

4 ALBERT EMBANKMENT  
LONDON SE1 7SR  
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7735 7611 Fax: +44 (0)20 7587 3210

Circular Letter No.3947  
11 March 2019

To: IMO Member States and other Governments  
United Nations and specialized agencies  
Intergovernmental organizations  
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status

Subject: **World Maritime Day, 2019**

Further to [Circular Letter No.3922](#) of 23 January 2019, which included a background paper on the year's theme "Empowering Women in the Maritime Community", the Secretary-General has the honour to enclose herewith the text of his message on the occasion of World Maritime Day 2019. This year's celebrations will take place on 26 September 2019.

The message will be available for downloading in all of the Organization's official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish) and the background paper will be available in the Organization's three working languages (English, French and Spanish). Additionally, a video containing the Secretary-General's message is now available on the IMO website at [www.imo.org](http://www.imo.org).

You can watch the Secretary-General's video message [here](#):



In addition, the Secretary-General wishes to remind all Member States and international organizations of the newly created Calendar of Events on the IMO website, which can be accessed at [www.imo.org/en/About/Calendar](http://www.imo.org/en/About/Calendar).

The Calendar of Events provides the opportunity for greater visibility of the many events held around the world in support of World Maritime Day and the Day of the Seafarer. It presents an effective and easy-to-use platform to inform other Member States and international organizations, in advance, of relevant celebrations in support of both days. More information on the Calendar of Events is enclosed in [Circular Letter No.3889](#).

In order to promote the Day more widely, the Secretary-General encourages the authorities concerned to organize, wherever possible, suitable events throughout the year to celebrate the Day, and inform the Secretariat of any such activities, including listing them on the calendar as described above. The information will then be included in a report to be prepared for submission to the Council at its thirtieth extraordinary session in November 2019.

Social media participation is also encouraged via Twitter, by using the hashtag #WorldMaritimeDay. Photographs of any events can also be sent to: [media@imo.org](mailto:media@imo.org).

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**ANNEX**

**WORLD MARITIME DAY 2019  
EMPOWERING WOMEN IN THE MARITIME COMMUNITY**

**A message from Kitack Lim  
Secretary-General, International Maritime Organization**

Empowering women isn't just an idea or a concept. It is a necessity that requires strong, positive action to address deep-seated structural, institutional and cultural barriers.

Shipping has always been a male-dominated industry and the same applies to many of the associated jobs and professions in the maritime community.

But that is changing; and there are many reasons why.

Gender equality has been recognized as one of the key platforms on which people can build a sustainable future. It is one of the 17 goals that underpin the UN's Sustainable Development Agenda, which countries all over the world have pledged to implement.

The maritime community itself is missing out on a huge talent pool if it fails to properly empower women in the workplace. Gender-diverse teams are more productive than male dominated teams and gender-diverse workplaces promote better job satisfaction, employee engagement and retention. Having more women in the workplace is beneficial for organizations as a whole, for men and for women.

And it's not just about numbers. Research has shown that companies with a higher percentage of women in senior management positions significantly outperform those that do not.

IMO has been running a highly successful campaign to promote women in the maritime community for more than 30 years. Of course, much more work remains, and it needs the whole of the maritime community, including IMO's Member States and the maritime industries, to come together and commit to ensuring that women truly are empowered.

There are already some great stories out there and this year we want to highlight as many as we can; and we want you to tell your stories, too.

So let us make 2019 a year of action; a year to break down all barriers; empowering women in the maritime community.

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