

ASIA PACIFIC DAY FOR THE OCEAN
29 October 2020
REMARKS AT THE CLOSING SESSION
by IMO Secretary-General Mr. Kitack Lim

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

We are in unprecedented times. The pandemic is affecting all corners of the world and all levels of society, and the last eight months have shown us how incredibly connected we all are, and how dependent we are on these networks. As this Day for the Ocean has illustrated, the ocean is truly at the heart of what connects us all around the world.

The maritime sector provides an example of this and shows the importance of the ocean for a truly sustainable development. Despite the tremendous challenges throughout the pandemic, international shipping has kept the trade going within regions, and between continents. It has made sure that the critical supplies such as medicines and food, as well as the basic resources that we all depend on, have been able to move without major interruptions.

IMO has spared no efforts in this regard, working with Member States, UN agencies, and the shipping industry to ensure that operations can continue safely, not least through the facilitation of crew changes. This is essential, since shipping continues to deliver more than eighty percent of all trade, and with the Asia-Pacific region being at the center of maritime activity this Day for the Ocean is very timely and appropriate.

With this in mind, I am certain that shipping, as one of the major users of the ocean, will also be at the heart of the economic recovery and future sustainable growth far into the future, both at sea and ashore, supporting an inclusive and resilient economy to underpin the achievement of the sustainable development goals. As you may be aware, the IMO World Maritime Theme 2020 is 'Sustainable Shipping for a Sustainable Planet'. This theme could not be more relevant - now and for many years to come.

We know that in the post-COVID world, there will have to be a significant focus on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Now, more than ever, these goals must be at the heart of our actions to achieve the future we want. The

Ocean is essential for sustainable development, and the 2030 Agenda will only be realized with a sustainable transport sector supporting world trade.

To ensure a sustainable global economy, IMO continues to work together with Member States and the maritime industry to support the decarbonization of shipping and improved energy efficiency; the facilitation of shipping through increased digitalization involving ports; and not least ensuring a sustainable maritime workforce, with an important emphasis on diversity. All these aspects are key to a successful and sustainable governance of our ocean.

Cooperation and communication are key to achieve our common goal the protection and sustainable development of the ocean. I am certain that the fruitful discussion you had today will lead to concrete proposal for regional cooperation to ensure conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Thank you.