...
conducted jointly with the NATO Shipping Centre in Hamburg and the ReCAAP-ISC Singapore Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference in Singapore.

• The application of the Long-Range Information and Tracking (LRIT) system to anti-piracy activities was, and remains, the subject of continuing IMO-led liaison with all concerned stakeholders.
• IMO concluded agreements with the NATO Shipping Centre and the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations office in Dubai (UKMTO) to allow transmission of piracy reports over the ISC network.
• IMO participated in a range of meetings and briefings with military, industry and other officials on various topics including piracy reporting and liaison.

Against objective 4:
• On-going development of a Djibouti Code regional information sharing network of National Focal Points (NFPs) in every Djibouti Code signatory State.
• Reinvigoration of the “Kampala Process” in co-operation with United Nations Political Office for Somalia.
• IMO Secretary-General briefed UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination.
• Joint workshop between the three ISCs, ReCAAP and IMO held in Singapore to initiate piracy information exchange.
• MSC approved guidelines to assist in the investigation of crimes of piracy and armed robbery against ships.
• IMO liaised with NATO for possible future collaboration on operational training for maritime law-enforcement forces from the Djibouti Code of Conduct States.
• IMO participated in a series of meetings, fora and conferences aimed at promoting anti-piracy co-operation and coordination.
• The building work on the IMO Djibouti Regional Training Centre commenced.
• IMO participated in a UN assessment mission to examine the scope of the threat of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, as well as the capacity of Benin and of the West African sub-region as a whole, to ensure maritime safety and security in that region.

Against objective 5:
• On-going development of the Djibouti Regional Training Centre (DRTC).
• Sana’a ISC equipped and operational.
• Mombasa MRCC became operational as a counter-piracy ISC.
• Dar es Salaam SRSC became operational as a counter-piracy ISC.
• On-going review of existing national legislation of Djibouti Code signatory States. Development of model legislation and regulations. Close co-operation with UNODC, UN Department of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea and the CGPCS.
• Legal workshop held in conjunction with UNODC in Djibouti.
• IMO assisted EU to run training courses at the Interim Centre in Djibouti.
• A joint IMO/UNODC project to draft legislation for the Somaliland coast guard was initiated.
• Extensive series of workshops and training courses with Governments and their agencies undertaken in the region.

Against objective 6:
• Continuing engagement with the CGPCS.
• Seamen’s Church Institute Post-Piracy Care for Seafarers guidance promulgated by industry organizations and by EUNAVFOR.
• Assembly resolution A.1044(27) strongly urges Governments to encourage owners and operators of ships entitled to fly their flag to fully consider the provision of post-traumatic care for seafarers attacked or held hostage by pirates, and for their families.
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IMO Assembly adopts wide range of resolutions

A wide range of resolutions, reflecting the broad canvas of the Organization’s work, was adopted by the 27th Assembly of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), when it met in London at the Organization’s Headquarters from 21 to 30 November 2011.

They included a resolution urging Governments to continue their efforts to combat piracy and armed robbery against ships off the coast of Somalia and a resolution firmly establishing 25 June each year as the “Day of the Seafarer”.

The Assembly also adopted the high-level action and strategic plans for the Organization; the Organization’s budget for 2012 to 2013; and several updated codes and guidance documents.

Piracy and armed robbery against ships

The resolution on piracy and armed robbery against ships in waters off the coast of Somalia condemns and deplores all acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships, irrespective of where such acts have occurred or may occur; and expresses deep sympathy for the loss of seafarers, while in captivity, for their plight while held hostage in appalling conditions, often for long periods of time, and for their families.

Expanding on a similar resolution adopted by the previous IMO Assembly, the resolution notes the extensive efforts undertaken by IMO and others to address piracy, in particular during 2011, when the theme for World Maritime Day of “Piracy – Orchestrating the response” has underscored much of the Organization’s work. It appeals to all parties that may be able to assist to take action, within the provisions of international law, to ensure that all acts or attempted acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships are terminated forthwith and that any plans for committing such acts are also forthwith abandoned; and that any hijacked ships, seafarers serving on them and any other persons on board such ships are immediately and unconditionally released and that no harm is caused to them.
Among other things, the resolution strongly urges Governments that have not already done so to do everything in their power, promptly, to ensure that ships entitled to fly their flag comply with the preventive, evasive and defensive measures detailed in the best management practice guidance already promulgated through IMO.

