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Singapore

## ***Press Release on ASA's response to Bangladesh ratification of the Hong Kong Convention***

On 26 June 2023, Bangladesh and Liberia deposited their instruments of accession of the Hong Kong Convention (HKC) with IMO. Asian Shipowners' Association (ASA) welcomes this ratification!

This significant step demonstrates Bangladesh's commitment to sustainable practices in the ship recycling industry and highlights its dedication to protecting the environment and the well-being of workers.

The HKC, adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in 2009, sets out guidelines and regulations for the safe and environmentally sound recycling of ships. Its ratification by Bangladesh solidifies the country's adherence to international standards and positions it as a responsible global player in the ship recycling sector.

ASA Secretary General, Yuichi Sonoda, said:

"With this ratification, Bangladesh joins a select group of nations actively working towards enhancing safety and sustainability in ship recycling operations. The decision reflects Bangladesh's proactive approach to improving the industry's practices, ensuring worker safety, and minimizing the environmental impact associated with ship recycling."

The ratification of the HKC signifies a vital milestone for Bangladesh, as it aligns with the country's broader commitment to sustainable development and responsible industrial practices. It underscores Bangladesh's dedication to promoting a circular economy and fostering the responsible management of end-of-life vessels.

"By implementing the guidelines outlined in the HKC, Bangladesh aims to ensure the safe and environmentally friendly recycling of ships within its territory.", said ASA.

The Convention emphasises proper management of hazardous materials, appropriate working conditions for shipbreaking workers, and efficient waste management practices.

ASA also said; "Furthermore, this ratification opens up opportunities for collaboration and knowledge sharing with other signatory nations. Bangladesh looks forward to engaging in international partnerships that will contribute to the continuous improvement of ship recycling practices, benefiting not only the country but also the global maritime industry as a whole."

Bangladesh's shipbreaking yards have taken significant steps towards enhancing workers safety, environmental protection and sustainable operations. ASA hopes acceleration in improvements in yard facilities and operations in Bangladesh, like India has done before and after its ratification of HKC.

ASA calls upon industry stakeholders, international organisations and relevant partners to join hands in supporting the country's efforts. ASA strongly encourages its fellow international organisations to follow ASA's standing policy of ensuring priority usage of HKC-certified yards and yards in the process of obtaining certification, as the world needs much more compliant yards in coming years to replace the obsolete vessels to newer green vessels. Together, we can strive for a safer, greener and more sustainable future for the ship recycling industry, benefiting both the global environment and our community. We will encourage other countries to ratify HKC.

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***Editor's Note:***

*The Asian Shipowners' Association (ASA) is a voluntary organization of the shipowner associations of Australia, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea and the Federation of ASEAN Shipowners' Associations comprising shipping associations of ASEAN countries. The aims of the ASA are to promote the interests of Asian shipowners. Between annual ASA meetings, the ongoing work is carried out by five Standing Committees: The Seafarers Committee (SC), the Ship Insurance and Liability Committee (SILC), the Safe Navigation and Environment Committee (SNEC), the Shipping Policy Committee (SPC), and the Ship Recycling Committee (SRC). It has been estimated that ASA shipowners and managers control and operate around 50% of the world's cargo carrying fleet.*