

SHIPREC 2013

AS DELIVERED

**International Conference on Ship Recycling
World Maritime University, Malmö
7-9 April 2013**

**Keynote Address
by
Dr. Stefan Micallef,
Director, Marine Environment Division,
International Maritime Organization (IMO),
London, UK**

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen



It is a genuine pleasure for me to address this important international conference on ship recycling at the World Maritime University **on behalf of the Secretary-General** of the International Maritime Organization, Mr Koji Sekimizu, who is proud to be closely associated with the University in his capacity as its Chancellor and who conveys his very best wishes to you all and for the success of this conference.

This year marks the **30th anniversary of the University's establishment** by IMO, with the objective to give young people from member States around the world the chance to meet and work together in a centre of teaching and research excellence and maritime capacity-building. IMO has therefore all the more reason to fully support this conference and I sincerely **thank** the organizers for their initiative. It brings together all the relevant stakeholders with an interest in ship recycling and I have no doubt that it will provide a lively forum for fruitful discussions.

Ladies and gentlemen,



Safe and environmentally sound ship recycling is a relatively new subject for IMO, but one which the Organization has embraced with its usual determination to provide **leadership** in setting global standards for international shipping. Next month, it will be four years since the IMO diplomatic conference, convened by IMO in Hong Kong, adopted **by consensus** the *Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships* – in short the Hong Kong Convention.

The Hong Kong Convention was developed in record time, in response to proposals by IMO's Member States and concerns of civil society with the full co-operation of the shipping industry. It sets **universal standards** of human health and safety and environmental protection.



The Hong Kong Convention aims at both the responsibilities of the shipping industry and of the recycling industry. The preparatory work has been challenging due to the inclusion of the land-based recycling facilities which remains a special feature of the Convention, for which the regulation and enforcement is traditionally a national matter rather than an international one, and it has previously not been considered part of IMO Conventions to regulate land-based activities except in ports. The Convention is therefore a **comprehensive** instrument that addresses the reduction of all safety and environmental risks relating to the dismantling and ultimate disposal of ships at the end of their commercial life, including the responsible management of associated waste streams and their disposal.

Following the Convention's adoption, the Marine Environment Protection Committee of IMO worked expeditiously to complete the development of **a set of guidelines, six guidelines in all, which are** required under the Convention to facilitate the global implementation of its requirements in a uniform and effective manner. This work has been completed, although some final fine-tuning may still be needed during the process of ratification and implementation.

The priority at present is to bring the Hong Kong Convention into force soonest. There are **positive indications that ratification is receiving serious consideration** by a number of governments and I would urge all IMO member States to consider ratification at their earliest convenience.

Further in this regard, it is encouraging that leading international associations of shipowners, such as BIMCO, the International Chamber of Shipping and Intertanko, have agreed to support **voluntary** adherence to the requirements of the Hong Kong Convention, **in the interim period ahead of the Convention's entry into force**. This effectively puts in motion a process of **early and incremental** safety and environmental improvements for the ship recycling sector.

In this regard and for instance, many ships are already carrying on board the Inventory of Hazardous Materials, although this is not mandatory as long as the Convention is not in force.



Ladies and gentlemen,

Environmental shipping regulation and for that matter all regulation be it that which addresses safety, security or protection of the environment cannot have its intended effect without proper implementation and enforcement, and this demands that all stakeholders concerned fully understand their respective roles and the need for the necessary investments, financial and others, such as investments in training, to ensure the effectiveness of adopted regulations. From a ship recycling perspective, IMO is convinced that the Hong Kong Convention is the **only workable** instrument to regulate the ship recycling sector to the benefit of all the relevant stakeholders. The Convention's provisions are **pragmatic and realistic** in respect of three critical factors:

- **First**, the Convention is tailored to the **particular characteristics of international shipping as a globalized industry**, as indeed any IMO instrument should be and which is in accordance with the global standard-setting competence of IMO to regulate international shipping, and hence, due care has to be taken not to undermine global solutions by adding requirements to already adopted international conventions, and hence impacting the global nature of shipping.

- **Second**, the Convention takes account of the **commercial practicalities of the ship demolition sector**.
- **Third**, the Convention is global in scope and this means that it cannot ignore the **prevailing realities in the developing world**, where the majority of ship recycling takes place, relying mostly on rudimentary forms of labour. A **gradual** approach involving incremental improvements is therefore the way forward, supported by awareness raising and training measures and proper systems for recording working practices and procedures, the reporting of incidents and accidents and adequate planning for emergency response.



