

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE ON WORLD MARITIME DAY

24 September 2026

With at least 80 per cent of international trade moving by sea, maritime shipping keeps our world afloat. For nearly eight decades, countries have worked together to develop conventions and codes that make global seafaring more efficient, fair, sustainable and safe.

But this critical framework is under strain. Conflicts and geopolitical tensions are infringing on navigational rights and freedoms that must be restored. The lives of seafarers are being threatened, and the global supply of fuel, fertilizers and food has been disrupted. These shocks to the global economy have devastating consequences, especially for developing countries.

That is why the theme of World Maritime Day for 2026 and 2027 is “From Policy to Practice: Powering Maritime Excellence”. It speaks to the vital importance of adhering to international law and ensuring it is fully implemented.

Seafarers, port workers, ship operators and inspectors all have a role to play in turning global maritime commitments into reality. From worker safety to the energy transition, these laws and policies protect crews and help preserve our oceans.

With collective action by governments, labour groups and the private sector, we can go even further. Together, let us ensure maritime excellence – and safer, more resilient seas for all.
