

ASA SPC

ASA Shipping Policy Committee

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ASA
Asian Shipowners' Association

27 March 2025, Singapore

Press Release on 38th Interim Meeting of ASA Shipping Policy Committee (SPC)

Asian Shipowners' Association (ASA) held the 38th Interim Meeting of Shipping Policy Committee (SPC) in Singapore on 27 March in conjunction with Singapore Maritime Week. Around 30 participants mainly from ASEAN, China, Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea joined the meeting in person or online.

The meeting drew attention to the recent intensification of economic conflicts worldwide and the rise of protectionism and unilateralism. SPC members shared the view that the widespread adoption of protectionist policies could pose a serious threat to the sustainable development of global trade and supply chains.

Under such circumstances, the committee adopted the ASA SPC Statement, reaffirming its longstanding commitment to supporting the principles of free trade, fair competition, and market access amid intensifying economic conflicts and the growing tide of protectionism and unilateralism.

Mr. Keiji Tsuchiya, Chair of the SPC, stated, "*Asian shipowners continue to collaborate with their governments to advocate for the non-discriminatory treatment of foreign-flagged vessels and to promote the adoption of internationally harmonized, transparent, and predictable regulatory frameworks within their jurisdictions.*"

For details on its meeting summary and the statements adopted, please refer to:

- Annex A: Meeting Summary of the 38th Interim Meeting of the Asian Shipowners' Association (ASA) Shipping Policy Committee (SPC)
- Annex B: ASA SPC Statements towards Sustainable Development of the Global Economy



Pictures:

SPC delegates attending the 38th Interim Meeting in person

Discussion during the meeting

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MEETING SUMMARY

of

the 38th Interim Meeting of the Asian Shipowners' Association (ASA)
Shipping Policy Committee (SPC)

The 38th Interim Meeting of ASA SPC was held in Singapore on 27 March 2025. The meeting was chaired by Mr Keiji Tsuchiya, Vice President of the Japanese Shipowners' Association and participated in by 21 delegates from ASA member associations of ASEAN, China, Hong Kong, Japan and Korea, and 7 observers and guests from ASA Associate Members and related organisations, as per the attendance list attached.

During the ASA SPC Interim Meeting, members were committed to ensuring full compliance with all applicable competition laws throughout the entire programme under diligent guidance from their legal counsel, as in previous meetings.

The outline of the meeting was as follows:

1. Strategic Role of Singapore as a Global Hub Port and International Maritime Centre

Ms Jasmin Tan, Director of the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (International Maritime Centre), highlighted MPA's priority areas for navigating the future as a global hub port. SPC appreciates its active commitment to decarbonisation and sustainability, digitalization and innovation, and talent development.

2. Update on Global Antitrust Immunity for Carrier Agreements and U.S. Legal Issues

Mr. Robert K. Magovern, Cozen O'Connor, and the SPC's legal counsel presented his report on the latest developments in reviews of the antitrust immunity system for carriers' agreements across several jurisdictions, as well as recent regulatory and legislative changes in the U.S. affecting the shipping industry. The SPC welcomed the U.S. initiative to enhance the efficiency and competitiveness of the global maritime sector by expanding U.S. shipbuilding capacity. At the same time, it agreed to seek collaboration with the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) to explore alternative effective and timely solutions—rather than the proposed remedies, including potential

port service fees on China-built vessels calling at U.S. ports—to achieve their ambitious goal.

3. Impact of GHG Reduction Regulations on Global Supply Chain

SPC members noted updates on GHG reduction regulation negotiations at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) ahead of the critical Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 83) meeting in April. Mr. Simon Bennett, Deputy Secretary General of ICS, stressed the urgent need for a bridge between the majority of states advocating for a GHG levy and those that remain opposed in order to achieve consensus, which remains uncertain due to many moving parts.

We also noted with concern the recent unilateral actions by several African nations to introduce their own carbon tax schemes. It was agreed that ASA, in cooperation with the ASA SNEC Secretariat and ICS, should closely monitor these developments and consider taking necessary actions to encourage their governments to adopt a global environmental regulatory framework.