Given that **at least two thirds** of the world's ship recycling capacity is estimated to rely on tidal beaching, the Convention would lose credibility if it were to ban the use of this method – that is the reason why the Hong Kong Convention sets out the safety and environmental standards for ship recycling without specifying any particular method of work. I would argue that such a ban would isolate those ship recycling yards where safety and environmental improvements are most urgently needed. In a similar vein, any leverage would be lost that could otherwise be brought to bear upon those same yards – and upon the authorities in the countries of the yards' location – in order to **motivate** them to gradually improve their safety and environmental standards.

In a later session of this conference, **my IMO colleague, Ms Simone Leyers**, will highlight the various technical requirements and associated guidelines that together ensure the Convention's **pragmatic and realistic** approach. Therefore, suffice for me to reiterate that the Convention **can and will** bring **real, measurable** change by way of progressive improvements in the health and safety of workers and in pollution prevention.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Name:	Redoubtable				
Builder:	Lorient , France				
Laid down:	December 1872 ^l 18 July 1873				
Launched:	18 September 1876				
Commissioned:	22	November	1878	for	trials.
	31	December	1878	for	service.
	8 February 1879				
Struck:	9 March 1910				
Fate:	Sold 17 August 1911 for 100,000 francs. 1912				
	broken	up	at	Saigon.	
	Sold for demolition at Saigon 1913				



Until the late 20th century, ship dismantling took place in port cities of industrialized countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States.

Today, most yards are in developing countries, with the largest yards at Gadani in Pakistan, Alang in India, Chittagong in Bangladesh, Changjiang Ship Breaking yard in China and Aliağa in Turkey, among others.

The major ship recycling countries should now do their bit to promote the global implementation of the Convention by redoubling their efforts to ratify it. Meanwhile, the Secretariat of IMO stands ready to support the ratification process in both recycling States and flag States with **technical assistance**, as may be requested by member States and within the limited of the resources under the Organization's Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme.

By way of example, the IMO Secretariat is currently in discussion with the authorities of Bangladesh for a technical co-operation project to promote safe and environmentally sound ship recycling in that country, with funding from Norway (The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation - Norad). And next month's meeting of the Marine Environment Protection Committee will be invited to consider and agree on the inclusion of the Hong Kong Convention as a marine environment related thematic priority for technical co-operation during the **2014-2015 biennium**, with special emphasis on strengthening national and regional capacity and fostering regional co-operation for the Convention's ratification and implementation.

Before concluding my address, I would like to return very briefly to the **issue of ratification**. A number of **external factors** play a role and it may therefore take a few more years for the Convention to enter into force.

While some governments are actively working for accession, others appear to prefer to hold back until they have a clearer picture of what other governments are doing. This is by no means unusual, although in the particular case of the Hong Kong Convention the situation is perhaps more **complex**. Quite a number of **different Ministries** in some countries consider themselves as legitimate stakeholders which need to be involved in the consideration of the proposed ratification and of related draft texts for any new national legislation. These range from Ministries for Shipping and the Environment to Ministries for Industries and Commerce, for Labour and, in the case of India, I understand also the Ministry of Steel. However I would urge the leading Ministry in those countries to co-ordinate their efforts leading to early ratification of the Hong Kong Convention

Ladies and gentlemen,



We at the IMO Secretariat will continue to promote the Hong Kong Convention actively to both governments and the shipping and recycling industries and urge recycling and flag States alike to make every effort to bring the Convention into force as soon as possible. We are aware that **already now** a number of key States – whether in terms of their ship recycling capacity or by virtue of the gross tonnage registered under their flag – are busy working towards accession or ratification. Of course, from IMO's perspective, synchronized accession by the principal recycling States (Bangladesh, China, India, Pakistan and Turkey) would be ideal and ensure the universal implementation of the Convention.

I have no doubt that the discussions at this conference will add momentum to the on-going efforts to widen awareness of the safety and environmental benefits of the Convention. As you have seen, I chose to illustrate my address with a small **gallery of photo slides**. I hope you liked them and that they will inspire you to make your own views and comments be known in the next few days.

Once again, I **thank** the World Maritime University most sincerely, also on behalf of Mr Sekimizu and my colleagues in the Marine Environment Division of the IMO Secretariat, for the generous hospitality and hard work in providing this important opportunity for debate, information exchange and mutual learning.

With these words, I wish you all a successful and enjoyable conference and a pleasant stay in this most charming and welcoming of cities, Malmö.

Thank you.

