

MLC SEMINAR
Athens 30th May, 2013
Admiral Stavros Michailidis Speech

Good morning, distinguished guests and participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Stavros Michailidis and I am the General Manager of the “Maria Tsakos” Foundation – International Center of Maritime Research and Tradition – a non-Governmental, not-for-profit organization with its seat on the island of Chios.

This is the first major event we undertake in Athens since the Foundation started operating in its present form and I hope you will find the arrangements we have made to your liking. I can assure you we have spared no effort to ensure the success of the Seminar.

I trust you have all received copies of the programme and am sure you will have noticed the number and calibre of the speakers who have come to Athens to share with us their knowledge and expertise on the topics they will focus – all related to the all-important Convention of ILO on Maritime Labour. We are grateful to all of them for their positive response to our invitation to come over and assist in the Seminar.

We are particularly grateful to those of them who made pertinent proposals on the programme of the meeting so that it covers all aspects of the MLC – which, of course, will facilitate your understanding of its provisions, requirements and implications. This will, we hope, lead to its smooth introduction and effective implementation.

For this to happen, we have structured the programme of the meeting around four thematic unities:

- The **first**, to be moderated by Mrs. Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry, ILO’s Director of International Labour Standards, provides a general introduction in the MLC: its historical background and the input in its development of IMO, the shipping industry and seafarer organizations;

- The **second**, to be moderated by the representative of the Greek Ministry for Shipping and the Aegean, Admiral George Boumpopoulos, analyses the role, duties and obligations of Governments in their capacity as flag or port States or both;
- The **third**, to be moderated by Mr. Peter Hinchliffe, Secretary-General of ICS/ISF, will explain the role of shipping companies, ship managers, recognized organizations and manning agencies in ensuring compliance with the requirements of the MLC; and
- The **fourth**, to be moderated by the representative of ITF, Mr. Jon Whitlow, will deal with seafarer welfare issues as seen by speakers from the Union of Greek Shipowners, the Mission to Seafarers and the World Maritime University.

Adequate time for questions and answers has been provided in the programme at the end of each session.

Coffee/tea and buffet luncheons will be provided between sessions and, given that we have a heavy programme to go through in a relatively short time, I should be most grateful if you would take your seats in time for the next bit of the programme to commence being delivered.

This evening we will be delighted to welcome you all to a reception the Foundation is hosting at the Roof Garden of the nearby Metropolitan Hotel from which you will have a panoramic view of the Saronic Gulf, including the islands of Aegina and Salamina and the approaches to the Piraeus Harbour. Those of you with a good knowledge of History will remember that the narrow strait between Salamina and the mainland provided, in 480 BC the theatre of a major sea battle between the fleets of the Athenians and the invading Persians. The Athenians prevailed and the next is history.

Finally, the programme provides for a concluding session (to start at 11:15 tomorrow morning), consisting mainly of a panel discussion, during which the moderators of the four sessions will present the conclusions and recommendations

of the meetings they presided over. This will be followed by an open discussion, in which you will be invited to participate.

The programme will close with the Founder of the Foundation, Captain Panagiotis Tsakos, delivering his concluding remarks.

On your way out, at the end of the Seminar tomorrow, you may wish to collect a copy of this very useful publication of the ISF providing Guidelines on the application of the MLC. (Have copy handy to show!)

With these words, I welcome you, once again, to the Seminar and let us move on to the first session.

Thank you.