4. Canal Issues

Dr. Fathy Abdel Bari Emara, Director of the Planning, Research, and Studies Department at the Suez Canal Authority (SCA), explained in his presentation their commitment to enhancing safety, reliability, and cost-effectiveness, recognising the Canal as a vital artery of global trade.

The SPC delegation expressed appreciation for the SCA's continued efforts, including the expansion project in the southern section and the development of safety measures, even amid the prolonged Red Sea Crisis. While the industry requires thorough safety evaluations in the region before making any decisions to resume vessel transits, both parties agreed on the importance of continuing dialogue to deepen mutual understanding and cooperation in ensuring the smooth flow of global trade.

In addition, SPC members noted recent developments regarding the Panama Canal and instructed the Secretariat to monitor future changes to the toll structure and the review of reservation systems as well as customer ranking to ensure transparency and predictability for Canal users. The early completion of a new water reservoir is also essential to prevent disruptions again due to water shortages in Panama in the future.

5. Adoption of ASA SPC Statement towards Sustainable Developments of Global Economy

Amid intensified economic conflicts worldwide and the rise of protectionism and unilateralism, the 38th SPC Interim Meeting adopted the "Statement Towards Sustainable Development of the Global Economy" to reaffirm ASA's longstanding position in support of open and free market access, the removal of restrictive trade barriers, and the maintenance of a level playing field to ensure transparency and predictability in cross-border shipping.

With this document, SPC members agreed to closely communicate with their respective

governments to advocate for and promote the importance of non-discriminatory measures for foreign-flagged vessels, as well as the adoption of internationally harmonised, transparent, and predictable regulatory frameworks within their jurisdictions.

The Statement also emphasised the "Importance of a Global Environmental Regulatory Framework and Stakeholder Cooperation for Shipping Decarbonisation", "Engagement with the Authorities of the Panama and Suez Canals", and "Maintenance of Antitrust Immunity for Cooperative Shipping Agreements" respectively in order to ensure a brighter future for global trade and economic prosperity.

* * *

The ASA Shipping Policy Committee (SPC) is a forum for the members of ASA associations to discuss maritime policy issues such as regulation, taxation, trade policy, customs, canals, infrastructure and the macro economy, and policy public relations.

ASA SPC Statement towards Sustainable Developments of Global Economy

27 March 2025, Singapore

Members of the Shipping Policy Committee (SPC) of the Asian Shipowners' Association (ASA), met in Singapore on 27 March 2025, reaffirming our its long-standing commitment to supporting the principles of free trade, fair competition and market access amid the currently intensified economic conflicts worldwide and rise of protectionism and unilateralism. To achieve sustainable global economic developments, it was agreed that the ASA will continue to express its voices regarding the following issues;

Concern over the Accelerated Increase in Trade Restricting and Retaliatory Measures

- It has been widely recognised that the widespread adoption of protectionist measures that prioritise their own national and/or regional economies could undermine reliable, quality and seamless shipping services to customers.
- Hikes of tariff and fees increase costs of imported goods and services, exacerbating persistent inflation and negatively impacting consumers, and such measures prove to be counterproductive and do not contribute to economic prosperity in the long run.
- Without stability, transparency and predictability, opportunities for global trade cannot be sustained. It is therefore essential for Asian shipowners to urge their respective governments to uphold a free and fair competitive shipping market, to maintain a rules-based global framework for maintaining a level playing field.

Importance of Global Environment Regulatory Framework as well as Stakeholder Cooperation towards for Shipping Decarbonisation

- Any national legislation affecting the global shipping industry should comply with IMO standards and international frameworks in order to ensure that ocean-going vessels can call at foreign ports whenever and wherever necessary. Sustainable economic growth can only be achieved—even amid increasing global trade uncertainties - when operators can choose safe, efficient and environment-friendly trading routes, at the discretion, that respond to the demands of shippers.
- The global shipping industry is accelerating momentum towards the goal of “net

zero GHG by 2050”, making huge investments for low/zero carbon fuelled ship. In order to meet growing demand for eco-friendly supply chain, it is crucial to obtain understanding and appropriate cooperation from shippers and governments as well.