It also urges Governments, taking into account the interim recommendations and guidance developed by the Organization, to decide, as a matter of national policy, whether ships entitled to fly their flag should be authorized to carry privately contracted armed security personnel and, if so, under what conditions. In addition, port and coastal States are strongly urged to promulgate their national policies on the embarkation, disembarkation and carriage of privately contracted armed security personnel and of firearms, ammunition and security-related equipment to be used by such personnel on board ships; and to make those policies and procedures known to the shipping industry, to the providers of privately contracted armed security personnel, and to all Member Governments.

The resolution also strongly urges Governments to encourage owners and operators of ships entitled to fly their flag to consider fully the provision of post-traumatic care for seafarers attacked or held hostage by pirates, and for their families and, in so doing, take into account recommendations and good practice guidance produced by the Organization, the shipping industry and welfare organizations; and to establish, as necessary and when requested, plans and procedures to keep substantially interested States informed, as appropriate, about the welfare of seafarers in captivity on ships entitled to fly their flag, measures being taken for the early release of such seafarers and the status of payment of their wages.

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**Strategic and High-level Action Plans**

IMO’s High-level Action Plan for 2012-2013 sets out in detail the planned outputs for the biennium and links them to the six-year Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan identifies strategic directions and specific actions aimed at addressing current trends, developments and challenges, including:

- piracy and armed robbery against ships;
- the impact of global shipping activities on the environment, including the need to contribute to international efforts to reduce atmospheric pollution and address climate change;
- the need to eliminate sub-standard shipping;
- the implementation of security measures while ensuring that the flow of seaborne trade continues to be smooth and efficient;
- identifying shipping activities and incidents that could have an adverse impact on the environment and developing corresponding preventive measures;
- the need to place increased emphasis on the contribution of the human element to safer, more secure and environmentally friendly shipping;
- the continuing challenge of safety of life at sea;
- the implementation of effective measures to address the issues of migrants transported by sea, stowaways and the humanitarian aspects of piracy and armed robbery against ships;
- ensuring an equitable and sustainable means of funding for the integrated technical co-operation programme and to improve its delivery, efficiency and effectiveness; and
- ensuring that technological developments adopted are conducive, as applicable, to enhancing maritime safety, security, protection of the environment and facilitation of international maritime traffic, and take into account the need for their global application.

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**Budget**

The Assembly adopted the Organization’s budget for the next biennium, agreeing to a total appropriation of £62,206,200, comprising an appropriation of £30,520,200 for 2012 and an appropriation of £31,686,000 for 2013.

**Appointment of the Secretary-General**

The Assembly endorsed the decision of the IMO Council in June to elect Mr. Koji Sekimizu (Japan) as IMO Secretary-General, to start a four-year term on 1 January 2012. The outgoing Secretary-General, Mr. Efthimios E. Mitropoulos (Greece) ended his second four-year term on 31 December 2011.

The Assembly also adopted a resolution expressing deep appreciation for the work of Mr. Mitropoulos as Secretary-General and designating him Secretary-General Emeritus of IMO, with effect from 1 January 2012.

**Day of the Seafarer**

The Assembly adopted a resolution on the Day of the Seafarer, establishing 25 June of each year as the “Day of the Seafarer”, recognizing the invaluable contribution seafarers make to international trade and the world economy, often at great personal cost to themselves and their families. The resolution invites Governments, shipping organizations, companies, shipowners and all other parties concerned to promote and celebrate the Day in an appropriate and meaningful manner.

The Day of the Seafarer was first celebrated in 2011, following its establishment by a resolution adopted by the Conference of Parties to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, held in Manila, Philippines, in June 2010, which adopted major revisions to the STCW Convention and Code.

The Day of the Seafarer has now been included in the annual list of United Nations Observances.
Reducing administrative burdens

The Assembly also adopted a resolution on Periodic Review of Administrative Requirements in Mandatory IMO Instruments, which requests the Council to establish an Ad Hoc Steering Group for Reducing Administrative Requirements, with the aim of releasing resources from administrative tasks for Administrations and industry alike, thus contributing to the Organization’s goals of efficient regulation of safety and security of shipping and the prevention and control of pollution by ships.

IMO Assembly background

The 27th session of the IMO Assembly was held at IMO Headquarters, London, from 21 to 30 November 2011 and was attended by some 1,200 delegates from IMO Member States, as well as observers from international organizations.

The Assembly is IMO’s highest governing body. All 170 Member States and three Associate Members are entitled to participate, as are intergovernmental organizations with which agreements of co-operation have been concluded, and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO. The Assembly normally meets once every two years, in regular session.

