

SPEAKER'S PROFILE

Opening Session



Kitack Lim

Secretary-General

International Maritime Organization (IMO)

Mr. Lim (Republic of Korea) is the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Born in Masan, Mr Lim graduated from the Korea Maritime and Ocean University (KMOU), Busan, and worked on ships before joining the Korea Maritime and Port Administration in 1985. From 1986, Mr. Lim participated in the Republic of Korea delegation to IMO meetings. In 2006, he was appointed as Maritime Attaché, minister-counsellor at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in London and served as Alternate Permanent Representative to IMO until August 2009. Mr Lim was then appointed Director General for Maritime Safety Bureau at the Ministry of Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs (MLTM). In 2011, Mr. Lim was appointed Commissioner of the Korean Maritime Safety Tribunal (KMST). In 2012, he became President of Busan Port Authority, until January 2016 when he took up his appointment as Secretary-General of IMO. Mr Lim holds master's degrees from Yonsei University, and the World Maritime University (WMU).



Gilbert F. Hougbo

Director-General

International Labour Organization (ILO)

Gilbert F. Hougbo was born in Togo in 1961 and has spent much of his life working to improve the prospects of the world's most vulnerable people, using his extensive experience in policy issues, economic development, diplomacy and financial accountability.

Following an advanced degree in business management from the University of Lomé (Togo), Gilbert F. Hougbo obtained a degree in accounting and finance from the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières (Canada). He is a member of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Professional Accountants.

Gilbert F. Hougbo joined Price Waterhouse in Canada in 1986 and worked with them until 1993.

Between 1994 and 1996 he served as Director of Finance at the International Bank of Mali, before moving to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) where he held several posts, including as Head of Financial Reporting and Trust Fund Management, Comptroller and Director of Finance and Administration, Chief of Staff, and Assistant Secretary-General and Regional Director for Africa.

In 2008, Gilbert F. Hougbo was asked to serve as Prime Minister of Togo, a position he held until 2012.

He returned to the United Nations system in 2013 as Deputy Director-General for Field Operations and Partnerships at the International Labour Office.

In 2017 he was elected as the sixth President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and in 2021 he was re-elected to the post. Since 2017 he has served as Chair of UN-Water, the coordination mechanism of the United Nations for water and sanitation.

Gilbert F. Hougbo chairs the Board of the Natural Resource Governance Institute (NRGI) and is a board member of the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA).

In March 2022 Gilbert F. Hougbo was elected by the ILO's Governing Body as the Organization's 11th Director-General, becoming the first African to hold the position, and took up the role on 1 October 2022. He is focusing his mandate on promoting greater social justice, fighting inequalities and discrimination in the world of work and achieving better working conditions both through national action and by building more effective multilateral coordination and leadership. To bring this about, he is placing special emphasis on universal social protection, decent work in global supply chains and in the platform economy, the fight against child and forced labour, protecting the rights of migrant workers, promoting social dialogue and freedom of association, ensuring just transitions and attaining gender equality.

Gilbert F. Hougbo is married and has three children.



H.E. Binali Yıldırım

Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Türkiye

**Chairman of the Council of Elders of the
Organization of Turkic States**

Binali Yıldırım, was born in Sivas, Turkey on 20 Aralık 1955. He is the father of three children. He speaks English and French.

Education and Training

Undergraduate and Master's Degree from İstanbul Technical University's School of

Maritime Sciences, Naval Architecture and Ocean Engineering Faculty.

Specialised training regarding Maritime Safety and Environmental Protection from the International Maritime Organisation's World Maritime University in Sweden

Professional Career

1978 – 1993 Numerous managerial positions in the General Directorate of the Turkish Shipping Industry and the Camialtı Shipyard

1990 – 1991 While training at the World Maritime University, he spent six months working with maritime administration professionals at Scandinavian and European ports.

1994 – 2000 Director General of the İstanbul Fast Ferries Company

Political Career

He was a founding member of the Justice and Development Party.

He became member of Parliament from İstanbul district following the 3 November 2002 elections. He was also elected from Erzincan and İzmir in subsequent elections respectively.

He served as Minister of Transportation during 2002-2013 and 2015-2016.

In 2016 he became the Prime Minister of Turkey, and served until 2018 until the establishment of the presidential system.

In 2018 he was elected Speaker of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (Parliament).

He is currently the Deputy Chairman of the Justice and Development Party.



Guy Platten

Secretary General

International Chamber of Shipping (ICS)

Guy Platten was appointed Secretary General of ICS in August 2018.

He has extensive experience in the maritime industry both at sea and ashore and is a qualified Master Mariner. He has held a number of senior positions including Chief

Executive of the UK Chamber of Shipping, Chief Executive of Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited, and Director of Marine Operations for the Northern Lighthouse Board.

Guy's career at sea began in 1982 with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Service. He joined the RNLI in 1993 as an Inspector of Lifeboats, latterly as Inspector for Scotland training and overseeing lifeboat crews around the coast and following this he served with the MOD as a Salvage Officer and led or contributed to a number of projects including the removal of oil from a sunken World War 2 battleship, recovery of ditched aircraft and the refloating of a grounded warship.



Stephen Cotton

General Secretary

**International Transport Workers'
Federation (ITF)**

Stephen Cotton is the general secretary of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF).

Cotton joined the ITF in 1993 as head of the agreements unit in the maritime section. He was later promoted to the position of assistant secretary of the special seafarers' department (SSD), secretary of the SSD and maritime coordinator prior to his appointment as acting general secretary in October 2012.

During his time as leader of the ITF's maritime section, significant achievements were made that have positively impacted the maritime industry and bettered the lives of seafarers. The ITF inspectorate expanded from 35 to 147 inspectors and contacts, and ships covered under ITF collective bargaining agreements increased to over 12,000 from less than 2,000. Cotton oversaw major Flags of Convenience (FOC) policy changes and led the introduction of 'Oslo to Delhi' and Mexico City policies, which laid the foundation for the landmark 2006 signing of the International Labour Organization's Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) – establishing a set of international minimum standards enforceable by international law.

Throughout his career at the ITF, Cotton has sought to improve the operations of the ITF, focusing on building affiliates' power and streamlining the operations of the secretariat in order to make a real difference in the lives of transport workers and influence lead industry players in the transport sector. He is a trustee of the ITF Seafarers' Trust and serves on the United Seaman's Service (USS) governing body.

In 2021, Cotton was appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to serve as a Member of the Board of the UN Global Compact, an initiative that mobilises industry leaders globally to do business responsibly and improve the state of society. He chaired the Council of Global Unions (CGU) between 2019 and 2023, a particularly challenging time for trade unions globally.

In 2014, Cotton received the United Seamen's Service (USS) Admiral of the Ocean Sea Award (AOTOS), the maritime industry's most prestigious award, in recognition of his work for defending the well-being and fair treatment of seafarers around the world.