



ASIAN SHIPOWNERS' FORUM

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PRESS RELEASE

The ASF calls for a stop to piracy attacks on merchant ships

The Asian Shipowners' Forum (ASF), at its 19th annual meeting held today in Hong Kong, expressed its strong concern at the continuing attacks on merchant ships and urges the world's navies to increase their protection of ships passing through the Gulf of Aden and the Western Indian Ocean. "The situation has become a serious crisis, one that deeply affects seafarers and their families and the carriage of world trade, and while we are grateful for their protection, it would seem that the rules of engagement are not effective to stop and punish the attackers", said Mr SS Teo, the SNEC Chairman.

Mr George Chao, the SILC Chairman added "And the deliberately vague Executive Order issued by the President of the United States is only adding to the confusion, by apparently seeking to restrict the ability of shipowners to free their seafarers from kidnap while not offering anything in return that would ensure the protection of our seafarers."

Mr Kenneth Koo, the Chairman of the 19th ASF, said "We call upon the world's governments to seek a realistic and final solution to this crisis. It is clear that any lasting solution will only be found on land, not at sea, but yet there seems to be very little that is being done on land in Somalia by the world's governments to stop the activities of these pirates."

The ASF noted that despite recent indications of a gradual recovery of the world economy, it is clear that this might not yet be sustainable. Mr Yasumi Kudo, Chairman of the SERC said, "The situation remains difficult, and we call upon the Panama Canal Authority to reassess the apparent need to increase Panama Canal tolls at this particular time."

The ASF expressed its deep concern over the proposals being made on Seafarer rest hours in the draft revisions to STCW that will be discussed at the diplomatic conference in Manila in June. Mr Li Shan Min, the SC Chairman said "The proposals made so far do not reflect the reality of the shipping industry. There are times during short term peak workloads when seafarers must be able to continue to work for safety

and exceptional operational reasons or to comply with port authority requirements”. The ASF agreed that it is essential that the final text of the STCW revision contains the ability for administrations to grant exceptions to stipulated daily rest hours while retaining the stipulated weekly limits in order to ensure the ship’s crew is adequately rested.

The members of the ASF once again gave their full commitment towards the protection of the environment, recognizing in particular the importance of the reduction of GHG emissions. Mr. Kenneth Koo, the 19th ASF Chairman, said, “The protection of the environment is the most important issue that our industry must handle in order to build a sustainable future. It is essential that we give our utmost towards developing new concepts and ideas, as well as to work towards continuous improvement of our existing practices.”

The members of the ASF confirmed their support for the Hong Kong Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships, 2009, and calls upon all States to consider early ratification of the Convention. Mr Bronson Hsieh, the SRC Chairman said “While we await the entry into force of the Convention, we urge all owners to consider early production of the inventory of hazardous materials and compliance with the Ship Recycling Guidelines issued by the International Organisations.”

For further information, please contact Mr Yuichi Sonoda, Secretary-General of the Asian Shipowners’ Forum, at the contact address shown in the header. Please also visit ASF’s website www.asianshipowners.org.

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The Asian Shipowners’ Forum (ASF) is a voluntary organisation of shipowner associations and its aim is to promote the interests of the Asian shipping industry. It is estimated that the ASF represents about 50% of the world’s cargo carrying fleet.

The ASF consists of the following 8 members:

Australian Shipowners Association	(ASA)
China Shipowners’ Association	(CSA)
Federation of ASEAN Shipowners’ Associations*	(FASA)
Hong Kong Shipowners Association	(HKSOA)
Indian National Shipowners’ Association	(INSA)
Japanese Shipowners’ Association	(JSA)
Korea Shipowners’ Association	(KSA)
National Association of Chinese Shipowners	(NACS)

*FASA is composed of:

Filipino Shipowners’ Association	(FASA-FSA)
Indonesian National Shipowners’ Association	(FASA-INSA)
Malaysian Shipowners’ Association	(FASA-MASA)
Myanma Five Star Line	(FASA-MFSL)
Singapore Shipping Association	(FASA-SSA)
Thai Shipowners’ Association	(FASA-TSA)
Vietnam Shipowners’ Association	(FASA-VSA)

Between the ASF AGMs, the ongoing work is carried out by the five Standing Committees;

Seafarers Committee	(SC)
Shipping Economics Review Committee	(SERC)
Ship Insurance and Liability Committee	(SILC)
Safe Navigation and Environment Committee	(SNEC)
Ship Recycling Committee	(SRC)