IMO Assembly elects new 40-Member Council

The Assembly elected the following States to be Members of the IMO Council for the 2012-2013 biennium:

Category (a) 10 States with the largest interest in providing international shipping services:
- China, Greece, Italy, Japan, Norway, Panama, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States.

Category (b) 10 States with the largest interest in international seaborne trade:
- Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, India, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden.

Category (c) 20 States not elected under (a) or (b) above, which have special interests in maritime transport or navigation and whose election to the Council will ensure the representation of all major geographic areas of the world:
- Australia, Bahamas, Belgium, Chile, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Liberia, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey.

The Council is the executive organ of IMO and is responsible, under the Assembly, for supervising the work of the Organization. Between sessions of the Assembly, the Council performs all the functions of the Assembly, except that of making recommendations to Governments on maritime safety and pollution prevention.

The newly elected Council met, following the conclusion of the 27th Assembly, for its 107th session.

Resolutions adopted

Altogether, 27 resolutions were adopted by the Assembly:

- A.1033(27) Day of the Seafarer
- A.1034(27) Appreciation of the services to the Organization of Mr. Efthimios E. Mitropoulos
- A.1035(27) Approval of the appointment of the Secretary-General
- A.1036(27) Appointment of the external auditor
- A.1037(27) Strategic Plan for the Organization (for the six-year period 2012 to 2017)
- A.1038(27) High-level action plan of the Organization and priorities for the 2012-2013 biennium
- A.1039(27) Results-based budget for the 2012-2013 biennium
- A.1040(27) Presentation of accounts and audit reports
- A.1041(27) Areades of contributions
- A.1042(27) Revision of the Organization’s financial regulations (effective 1 January 2012)
- A.1043(27) Periodic review of administrative requirements in mandatory IMO instruments
- A.1044(27) Piracy and armed robbery against ships in waters off the coast of Somalia
- A.1045(27) Pilot transfer arrangements
- A.1046(27) World-Wide Radionavigation System
- A.1047(27) Principles of minimum safe manning
- A.1050(27) Revised recommendations for entering enclosed spaces aboard ships
- A.1051(27) IMO/WMO Worldwide met-ocean information and warning service guidance document
- A.1053(27) Survey guidelines under the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification (HSSC), 2011
- A.1054(27) Code for the implementation of mandatory IMO instruments, 2011
- A.1055(27) Issue of Bunkers Certificates to ships that are also required to hold a CLC Certificate
- A.1056(27) Promotion as widely as possible of the application of the 2006 Guidelines on fair treatment of seafarers in the event of a maritime accident
- A.1057(27) Issue of Wreck Removal Certificates to bareboat registered vessels
- A.1058(27) Collation and preservation of evidence following an allegation of a serious crime having taken place on board a ship or following a report of a missing person from a ship, and pastoral and medical care of victims
- A.1059(27) Relations with Non-Governmental Organizations
SLF tackles tanker stability

Draft Guidelines for verification of damage stability requirements for tankers were agreed, in principle, by the Sub-Committee on Stability and Load Lines and on Fishing Vessels’ Safety (SLF), when it met for its 54th session.

When the ongoing work to develop the related mandatory carriage requirements for stability instruments is completed, both measures will be submitted to the MSC for approval.

The guidelines are intended to be applied to oil tankers, chemical tankers and gas carriers, constructed on or after a date to be agreed by the MSC. They address the scope of damage stability verification, which is determined by the required damage stability standards (applicable damage stability criteria) and aim at providing the ship’s master with a sufficient number of approved loading conditions to be used for the loading of the ship.

The Sub-Committee also agreed associated draft amendments, referring to damage stability calculations, to the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966, as modified by the Protocol of 1988 relating thereto, for submission to MSC 90 for approval, with a view to subsequent adoption.

Draft amendments to OSV Guidelines agreed

The Sub-Committee agreed draft amendments to the Guidelines for the design and construction of offshore supply vessels, 2006 (resolution MSC.235(82)), concerning damage stability standards, for submission to MSC 90 for adoption.

SOLAS chapter II-1 stability review continued

The Sub-Committee made substantial progress with an ongoing review of SOLAS chapter II-1 subdivision and damage stability regulations. Acknowledging the need to take into account the outcome of various ongoing related research projects, the Sub-Committee invited the MSC to extend the target completion year for this output to 2013.

