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Circular Letter No.4886  
12 June 2024

To: All IMO Members  
Intergovernmental organizations  
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status

Subject: **Communication from the Government of the Republic of the Philippines**

The Government of the Republic of the Philippines has sent the attached communication, dated 4 June 2024, with the request that it be circulated by the Organization.

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**Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines**  
Pasuguan ng Republika ng Pilipinas  
**London**



LTR-~~86~~ TLL -2024

4 June 2024

Dear Secretary-General,

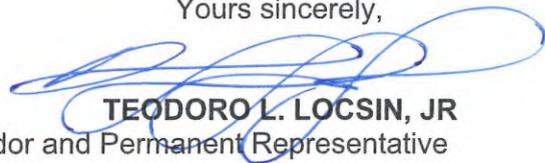
As mentioned in a previous telephone conversation, the Philippine Mission to the United Nations in Geneva will be tabling a resolution on the promotion and protection of the human rights of seafarers, at the 56<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council from 18 June – 12 July 2024.

In broad strokes, the draft resolution aims to deliver a strong political message on the urgent need for all shipping industry stakeholders to effectively promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all seafarers, in line with international human rights instruments. The draft also recognizes the initiatives taken by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to promote safe and decent living and working conditions for seafarers.

Attached is a copy of the draft resolution. We hope you could share this information with other IMO member states who in turn could encourage their respective Missions in Geneva to support the resolution.

I avail myself of this opportunity to reiterate the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,



**TEODORO L. LOCSIN, JR**  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative

**MR. ARSENIO DOMINGUEZ**  
Secretary-General  
International Maritime Organization  
London

## ***Promotion and protection of the human rights of seafarers***

The Human Rights Council,

[PP1] *Reaffirming* the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and relevant international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,

[PP2] *Reaffirming* also the Maritime Labor Convention of 2006, as amended, and other relevant ILO instruments,

[PP3] *Acknowledging* the pivotal role of seafarers in the global shipping industry which transports around 90%<sup>1</sup> of world trade essential to the normal functioning of society thus contributing to the progressive realization of human rights, (Based on PP5 and PP6 of A/RES/75/17),

[PP4] *Recognizing* the human rights of seafarers, including freedom of association and the effective recognition of collective bargaining, elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labor, elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation, a safe and secure work place, fair terms of employment, decent working and living conditions on board ship, and social protection, (Enumeration based on Articles III and IV of MLC 2006, as amended)

[PP5] *Mindful* of the challenging working and living conditions at sea that could pose risks to seafarers', including women seafarers', human rights, safety, and well-being, which are aggravated by crisis situations such as unlawful attacks against maritime navigation,

[PP6] *Expressing* grave concern over unlawful acts<sup>2</sup> against maritime navigation that threaten the human rights, safety, and well-being of seafarers and other persons on board ship,

[PP7] *Recognizing* the initiatives taken by the International Maritime Organization and International Labor Organization to promote safe and decent living and working conditions for seafarers;

[PP8] *Considering* that, given the global nature of the shipping industry, seafarers need special protection, [PP7 of MLC 2006, as amended]

1. *Reaffirms* the obligation of States Parties to the 2006 Maritime Labor Convention, as amended, to cooperate with each other for the purpose of ensuring decent living and working conditions of seafarers;
2. Calls upon all stakeholders, particularly States, shipowners' representatives, and seafarers' representatives, to enhance the enforcement of the 2006

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<sup>1</sup>See <https://www.oecd.org/ocean/topics/ocean-shipping/>. <https://www.ics-shipping.org/shipping-See> also [fact/shipping-and-world-trade-world-seaborne-trade/](https://www.ics-shipping.org/shipping-See).

<sup>2</sup> Defined in Article 3 of the Convention for the Suppression of unlawful attacks against the safety of maritime navigation (concluded on 10 March 1988).

Maritime Labor Convention, as amended and other relevant regulatory frameworks and mechanisms to ensure safe and decent living and working conditions for all seafarers;

3. *Further calls* upon States and other relevant shipping industry stakeholders to effectively promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of seafarers, including their right to life and right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, especially in crisis situations such as unlawful attacks against commercial vessels and, in this regard, further *urges* respect for:
    - i. The navigational rights and freedoms of commercial vessels, in accordance with international law; and
    - ii. The right of seafarers to refuse to sail on dangerous, high-risk waters, including areas under war-like conditions, and that such refusal should not negatively affect their employment competitiveness or future deployment.
  4. *Urges* States, consistent with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Human Rights, to uphold the principle of corporate responsibility to respect human rights in the shipping industry sector, by preventing, investigating, and providing redress to human rights abuses; [UNGP, p.3]
  5. *Calls* on business enterprises in the global shipping industry sector to meet their responsibility to respect human rights, including by instituting a human rights due diligence process to identify, prevent, mitigate and enable remediation for any adverse human rights impacts of business operations; [UNGP p. 19-21]
  6. *Urges* all stakeholders to step up efforts to advance gender equality and empowerment in the shipping industry sector by, among others, instituting policies, measures and programs to effectively prevent violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault, and all forms of discrimination on board vessels in order to foster an environment where women seafarers are safe and their rights protected;
  7. *Reiterates encouragement* for all shipping industry stakeholders to meaningfully celebrate the “Day of the Seafarer” every 25<sup>th</sup> of June in recognition of the unique contribution of seafarer from all over the world to international seaborne trade, the world economy and civil society as a whole; and [STCW/CONF.2/DC/4, Resolution 19 “Day of Seafarer”, June 2010]
  8. *Urges* stronger collaboration between States, shipowners representatives, seafarers representatives, the International Maritime Organization, the International Labor Organization, non-government organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure the effective enforcement of existing national and international regulatory frameworks and mechanisms to uphold and protect the rights and dignity of all seafarers all over the world.
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