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**IMPACTS ON SHIPPING AND SEAFARERS OF THE SITUATION IN THE BLACK SEA
AND THE SEA OF AZOV**

Impact on seafarers

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INTERCARGO, INTERFERRY, INTERMANAGER, INTERTANKO, IPTA, ITF and
P&I Clubs**

SUMMARY

Executive summary: The conflict in Ukraine is impacting seafarers' safety, security and welfare. The co-sponsors have developed a series of pragmatic and practical solutions to the issues faced by seafarers in this conflict.

Strategic direction, if applicable: 5 and Other work

Output: Strategic direction 5 aims to: Enhance global facilitation and security of international trade, however, the outputs are silent on war-like operations and their impact upon the security of shipping. Therefore, the output focuses on the overarching statement on security contained in the overarching principles for the organization's strategic plan 2018 to 2023 of Resolution A.1110(30), and OW 10.

Action to be taken: Paragraph 11

Related documents: None

Introduction

1 The conflict in Ukraine has and is having a significant impact upon the safety and security of seafarers and shipping. Multiple ships have been hit by munitions including missiles, shells and sea mines. Several seafarers have been killed, many more injured and several thousand are trapped in ships berthed in ports. The impact upon the seafarers and their families cannot be underestimated. The shipping industry views these attacks on innocent seafarers as totally unacceptable. In addition to the immediate security issues, the shipping industry has highlighted a series of concerns which should be considered by the Council due to their impacts on safety, security and international trade. These issues directly affect seafarers from Ukraine and Russia, who make up at least 15% of all seafarers as well as the wider community.

Seafarer safety

2 Seafarers serving on board ships in the waters off the conflict area have been subject to attack. Seafarers serving on board ships in the ports of the conflict area have been prevented from sailing as they may be subject to attack if they sail or are at risk from striking sea mines sown off the coast. The co-sponsors believe that ships should be allowed to sail from the ports provided their security can be assured. If their security cannot be secured, then humanitarian corridors should be set up so that seafarers can leave their place of work and return to a place of safety.

3 The co-sponsors have received multiple reports of harassment of seafarers due to their nationality in various ports. The co-sponsors believe that such action in ports around the world is totally unacceptable and should be condemned by the Council.

Seafarer welfare

4 Seafarers who are affected by this conflict need to maintain contact with home and their families. To do this, many shipowners are allowing free access to satellite internet services and waiving any limits on their use. The co-sponsors believe that satellite providers should work with the shipowners to facilitate this access at no cost to the seafarers.

5 Seafarers are not the intended target of economic sanctions and the co-sponsors are also very concerned by the inability to pay seafarers their wages due to either the banking system being physically closed or restricted as a result of the implementation of sanctions. Various electronic solutions have been proposed to allow seafarers access to their wages and the co-sponsors believe that IMO Member States should ensure that seafarers are able to access their wages.

6 Seafarers from the countries involved in the conflict are facing severe difficulties in joining and leaving ships due to the closure of airspace over their countries as a result of the conflict or the imposition of sanctions. This is already impacting crew changes and the co-sponsors believe that countries should acknowledge the key worker status of seafarers and allow their free movement by land.

7 The co-sponsors are concerned that upon return to countries in the conflict area, seafarers will be drafted into the military to serve in the conflict. The co-sponsors believe that seafarers should be exempt from military service as serving on board ships has long been accepted as being an alternative to military service. The trade flow by maritime transportation should be seen at a strategic level, particularly in the areas affected by this conflict.

Port State Control and inspection issues

8 Seafarers who have certificates of competency and related documents issued by countries involved in the conflict will face difficulty in renewing them in the coming months. Port State Control Officers (PSCO) may be faced with many seafarers holding expired documentation. The co-sponsors would urge that PSCOs should take a pragmatic approach to the inspection, taking into account the exceptional nature of the situation. The same consideration should apply to commercial inspection processes.

Proposals

9 The shipping industry believes that a number of steps should be taken which will reduce some of the suffering of seafarers and their families. These steps are:

- .1 as a priority, ships should be allowed to sail from the ports of Ukraine at the earliest opportunity without threat of attack;
- .2 for those ships that cannot leave immediately, or where it would be unsafe to do so due to the presence of sea mines or other hazards, humanitarian corridors should be set up that enables the safety of seafarers by allowing them to leave the conflict zone and return home as appropriate;
- .3 any form of harassment of seafarers due to their nationality should be condemned;
- .4 seafarers affected by the conflict should be allowed free access to communications with their families;
- .5 States should ensure that seafarers are able to access their wages;
- .6 States should acknowledge the key worker status of seafarers and allow their unrestricted movement;
- .7 taking into account the key worker status of seafarers, States involved should strongly consider exempting their seafarers from mandatory military service; and
- .8 where PSCOs are presented with expired documentation, a pragmatic approach to the inspection should be taken, taking into account the exceptional nature of the situation.

Summary

10 Seafarers within the conflict area are facing extreme levels of insecurity to their physical safety. Seafarers outside of the conflict area will be significantly affected by the conflict. The co-sponsors have proposed a series of practical and pragmatic proposals to mitigate the worst effects on the innocent seafarers.

Action requested of the Council

11 The Council is urged to note the information in this document, consider the most effective way to promote the proposals contained within paragraph 9 and take action.