Unified interpretation on guard rails agreed

The Sub-Committee agreed a draft circular on Unified interpretations to the 1966 LL Convention and the 1988 LL Protocol regarding guard rails, intended to clarify the relevant regulations due to the fact that, on some ships, fitting the brackets or stays in accordance with the above provisions may be impractical (e.g. on ships fitted with gantry cranes); may constitute trip hazards; or may otherwise impede progress in restricted spaces.

Tonnage Measurement correspondence group

The Sub-Committee continued its work in reviewing the 1969 International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships and established a correspondence group to: develop provisions to ensure the integrity and uniform implementation of the 1969 TM Convention; review the rules and requirements of the 1969 TM Convention; recommend and develop revised/updated interpretations of the 1969 TM Convention; identify areas for improvement of the 1969 TM Convention; recommend and develop draft amendments to the 1969 TM Convention, as appropriate; and report to the next session.

SDS correspondence group re-established

Following discussion during the session, the Sub-Committee re-established the Correspondence Group on Subdivision and Damage Stability (SDS) to: finalize draft amendments to SOLAS chapter II-1 subdivision and damage stability provisions and the related Explanatory Notes; finalize draft amendments to the Recommendation on a standard method for evaluating cross-flooding arrangements (resolution MSC.245(83)); further consider the development of guidelines for the approval of damage stability modules for safe return to port; and to work further on the damage stability regulations for ro-ro passenger ships, with a view to reporting to the next session.

Second generation intact stability criteria

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the correspondence group on the development of second generation intact stability criteria and agreed that, while the work had been progressed considerably, there were still a large number of issues to consider. The Sub Committee agreed on a revised plan of action for further work on the matter and re established the Intact Stability Correspondence Group.

Towing and anchor handling operations

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Production processes at sea to be prohibited

A draft SOLAS regulation to prohibit production processes on board ships was agreed by the Sub-Committee on Bulk Liquids and Gases (BLG) when it met for its 16th session with the sampling and analysis protocols, with the view to its finalisation.

Enclosed space entry and rescue drills agreed
The Sub-Committee agreed draft amendments to SOLAS regulation III/19 to mandate enclosed space entry and rescue drills, which had been agreed by the Sub-Committee on Dangerous Goods, Solid cargoes and Containers (DSC 16), noting that there was general support for additional requirements for the mandatory carriage and continuous use of an oxygen meter or other such devices on all ships.

Minimizing biofouling on recreational craft
The Sub-Committee agreed draft Guidance for minimizing the transfer of invasive aquatic species as biofouling (hull fouling) for recreational craft, for submission to the MEPC 64 in October 2012 for approval. The development of the guidance follows the adoption by the MEPC of Guidelines for the control and management of ships’ biofouling to minimize the transfer of invasive aquatic species (resolution MEPC.207(62)).

MARPOL unified Interpretation agreed
The Sub-Committee agreed the draft Unified Interpretation for the use of sludge oil during the warm-up process of continuous-feed type shipboard incinerators, for consideration and approval by MEPC 64. The draft interpretation relates to regulation 16.9 regarding Shipboard Incineration of MARPOL Annex VI on Regulations for the Prevention of Air Pollution from Ships.

Work on developing IGF and IGC Codes
The Sub-Committee continued its work on the development of a new international code of safety for ships using gases or other low flash-point fuels (IGF Code) and on the revision of the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships carrying Liquefied Gases in Bulk (IGC Code), with agreement to forward relevant parts of the draft revised IGC Code to other Sub-Committees for their input. The Sub-Committee also established a correspondence group to further develop the IGF Code intersessionally.

Draft amendments to IBC code agreed
The Sub-Committee agreed a number of proposed amendments to chapters 17, 18 and 19 of the IBC Code, relating to specific products, for submission to MEPC 63 and MSC 90 for approval and adoption.
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Captain Seog Hae-gyun of the Republic of Korea, Master of the chemical tanker *Samho Jewelry*, has been presented with the IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea 2011, for his decisive, brave and courageous actions to protect his ship and crew during a vicious pirate attack in the Indian Ocean, which left him with serious and long-lasting injuries.

Captain Seog, accompanied by his wife, was handed the award by then IMO Secretary-General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos, during a ceremony held on 21 November 2011 at IMO Headquarters in London. When the *Samho Jewelry* was boarded by pirates, in January 2011, the crew took cover in the designated citadel but the pirates broke in, detaining them on the bridge. Over two days, Captain Seog steered the ship on a zig-zag course, so that the pirates would not realize that the vessel was actually heading away from, instead of towards, Somali waters. He contaminated the fuel so the engines would not work normally, pretended the steering gear was malfunctioning and slowed the ship’s speed from 14 knots to six, to keep her out of Somali waters for as long as possible, thus maximizing the potential for units of the Republic of Korea Navy to attempt a rescue. However, the pirates became suspicious that some of Captain Seog’s actions were intended to outwit them and they brutally assaulted him, causing serious fractures to his legs and shoulders.

