



ASIAN SHIPOWNERS' FORUM

10 Anson Road
#16-18, International Plaza,
Singapore 079903
Tel: (65) 6325 4737 Fax: (65) 6325 4451
General Email: information@asf.com.sg
Website: www.asianshipowners.org

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PRESS RELEASE

The 22nd Annual Meeting of the Asian Shipowners' Forum (ASF) was held in Mumbai on 21 May 2013. It was hosted by the Indian National Shipowners' Association (INSA).

Mr Atul Agarwal, Chairman of 22nd ASF, welcomed the delegates of member associations and said, "Asia's growing stake in the international shipping will continue to be underpinned by Asia's role in driving world trade."

At the meeting, shipowners addressed major issues, including safety, security and the environment, currently facing the shipping industry.

Piracy

The Forum discussed recent reports and while noting that piratical activities off East Africa would appear to have abated, urged shipowners to remain vigilant and continue to apply BMP4 when transiting the area. In addition, the Forum urged governments and all stakeholders to continue exercising strong political will to resolve the problem.

Noting that there are still about 62 seafarers held in captivity by the Somali pirates on ships and ashore, **Mr Fu Xiangyang**, Chairman of the Seafarers Committee, expressed the urgent need for the international community to take decisive action to seek their release.

The Forum is deeply concerned with the increasing number of pirate attacks in the Gulf of Guinea over the last two years. **Mr Patrick Phoon**, Chairman of the Safe Navigation and Environment Committee, strongly emphasized, "The littoral States,

the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and the United Nations (UN) must act on this problem and deal with it quickly whilst it is still developing.”

Environment

The Meeting is pleased to note that the IMO, during its 65th Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) Meeting, agreed a text for an Assembly Resolution that would facilitate a practical timetable for the smooth implementation of the Ballast Water Management Convention.

The Meeting was concerned about the recent discussions on regional legislation to reduce air emissions, including Monitoring, Reporting and Verification System (MRV), and urges the international community to ensure global legislation is developed under the authority and leadership of the IMO.

The ASF wishes to stress that it is not in favour of Market Based Measures (MBM) based on trading systems, either regional or global. In this respect, the ASF is of the strong view that the IMO should respect the interest of international shipping and prevent the proliferation of any regional or unilateral rules.

Ship Recycling

The Forum was pleased to note the decision taken by the European Parliament to reject the levy proposed in the draft EU Ship Recycling regulation. **Dr Frank F H Lu**, Chairman of Ship Recycling Committee, said, “The global ship recycling regime under the Hong Kong Convention is the fastest and surest way to encourage environmentally friendly ship recycling without compromising ship recycling capacity.”

Canal Tolls

The Shipping Economics Review Committee expressed its grave concern over the toll increase of the Suez Canal implemented on 1 May 2013 and the Panama Canal Authority’s insistence on their toll increase from 1 October 2013. **Mr Yasumi Kudo**, Chairman of the Shipping Economics Review Committee, said “The Canal Authorities, as competent and responsible administrators of public infrastructure of global trade, should seriously listen to the voices of Canal users and governments of interested countries to build up the customer focus, transparent toll structure and predictability amidst a continuous stagnant shipping market.”

Facilitation of Movement of Seafarers

The Forum noted the difficulties that ASF members experience in making arrangements for the transit and shore leave of their seafarers especially in the Schengen area and the United States. **Mr Fu Xiangyang** commented, “ASF will continue to collect specific information of such difficulties in order to encourage the

necessary debate within the ILO and the IMO Facilitation Committee to resolve the situation.”

ASF Chairmanship

Mr Akimitsu Ashida, President of Japanese Shipowners’ Association, has been elected as the Chairman of the 23rd ASF. **Mr Youn-Jae Lee**, Chairman of Korea Shipowners’ Association, has been elected as the Vice-Chairman of the 23rd ASF. Their terms of office shall begin from 22 May 2013 until the next ASF Annual General Meeting in 2014.

For media enquiries, kindly contact:

Elvin Tan

Executive Officer

Asian Shipowners’ Forum (ASF)

Tel : (+65) 6325 4737
Email : elvintan@asf.com.sg
Website : www.asianshipowners.org

The Asian Shipowners’ Forum (ASF) is a voluntary organisation of the shipowners’ associations of Australia, China, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea and the Federation of ASEAN Shipowners’ Associations comprising shipping associations of ASEAN countries.

The aim of the ASF is to promote the interests of the Asian shipowning industries. It has been estimated that ASF owners and managers control and operate nearly 50% of the world's cargo carrying fleet.