



For workers' rights. For better business.

UN Secretary General

3 June 2020

On behalf of members of the Ethical Trading Initiative, representing #companies with global supply chains, we call on you to accelerate efforts to promote and act on the International Maritime Protocols<sup>1</sup> for seafarers as a matter of urgency to avoid both a humanitarian and economic crises.

ET members are reliant on a secure and stable logistics industry and shipping is vital to the maintenance of global supply chains. Equally important is the well-fare and wellbeing of the workers on vessels moving goods and produce around the world. The current situation is unsustainable for the safety and wellbeing of ship crew and the safe operation of maritime trade.

Due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, large numbers of seafarers are having to extend their service on board ships after many months at sea, unable to be replaced after long tours of duty or be repatriated via aircraft to their home countries. Each month about 150,000 seafarers need to be changed over to and from the ships which they operate to ensure compliance with international maritime regulations for ensuring safety, crew health and welfare, and the prevention of fatigue.

As a leading alliance of companies, trade unions and NGOs we approach doing business responsibly in complex global supply chains – we align this to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which set out the Protect, Respect and Remedy framework. States should protect human rights; businesses should respect those rights; and both should work to provide remedy when rights are violated.

Our members are committed to respecting seafarers' rights and will communicate the protocols through their extensive supply chain and business networks.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter McAllister".

**Peter McAllister**  
Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> IMO Circular Letter No.4204/Add.6 of 27 March 2020 contained, inter alia, the following recommendations to Member States about measures to facilitate ship crew changes in seaports