While all this was happening, the pirates ordered him to communicate information about the incident to his shipping company in English, via satellite. Captain Seog surreptitiously inserted information in Korean about the true situation – information that proved vital for the Navy of his country to gain full control of the bridge. During this time, Captain Seog, despite his injuries, managed to send out an urgent message via VHF, warning the boarding party that there were three pirates at the steering wheel.

The already-injured Captain Seog survived being shot four times, including twice in the abdomen, by pirates firing in revenge. Having received emergency treatment from the Special Assault Commando, he was transported by means of an inflatable craft and a helicopter to the Sultan Qaboos Hospital in Oman. Meanwhile, the Republic of Korea naval forces involved in the assault continued operations on the ship, and all 21 crew members eventually were freed. In all, eight pirates were killed and five captured.

From the Omani hospital, Captain Seog was transferred to a hospital in the Republic of Korea, where he underwent major surgery. It was nearly a month before he recovered full consciousness.

Mr. Mitropoulos said that the fact that Captain Seog’s act of bravery has been judged as deserving the top honour had particular resonance this year, “when piracy has been at the epicentre of our activities, spurring and motivating us to orchestrate a credible response to its menace”.

“Captain Seog Hae-gyun was confronted not by the elements that nature can throw at men and ships, but an even more insidious danger: that of pirates threatening him, his crew and his ship. In response, he acted with quick thinking, courageously, decisively and with extreme bravery to protect all those whose lives depended on him and his decisions. His selfless reaction left him with severe injuries and nearly cost him his life,” Mr. Mitropoulos said.

The Award takes the form of a silver medal depicting, on one side, a search and rescue operation with a sinking ship in the background and a helicopter rescuing survivors from the sea in the foreground, with the IMO logo on the reverse side.

**Special recognition to MRCCs Falmouth and Stavanger**

During the ceremony, special Certificates of Commendation were awarded to the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCCs) Falmouth (United Kingdom) and Stavanger (Norway), for their contribution, on several occasions, to search and rescue operations unfolding in distant areas, far away from their respective countries’ search and rescue regions, over many years.

**Certificates to highly commended nominees**

In addition to the Award itself, certificates were also presented during the ceremony to the following “highly commended” nominees or their representatives:

- **Mr. Wang Hao**, rescue swimmer of the B-7313 SAR helicopter aircrew, Bei Hai Search and Rescue Flying Service, Ministry of Transport, China, nominated by China, for keeping an injured fisherman alive by removing a cable that had been wrapped around the injured man’s neck during a hoisting operation in heavy seas, in January 2011.
- **Captain Cao Deguang**, Master of the rescue vessel *Bei Hai Jiu 111*, Bei Hai
Rescue Bureau, Ministry of Transport, China, nominated by China, for rescuing, in severe weather, in December 2010, all six crew members of the bauxite carrier, Li Zhou 8, which had had its hatch covers ripped off by high winds and was taking on water.

Mr. Guo Wenbiao, who has been responsible for saving many lives since setting up the first self-financing, volunteer life-saving station (called “Folk Relieving Station of the Sea Peace”) in Zhejiang Province, China, in 2008. He was nominated by China for attempting to rescue seven crew members of a fishing vessel, diving seven times and locating six bodies in the cabin, in May 2010, after professional divers had given up the search.

The crew of the container ship Charlotte Maersk, nominated by Denmark, for fighting and extinguishing an aggressive, fast-evolving fire aboard their ship, in July 2010. The fire erupted shortly after the ship left Port Klang, Malaysia. Huge flames leapt 50 metres in height and violent explosions ripped through containers, many of which were carrying dangerous goods. The Master and 21 crew members successfully fought the fire without professional help, putting their own lives at stake to stop the fire from spreading and thereby save their ship and cargo.

Third Petty Officer Jesús Damián Orta Salénz and Corporal Edgar José Iturriaga Cariño, rescue swimmers of the Mexican Navy, based in Yúkalché, Yucatán. They were nominated by Mexico, for rescuing seven persons from the grounded fishing vessel, Hulkín V, in June 2010. Their ocean patrol vessel could not, owing to its draught, approach the stranded ship, from which it remained at a distance of 600 metres, forcing the two rescuers to undertake a long and exhausting swim to and from the Hulkín V – an exercise, which they had to repeat several times in heavy seas, to bring back all the survivors.

