

IMO Awards Ceremony

2 November 2022 [Photos here.](#)

IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea

Speech by Chief Officer of the oil tanker Jian Qiao 502 Mr. Bo Xu

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon! I'm Xu Bo from Shanghai Jianqiao International Shipping Company.

It's a great honor for me to receive this Exceptional Bravery Award from the IMO.

I was born in the beautiful and rich Zhoushan Islands in Zhejiang province of China. My father and grandfather are both fishing boat captains. When I was a little boy, they often told me stories of their experiences at sea, which helped me realize the fragility and preciousness of life at a very young age. Following their footsteps, I became a seafarer myself and now I am a Chief Officer and have been working on board for 16 years.

On 12 December 2021, around 4 a clock in the morning, when my ship "Jianqiao 502" was sailing in the northern part of China's Yellow Sea, I suddenly received an instruction from Yantai Maritime Search and Rescue Center, informing me that the ship "Tianfeng 369" at 5-6 nautical miles to the starboard of my ship was in distress and was about to sink. At that time, the wind force was of category 7-8, the temperature was minus 10 degrees Celsius, and the wave height was 3-4 meters.

Upon receiving the instruction, our ship immediately changed course and sailed to the accident site to carry out search and rescue. After more than an hour's search, we

spotted a drifting life raft filled with seawater and carrying two survivors on it. We instantly headed for the raft and tried to throw the rescue rope to the raft several times, but the two survivors were too weak to reach for the rope because they had been soaked in cold seawater for too long and were almost in shock.

Time was passing by and the seafarers were becoming weaker and weaker. Without any hesitation, I jumped into the sea and swam to the life raft as hard as I could, against the cold wind and the high waves. The the low temperature and coldness numbed my body and slowed my movement, but I knew I was racing against death. Eventually, I reached the life raft and managed to tie the ropes around the waist of the survivors. With the assistance of other crew members, the two survivors were successfully transferred to the deck. Despite the fatigue and cold, I immediately conducted emergency resuscitation on the two crew members. With our efforts, one young crew member survived, but the other passed away due to hypothermia.

This award from IMO is not only an encouragement to me and my team, but also a recognition of China's efforts in maritime SAR. In 2021 alone, China successfully rescued more than 13,000 people in distress at sea, which protected the happiness of tens of thousands of families. The sea could be cold and merciless but humans are not. As a seafarer, I will never hesitate to jump overboard to save people in danger!

Thanks for your listening, and once again, I would like to thank IMO, my country, my family and friends!

[Photos here.](#)