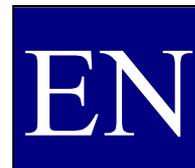




**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



## **Council conclusions on the commission communication on the strategic goals and recommendations for the EU's maritime transport policy until 2018**

*2935th TRANSPORT, TELECOMMUNICATIONS and ENERGY Council meeting  
Brussels, 30 March 200*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council of the European Union

HAVING regard to the essential objectives of the European Sustainable Transport Policy and the overarching objectives in the Integrated Maritime Policy;

RECALLING that over 90% of world trade is carried by sea, that shipping and related maritime transport services represent an important contribution to the European economy, that European Union shipping and related services are essential for European competitiveness, that maritime transport has a direct impact on the quality of life in Europe and that Short Sea Shipping, is an essential part of the multimodal European transport system and door-to-door logistics;

UNDERLINING that the European Union has an interest in promoting safe, secure and efficient shipping in cleaner oceans and that the European maritime transport administrations and the European shipping industry have achieved significant progress in maritime safety, security and protection of the marine environment;

# **P R E S S**

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RECOGNIZING that the European maritime sector faces significant challenges in the next 10 years, *inter alia*, the impact of the present economic downturn, difficulties in obtaining seafarers within the Community, the strategic importance of shipping for ensuring the supply of energy, the pressing concerns related to the environment including climate change, unfair competition from third countries and the threats of piracy and terrorism;

RECOGNIZING also that the geographical location and particular circumstances of the different maritime areas in Europe, in terms of vessels, traffic, security and safety needs, ice-navigation requirements and prevailing environmental conditions, should be adequately taken into account in the future European maritime policy, because they impose special requirements as regards the characteristics and quality of ships, infrastructure, and the competence of crews;

RECALLING that with the adoption of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Maritime Safety Package and together with internationally adopted rules, the EU now has one of the world's most comprehensive regulatory frameworks for shipping; RECALLING the role of the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) in assisting the Member States and the Commission to achieve the goals of the EU in that regard;

CONSIDERING that it is necessary to maintain and further develop an attractive and sustainable framework for quality shipping in a context of liberalized international maritime services in order to prevent the relocation overseas of European shipping centers, as well as for combating substandard shipping, and that this is therefore a priority issue;

STRESSING that sufficient and well-trained human resources are essential for the whole maritime cluster and above all for maritime safety; CONSIDERING that the conclusions adopted by the Council in June 2003 and December 2005 on improving the image of Community shipping and attracting young people to the seafaring profession<sup>1</sup> remain therefore fully pertinent;

STRESSING that the international character of shipping requires a level playing field ensuring global application and enforcement in a uniform manner of internationally agreed rules, the constant support of the European Union for the efforts of the international community and, in particular, of the IMO, ILO and UNCITRAL to achieve such a level playing field, and the strong interest of the European Union in promoting open shipping markets and trade, as well as quality shipping values with its main trading and shipping partners;

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<sup>1</sup> Doc.10737/03, dated 20 June 2003.

EMPHASISING that knowledge, innovation and advanced modern technology are essential for upgrading the efficiency of the European maritime sector as a whole, for reinforcing the competitiveness of the European maritime transport industries, for improving energy efficiency, and for minimizing environmental impact; thus AIMING towards the long-term "zero-vision" for the European maritime transport by reducing to the greatest extent possible waste and emissions;

1. STRESSES that the European Union has a key strategic interest in improving the performance of its maritime transport system in terms of security of supply, competitiveness, employment, environmental performance and contribution to economic growth;
2. RECALLS that the financial crisis and economic slowdown are having a significant impact on European shipping and related industries; that protectionist practices affecting sea-borne trade and unfair competition in shipping markets represent a serious threat to the recovery of the European and world economies and that depressed market conditions can easily give rise to substandard shipping, which entails unacceptable risks of loss of human life at sea and of serious degradation of the marine environment;
3. AGREES that a committed and cooperative effort by all economic actors is required for ensuring that Europe keeps its maritime know-how, with adequate human and technological resources and the right conditions for the long term competitiveness of European shipping in world markets and for the full exploitation of short-sea potential;
4. WELCOMES the Commission's strategic review in cooperation with the maritime transport Administrations and the European shipping industry, and the resulting Communication of the Commission on the strategic goals and recommendations for the EU maritime transport policy until 2018, and CONSIDERS, that the approach presented in the strategic review offers a long term vision for a more competitive and sustainable European maritime industry, reinforced maritime know-how and quality jobs in the maritime sector in Europe, securing efficient and reliable maritime transport within, from and to Europe;
5. UNDERLINES that building trust and partnership at international level within the International Maritime Organization and the World Trade Organization, as well as through bilateral dialogues and bilateral maritime transport agreements, where appropriate, with trade and shipping partners is essential;
6. RECOGNISES the six strategic areas for action singled out in the Commission's Communication; European shipping and globalization, human resources, seamanship and maritime know-how, promotion of quality shipping, working together in the international scene, exploiting the full potential of short sea shipping and sea transport services for business and citizens in Europe and research and technological development;