The Master and crew of the general cargo ship Momentum Scan, nominated by the Netherlands, for their tireless and persistent efforts in rescuing 226 migrants, including women and children, from a 20-metre long wooden boat that was taking on water and sinking, in harsh weather and heavy seas, in the Adriatic Sea, in January 2011 – this, despite their having no previous search and rescue experience.

The crew of the Coast Guard rescue helicopter 6022, U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater, U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater, with special individual recognition to rescue swimmer AST2 Sara Faulkner, (nominated by the United States of America) for rescuing, at night, all three people from the yacht Arkur. The yacht had lost its engine and sail power off the Bahamas, in December 2010. Cohesive teamwork ensured the rescue was successful, despite large swells, which hampered the hoisting of survivors aboard the helicopter.

Chief Engineer Anthony Gervasio and Qualified Member of the Engineering Department (QMED) Louis Longlois, crewmembers of the offshore supply vessel Damon B. Bankston, nominated by the United States of America, for placing their own lives at risk while rescuing survivors from the Deepwater Horizon Mobile Offshore Drilling Unit, in the Gulf of Mexico, following a devastating explosion on the rig in April 2010. The Damon B. Bankston crew, who had been standing-by for a routine transfer, deployed the vessel’s fast rescue craft after hearing the explosion and Mr. Gervasio and Mr. Longlois directly saved 23 lives, locating people in the water amidst flames and debris raining down. They went on to assist in the rescue of another 92 people from the rig’s lifeboats.
Letters of Commendation

Furthermore, letters of commendation were sent to the following nominees:

- Six Australian Customs and Border Protection Service Marine Enforcement Officers serving aboard the Australian Customs and Border Protection Vessel Triton, and 12 members of the Australian Defence Force serving on the patrol boat HMAS Pirie, nominated by Australia, for rescuing 41 survivors from a small wooden vessel which had smashed against rocks off Christmas Island, in December 2010, with an estimated 70 to 100 persons on board. The rescuers spent some ten hours picking up survivors and recovering bodies.

- The crew of the helicopter UH-12 “N-7051”, call sign Albatroz 51, of the Brazilian Navy 5th Squad of Helicopters for General Use, nominated by Brazil, for rescuing all three survivors from a yacht that had gone adrift off the coast of Brazil, in February 2011. The three survivors had to be hoisted from the heavy seas and required the helicopter’s diver to go into the water himself, as the height of the yacht’s mast meant that rescue directly from the yacht’s deck was impossible.

- The crew of the rescue tugboat Nan Hai Jiu 197, Nan Hai Rescue Bureau, Ministry of Transport, China, nominated by China, for saving four out of five persons aboard a small cargo ship that had sunk in severe weather, in January 2011. The crew decided to launch the tugboat’s small lifeboat, despite the heavy waves, as it would be faster than the tugboat itself. They searched for and rescued four survivors, who had been adrift in lifejackets in the cold sea.

- The crew of the fishing boat Zhe Ping Yu 0158, nominated by China, for the rescue of three crew members from the stricken fishing vessel Cang Long Yu 022 during super-typhoon Fanapi, in September 2010. In severe weather they deftly manoeuvred their boat alongside the damaged vessel, before transferring the crew and then towing it to safety.

- Italian Coast Guard 7th Naval Squadron, Lampedusa, Sicily, nominated by Italy for working day and night, seven days a week, to save the lives of thousands of people from boats and rafts adrift or sinking in the waters surrounding the island of Lampedusa. Most of those rescued were refugees or migrants and included pregnant women and others needing medical attention.

- Captain Zaw Aung and the crew of the chemical tanker MTM Princess, nominated by Myanmar, for rescuing all four persons from the yacht Octagon, which had lost its steering and was taking on water. The rescue took place in darkness, bad weather and heavy seas, in the Atlantic Ocean, 300 miles north west of Spain, in June 2010.

- Captain Jeffrey J. Federigan of the cargo ship Delmas Nacala, nominated by the Philippines, for out-maneuvering, over a period of three hours, pirates in two skiffs, 600 miles off the coast of Seychelles, in March 2010. The pirates repeatedly attempted to reach the ship, firing at it with rocket-propelled grenades, but the Master performed zig-zag manoeuvres and successfully evaded boarding.