Engagements with Authorities of Panama and Suez Canals

- Both canals are national assets of Panama and Egypt and, at the same time, they remain crucial shipping routes for global trade. Their significance has been further underscored by Red Sea crisis and the water shortages in Panama.
- The industry continues to seek regular dialogues with the two authorities to foster mutual understanding and cooperation, ensuring safe and smooth transits as well as predictable toll pricing for users.

Maintenance of Antitrust Immunity for Co-operative Shipping Agreements

- Liner shipping companies are committed to offering a variety of services with limited transport assets to meet diverse demands. It is vital that regulatory frameworks governing competition in shipping are clearly defined and longstanding antitrust immunity for shipping agreements allowing vessel sharing is maintained, even after the abolition of the block exemption system in the EU. Vessel sharing agreements continue to contribute to long-term reliability and quality services, as well as reducing CO₂ emissions through the shared use of assets and infrastructure.

For brighter future of global trade and economic prosperity, Asian Shipowners are committed to closely communicate with their own governments to advocate and promote importance of non-discriminate measures for foreign flagged vessels as well as adoption of the internationally harmonized, transparent and predictable frameworks within their jurisdiction.

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27 March 2025, Singapore

The 38th Interim Meeting of ASA Shipping Policy Committee (SPC) on 27 March 2025

Participants List

*** Online participants**

CHAIRMAN

Mr Keiji Tsuchiya Vice President, Japanese Shipowners' Association

MEMBERS

< Chinese Shipowners' Association (CSA) >

Ms Sheryl Zhang International Cooperation Department, CSA

< FASA-Indonesia (INSA) >

Dr AKP Mochtan Senior Expert, INSA / Vice Secretary General, ASA
Ms Faty Khusumo Vice Chair, INSA / President Director, PT Temas Tbk
Mr Standly Rojali Deputy Head of International Relation Division, INSA
Mr Alberto Yongko Maritime HC Education Division, INSA

< FASA-Singapore (SSA) >

Mr T S Teo Council Member, SSA
Advisor, Management Office, Pacific International Lines (Pte) Ltd
Mr Jun Shibata Council Member, SSA
Executive Vice President, Marketing & Commercial Division (Global Headquarters) & Regional Head of South Asia
Ocean Network Express Pte Ltd
Mr Loh Chun How Executive Director, SSA
Ms Haniza Mustaffa* Technical Director, SSA / Acting Sec-Gen, FASA

< Hong Kong Shipowners' Association (HKSOA)>

Capt Nittin Handa* Director (Regulatory Affairs), HKSOA

< Japanese Shipowners' Association (JSA) >

Ms Kumiko Iwasa* Project General Manager, Corporate Planning Group,
Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha, Ltd.
Mr Akira Nakajima* Supervisor, Corporate Planning Division, Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, Ltd.

Mr Kotaro Okuni* Deputy General Manager, Corporate Planning Division, Nippon Yusen Kaisha

< Korea Shipowners' Association (KSA) >

Mr Jungyub, Lee* Executive Vice President (Head of Container Business Unit), HMM co., Ltd.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Mr Brendan Williams Head of Planning, Special Assistant to EVP, Interasia Lines
Mr Mathieu Kissin Managing Director, Liberian Registry
Mr Edward Ang Deputy General Manager (OPS), Wan Hai Lines (Singapore) Pte. Ltd

GUEST SPEAKER

Mr Simon Bennett Deputy Secretary General, International Chamber of Shipping
Ms Jasmin Tan Director, International Maritime Centre, Maritime & Port Authority of Singapore
Ms Choi Yi Fang Manager, International Maritime Centre, Maritime & Port Authority of Singapore
Dr Fathy Abdelbary Emara* Director of Planning, Research and Studies Department, Suez Canal Authority

ASA SECRETARIAT

Mr Yuichi Sonoda Secretary General, ASA
Mr Dylan Ow Senior Manager, ASA

LEGAL COUNSEL

Mr Robert Magovern SPC Legal Counsel /Vice-Chair Transportation & Trade, Cozen O'Connor

SECRETARIAT

Mr Kengo Nakamura General Manager, Planning Division, JSA
Mr Daijiro Mizushima Manager, Planning Division, JSA
Mr Kou Fujimoto Assistant Manager, Planning Division, JSA
