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Confederazione Italiana Armatori

PRESS RELEASE

ITALIAN SHIPOWNERS MEET KITACK LIM

Last 12th of April, **Kitack Lim**, Secretary General of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), together with Simona Vicari, Italian Undersecretary of State for Infrastructure and Transport participated at the Confitarma (the Italian Shipowners' Association) Council in Rome, chaired by **Emanuele Grimaldi**.

In his speech, **President Grimaldi** stressed that the performance improvements of the maritime sector have been recorded thanks to the implementation of IMO Conventions. "In the majority of global markets, it is extremely difficult for sub-standard ships to operate avoiding detentions and penalties. The IMO Conventions led to a gradual conversion of maritime transport, which today represents the safest, most efficient and environmentally friendly mode of transport".

Emanuele Grimaldi reaffirmed that IMO is the most suitable organisation for the establishment of effective rules ensuring equal conditions for all maritime operators. The adoption of new regulations requires significant investments by shipowners. For this reason, Member States should apply the new rules in a more realistic way: "Shipowners do not intend to avoid the application of the new standard rules for environmental protection, but they should be placed in a position to do so".

In this context, National Governments should choose a clear position regarding the implementation of sulphur content limits in marine fuels or any exceptions to the Ballast Water Management Convention, which will come into force next 8th of September, although this has not been ratified by Italy yet. As for measures to reduce CO2 emissions, shipowners agreed that they should be introduced through global instead of regional regulations, in order not to avoid distortions of competition.

The Secretary General of IMO **Lim Kitack** expressed his appreciation for the work done by Italy within the Organisation. He recalled that the objectives of IMO are to promote a safe, environmentally friendly, efficient and sustainable maritime transport and the activities of the 172 associated Member States are regular and intense in order to reach a global regulatory regime to be implemented uniformly and effectively. Among the traditional topics related to security and training of seafarers, the IMO is also involved in other new matters such as cyber security and the Arctic Code in a view to harmonize global rules and reduce the gap between regulations and operational reality, taking into account the needs of the sector.

Simona Vicari emphasised the role of maritime economy in Italy, with a value of 35 billion euros every year, and underlined that the sector is one of the few where employment remained stable despite the crisis of recent years. She reminded that Italy is among those countries that ratified the biggest number of treaties currently in force for maritime transport and that "Italy has the most renovated and technologically advanced fleet, which guarantees a safety navigation and protection of eco-marine system".

Furthermore, Undersecretary **Vicari** highlighted the need for proper international regulations with regards to environmental protection, stressing that "a contribution of all parties involved is required, from governments to maritime operators up to associations to re-launch the Italian maritime transport sector and strengthen Italy's leadership in Europe and worldwide".

Rome, 13 aprile 2017

Ufficio stampa Confitarma

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