- The crew of the patrol ship Taepyøng-yang No.9, from the Coast Guard of the Republic of Korea, nominated by the Republic of Korea, for rescuing all three crew members and 12 passengers from a cargo-passenger ship, in high winds, heavy seas and snow, in December 2010. The ship had already started sinking when it made the distress call but capsized within minutes of the patrol vessel arriving. Seven people were thrown into the freezing water from which they were rescued, while the other eight people were recovered from the upturned ship.
The crew of the Coast Guard MH-60J helicopter CG 6007, U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak, nominated by the United States of America, for rescuing, at night, in blowing snow and sub-zero temperatures, all five crew members from a stranded fishing vessel, in Alaska, in February 2011. The survivors were hoisted to safety one by one, as the helicopter worked in dangerous conditions, avoiding swinging masts, rigging and a nearby cliff.

Bei Hai SAR Flying Service, China Rescue and Salvage Bureau, Ministry of Transport, China, nominated by the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF), for hoisting to safety, under difficult conditions, all 25 persons clinging on to a damaged drilling platform, which was tilting at a 45 degree angle, in heavy seas and high winds, in September 2010.

Mr. Zhou Guoxiong, boatswain of the rescue vessel Dong Hai Jiu 113, Donghai Rescue Bureau, Ministry of Transport, China, nominated by the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF), for his personal involvement in saving six of the 17 people who had been lost overboard when their cargo ship sank, in December 2010, in darkness and rough seas. At one point Mr. Zhou Guoxiong jumped into the cold water to help a survivor who was too weak to grab the rescue rope himself.

**IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea**

The IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea was established by IMO to provide international recognition to those who, at the risk of losing their own life, perform acts of exceptional bravery in attempting to save life at sea or in attempting to prevent or mitigate damage to the marine environment – and, by so doing, help to raise the profile of shipping and enhance its image.

A total of 38 nominations from 14 Member States and one non-governmental organization in consultative status with IMO were received and considered by an Assessment Panel consisting of experts nominated by various international non-governmental organizations. A Panel of Judges then met, under the chairmanship of the Chairman of the IMO Council, with the participation of the Chairmen of IMO’s Maritime Safety, Marine Environment Protection, Legal, Technical Co-operation, and Facilitation Committees.
IMO Secretary-General pledges support for Philippines maritime development

IMO Secretary-General Sekimizu has pledged IMO's support for the Philippines in all facets of the country's maritime development.

In wide-ranging talks in Manila with Philippines' President Benigno S. Aquino III (right), as well as the country's Secretaries for Foreign Affairs, Transport and Communication, and Labour and Employment, Mr Sekimizu expressed his appreciation for the efforts made by the Government of the Philippines to provide a continuous supply of competent seafarers to the global shipping community. He also affirmed IMO's commitment to provide the Philippines with assistance in all aspects of its maritime development, including the fields of education, training, and certification of seafarers under the STCW Convention.

The Secretary-General spoke of his vision of a wider approach to technical cooperation, which would be based directly on the identification, through detailed country profiles, of the individual maritime needs of each developing country. He further promised IMO's support for the Philippines' efforts to formulate a national maritime transport strategy, which would provide a springboard for the development of maritime clusters in the country, comprising seafaring, ship building and repair, and ship management.

Mr Sekimizu and the Secretary of Transport and Communication, Mr Mar Roxas, agreed to establish an informal channel of communication between IMO and the Philippine Government, specifically to address any matters arising from the implementation of the STCW Convention and the 2010 Manila amendments, with a view to improving the mechanism for addressing certification issues.

Emphasizing IMO's determinations to improve counter-piracy measures off the coast of Somalis, the Secretary-General extended an invitation to the Philippines to send a delegation to the forthcoming conference on Capacity-building to Counter Piracy, to be held at IMO on 15 May, followed by a High Level Segment on the opening day (16 May 2012) of the Maritime Safety Committee, to discuss the issue of arms on board ships.

Mr Sekimizu also met leaders of the Philippine maritime industry, whom he commended for their contribution, through the supply of 25 per cent of the world's seafarers, to the economic growth of the Philippines and of Asia as a whole. Noting the significant role of national shipping within the Philippine archipelago, he encouraged the industry to take appropriate action to ensure the safety of domestic navigation. He also urged the industry as a whole to take steps, wherever possible, to raise public awareness of the maritime industry and its importance to the world economy.

At the conclusion of his visit, Mr Sekimizu said he had been encouraged by the steps being taken by the Philippine authorities to ratify a number of IMO instruments. He also felt reassured, throughout his meetings with government officials, by the determination of the Philippine Government to continue to ensure the compliance of its seafarers with the required standards of competence.

