

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe ENGLISH only
First Preparatory Conference
to the Sixteenth OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

“Maritime and inland waterways co-operation in the OSCE area: Increasing security and protecting the environment”

Helsinki, 10-11 September 2007

Security and environmental protection in the international maritime context

Good morning Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

My name is Andy Winbow and I am the Director of Administration at the International Maritime Organization – IMO - standing in today for the IMO Secretary-General Mr. Mitropoulos, who has asked me to pass on to you his apologies, as his travelling schedule has prevented him from attending in person.

I understand that the main focus of this meeting is on enhancing security and protecting the environment, with particular reference to the need for co-operation. Co-operation not only between the maritime and inland waterway sectors but also the many and diverse interests involved. I think it is fair to say that IMO has gained a great deal of experience over many years in creating its own international regulatory framework which, amongst other things, encompasses the issues of both security and environmental protection. It seems appropriate, therefore, to talk to you about some of the measures we have taken in this respect. Hopefully, there will be lessons to be drawn from our experiences that will be relevant in the particular context of this meeting.

First, a few words about IMO itself: IMO is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for the development and adoption of measures to improve the safety and security of international shipping and to prevent marine pollution from ships. The full list of shipping-related topics that make up the work of IMO is huge. Its international conventions, supported by literally hundreds of codes, guidelines and recommendations govern just about every facet of the shipping industry. But once these standards enter into force, it is for Member States to implement them through their national maritime laws and then to enforce them. IMO’s meetings include participation by a wide range of non-governmental organizations (representing organizations as different as the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)) which not only ensures specialist input to our technical standards but also leads to improved implementation of those same standards.

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Turning now to the two key issues on the agenda: security and environmental protection - first to matters of maritime security. The tragic events of 11 September 2001 in the United States were the catalyst for the merchant shipping community to undertake a comprehensive and internationally-based review of the security measures that were in place. IMO, with its mandate to develop the shipping industry's global regulatory regime, was the logical place for this review to be carried out.

Just over a year of intense work followed before, in 2002, a Conference at IMO Headquarters led to amendments to the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention. This historic meeting adopted a series of measures which combined to transform the face of maritime security and create the very first regime of internationally-recognized and approved security standards for international shipping – considerably expanding and tightening the provisions that had been in place previously.

Among its landmark decisions was to require, for the first time, that both ships and port facilities should appoint dedicated and properly trained security officers and have Government-approved security plans in place. IMO produced extensive guidance, including model training courses, to assist with uniform implementation of these provisions.

But perhaps most significantly, the Conference adopted the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code or ISPS Code, which effectively provides the blueprint for maritime security in today's troubled world. In essence, the SOLAS Convention and the related ISPS Code took the approach that ensuring the security of ships and port facilities is basically a risk-management activity. To determine what security measures are appropriate, an assessment of the risks must be made in each particular case. These measures recognize, however, that there is no such thing as 100 per cent security. The Code provides a standardised, consistent framework for evaluating risk, enabling Governments to offset changes in threat with changes in vulnerability for ships and port facilities through corresponding security measures. The Code established a three-tier system for escalating security levels and requires that ship and port security plans set out, in detail, the measures in place for each of those levels. IMO has developed detailed and extensive guidance on implementing its security provisions – much of which can be found on our website (www.imo.org).

Other resolutions adopted by the Conference addressed a number of key related maritime security issues, including the promotion of technical co-operation and assistance and the

enhancement of security in co-operation with other UN organizations. Our work in cooperation with the **International Labour Organization**, aimed at extending the port security provisions into other port areas, and with the **World Customs Organization** on issues including container and supply chain security.

Maintaining the security of shipping, which is a vital element of global society today, is something in which we all have a stake. In shipping, as in so many other arenas, there is a constant need to strike a balance between, on the one hand, regulations and their enforcement and, on the other, giving people the freedom they need to get on with their jobs. Nowhere is this dichotomy between regulation and freedom more apparent than in the area of maritime security.

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Turning now to environmental issues, when IMO first began to address environmental issues in the 1960s, the most serious problem at the time was the spillage of oil into the seas, either through accidents or poor operating practices. To tackle this effectively, in 1973, the Organization adopted an international convention on the prevention of pollution from ships, known universally as MARPOL.

Today, thanks to that treaty and several other IMO measures, the amount of oil finding its way into the sea from ships has diminished significantly, to the point where estimates suggest that less than one teaspoon of oil is spilt for every million gallons transported; or, put another way, some 99.9996 per cent of all oil transported by sea is delivered safely and without impact on the marine environment.

More than 30 years after its adoption, MARPOL – albeit much expanded, amended and updated – remains the most important international treaty covering the prevention of pollution by ships, whether from operational or accidental causes. Today, MARPOL has six separate annexes, five of which address pollution of the sea from ships by 1. oil; by 2. noxious liquid substances carried in bulk; by 3. harmful substances carried by sea in packaged form; by 4. sewage; and by 5. garbage. A sixth annex addresses the prevention of atmospheric pollution from ships.

IMO's environmental work in recent years has covered a remarkably broad canvas, from the quality of our atmosphere to the transport of microscopic aquatic life-forms around the world in ships' ballast water. As a result of which, whole ecosystems can be changed. In the United

States, the European Zebra Mussel has infested over 40% of internal waterways and it is estimated that between US\$750 million and US\$1 billion was spent on control measures between 1989 and 2000. In the other direction, in the Black Sea, the North American jellyfish has, on occasion, reached such densities that it has depleted native plankton stocks in the Black Sea to the extent that it contributed to the collapse of commercial fisheries.

IMO's work on ballast water management led to the adoption, in February 2004, of the Ballast Water Management Convention, and work is still continuing today. Other IMO Conventions deal with issues such as the use of harmful anti-fouling paint on ships' hulls and preparedness, response and co-operation in tackling pollution from oil and from hazardous and noxious substances. IMO has developed and runs a series of training courses worldwide to train those engaged in undertaking and managing spill response. Other conventions address the right of States to intervene on the high seas to prevent, mitigate or eliminate danger to their coastlines or related interests from pollution following a maritime casualty.

To conclude, perhaps the most significant threat to our environment today concerns atmospheric pollution. And, although the shipping industry is a relatively small contributor to the total volume of gas emissions – compared to road vehicles, aviation and public utilities, such as power stations – atmospheric pollution from ships has, nevertheless, been significantly reduced in the last decade. IMO continues to work towards further reductions as the evidence mounts and the world becomes more aware and more concerned about the further damage that might be caused if we do not address air pollution, global warming and climate change.

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Ladies and gentlemen, time is short and I aware that all the speakers today have been set strict time limits, so I will end this brief round-up of IMO's work at this point. I hope that I have provided some food for thought in the context of this preparatory meeting and, on behalf of the Secretary-General, I wish you every success with your future endeavours in increasing security and protecting the environment.

Thank you.

1528 words

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