7. INVITES the Commission to further develop on the basis of consultation with all relevant stakeholders, appropriate measures in the strategic areas, in particular on:
- a) maintaining and, if appropriate, improving a clear and globally competitive EU framework for state aid, tonnage and income taxation;
  - b) monitoring market conditions and promoting fair and effective competition for maritime transport world wide;
  - c) developing positive measures in order to enhance the image of shipping and awareness of the various maritime professions in the maritime transport sector to promote education, training and employment of European seafarers and mixed careers both at sea and in land based occupations in order to provide the necessary human resources for the whole European maritime cluster; improving working conditions and social protection and implementing relevant international law, such as the ILO Maritime Labour Convention;
  - d) working together with Member States and other nations to initiate and promote continuous improvement of safety, security, environmental performance and working conditions through international instruments agreed by IMO and ILO, ensuring effective implementation of internationally agreed rules by all flag, port and coastal States in the world;
  - e) creating favourable conditions for making use of the full potential of short-sea shipping and sea transport services for citizens and business in Europe, overseeing in particular the smooth development and implementation of any existing or new international instruments in the field of protection of the environment, avoiding distortions in the logistics chain, as well as other consequences, including those which could result in modal back-shift from short-sea shipping to road;
  - f) working together with Member States in order for the European Union to actively contribute to the IMO efforts to maintain and further develop a comprehensive international framework for shipping;
  - g) in view of the upcoming challenges, enhancing the work of the European Maritime Safety Agency for providing technical and scientific assistance to Member States and the Commission;
  - h) removing unnecessary administrative barriers, enabling the deployment of e-services, ensuring the further development of Motorways of the Sea and further supporting the maritime links and the port connections with the hinterland in the context of the TEN-T programme and the Marco Polo programme;

- i) supporting maritime R&D, in particular the Waterborne platform and improving energy efficiency and environmental performance, capitalizing RTD efforts and fostering the use of advanced information and communication technologies for the benefit of the European maritime transport system and of the European maritime industry;
- j) enhancing the competitiveness of the EU maritime cluster in the fields of manufacturing and provision of services, including its relation to the shipbuilding sector, by promoting advanced technology solutions with the aim of ensuring both high employment levels and high standard environmental goals;
- k) exploiting in full AIS, LRIT and satellite based systems (GMES), in the broader context of the upcoming e-maritime services, to the advantage of the European maritime transport policy objectives;

8. INVITES Member States to:

- a) stimulate the global competitiveness of the maritime transport industries and take specific measures to carry out the actions identified in the Council conclusions of 2003 and 2005 referred to above in order to enhance maritime know-how and improve the attractiveness of maritime careers, for both men and women, at sea and on-shore, while contributing to the improvement of working and living conditions on board through the ratification and implementation of the ILO Maritime Labour Convention;
- b) ensure the national implementation and enforcement of international and EU safety, security and environmental regulations, and work actively through the IMO to ensure effective implementation of internationally agreed rules by all flag, coastal and port states;
- c) work actively towards the development of an integrated EU maritime information and traffic surveillance system, building upon the most recent tools available, such as AIS, LRIT, SafeSeaNet and CleanSeaNet, or those that are being developed, such as Galileo and GMES;
- d) work actively to reduce unnecessary administrative burdens, duplicated cross-border controls, and to harmonize, where appropriate, documents intra-EU and globally;
- e) actively reiterate their support to the work of the IMO to pursue an adequate agreement in July 2009 demonstrating their willingness and determination to limit and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases from ships with the final aim of approving a global and binding instrument applicable to ships regardless of flag by 2011<sup>2</sup>;

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<sup>2</sup> See Council Conclusions (Environment) of 2 March 2009 (doc. 7128/09).

- f) confirm their commitment to do the utmost for ensuring a rapid adoption of a Protocol to the 1996 HNS Convention regulating liability and compensation for damage in connection with the carriage of hazardous and noxious substances by sea, so that an international regulatory framework can be brought into force in the shortest possible time;
  - g) support the revision process of the STCW Convention on training, certification and watch-keeping for seafarers and ultimately ensure its swift ratification, in order to enforce enhanced competency requirements for crews;
9. URGES all stakeholders to actively contribute to promoting quality shipping and achieving the overarching goals of an efficient and sustainable European maritime transport sector by 2018, *inter alia* by investing in human capital as the key competitive factor for ensuring the leadership of European shipping in world markets;
10. INVITES the Commission and the Member States, at the appropriate time, to present and explain the strategic goals of the EU Maritime Transport Policy until 2018 to the relevant international organisations and in bilateral relations;
11. REQUESTS the Commission to elaborate, together with Member States and all relevant stakeholders, a detailed road map as soon as possible and in any case no later than by the end of 2009, and conduct a mid-term review of the implementation of the European maritime transport policy by the end of 2013."
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