Action plan adopted for east Asia domestic ferry safety

A detailed action plan addressing domestic ferry safety in the east Asia sub-region was agreed by participants in a forum on the subject organized by IMO and held in Bali, Indonesia, on 6 and 7 December 2011.

Attended by delegates from several Governments as well industry organization Interferry, the Regional Forum on Domestic Ferry Safety adopted an eight-point plan which, among other things, calls on Governments to assist ship owners and operators to provide fit-for-purpose vessels that are compliant with national rules and regulations and to support and monitor ships' masters and operators to ensure that safety obligations are being properly fulfilled.

It also called for Governments to designate relevant focal points to participate in regular dialogue with, and to share relevant data among, all those with an interest in domestic ferry safety, to help identify critical issues that lead to accidents and casualties with a view to formulating effective solutions.

For the full text of the action plan, visit http://bit.ly/tG542a

The Forum, organized as part of IMO’s Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme, and in collaboration with Interferry and the Directorate General of Sea Transportation of Indonesia, discussed issues such as hazardous weather, vessel design and construction, overcrowding and the poor enforcement of rules, all of which may be considered to be significant contributory factors leading to accidents and fatalities.

Delegates included administrators and policy makers with responsibility for the implementation and enforcement of domestic ferry safety requirements in their countries, as well as ferry operators and other industry representatives from the private sector.

Altogether 74 participants from Australia, Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, United States, Viet Nam and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community attended. The private sector was represented by Interferry and Interferry’s membership including participants from classification societies (the American Bureau of Shipping and Det Norske Veritas).
Four United Nations agencies, including IMO, have launched a plan to improve the management of oceans and coastal areas. The Blueprint for Ocean and Coastal Sustainability sounds the alarm about the health of the oceans, and explains how they influence our everyday life by regulating the climate, providing highly-nutritious food resources and by sustaining livelihoods and economies. It recalls that although the ocean accounts for 70 per cent of the surface of our planet, only one per cent of it is protected.

Presented at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Headquarters in November, the Blueprint was prepared for consideration by the UN conference on sustainable development (Rio+20, June 2012).

It proposes a series of concrete measures to:

- Create a global blue carbon market as a means of creating direct economic gain through habitat protection
- Fill governance gaps in the high seas, by reinforcing the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)
- Support the development of green economies in small island developing states
- Promote research on how to adapt to, and mitigate, ocean acidification
- Increase institutional capacity for scientific monitoring of oceans and coastal areas
- Reform and reinforce regional ocean management organisations
- Promote responsible fisheries and aquaculture in a green economy
- Strengthen legal frameworks to address aquatic invasive species
- “Green” the nutrient economy (fertilizers for example) to reduce ocean hypoxia and promote food security
- Enhance coordination, coherence and effectiveness of the UN system on ocean issues.

The Blueprint was prepared by UNESCO’s Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and IMO.

It emphasizes that 60 per cent of the world’s major marine ecosystems have been degraded or are being used unsustainably, resulting in huge economic and social losses. Mangrove forests have lost 30 to 50 per cent of their original cover while coral reefs have lost 20 per cent, increasing the vulnerability of many highly populated coastal areas. The ocean absorbs close to 26 per cent of atmospheric carbon dioxide emissions which is provoking acidification that is already threatening some varieties of plankton and poses a threat to the entire marine food chain and dependant socio-economic activities.

Some of these phenomena are not new but are aggravated by cumulative pressures such as climate change, intensified human activity and technological advances. Furthermore, ecosystems situated in the deep ocean, where biodiversity and habitats often have major value, but are generally not well understood, have virtually no protection at all.

The international community pledged to tackle these challenges at the Summits of Rio (1992) and Johannesburg (2002). However the commitments made remain largely ineffectual and their objectives have not been met. Such has been the case for the pledge to restore fish stocks to sustainable levels by 2015, and the promise to create networks of protected marine areas by 2012. Few countries have adopted legislation to reduce land-based marine pollution, leading to an increase in the number of dead ocean areas. More than 400 marine areas have been listed as “biologically dead” to date.

“The full implementation of many of these goals and targets will require further efforts by States, intergovernmental organizations and the international community,” state the authors of the report. They claim the present situation is the result of insufficient political will and resources, inadequate institutional capacities, insufficient scientific data and market imbalances.

“Greening the Blue Economy will be science and technology driven,” they conclude. “But success will depend on sound policy processes and effective institutional arrangements and will therefore require commitment and funding from the international community as well as nations and industry.”

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