

COUNCIL
29th extraordinary session
Agenda item 11(e)

C/ES.29/11(e)/2
26 October 2017
Original: SPANISH

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

(e) Report on World Maritime Day 2017

Submitted by the Argentine Republic

SUMMARY

Executive summary: In this document the Argentine Republic provides a summary of the activities that have taken place during the course of 2017 as part of the celebrations for World Maritime Day 2017 promoted by the Secretary-General through Circular Letter No.3710

Strategic direction: 11.2

High-level action: 11.2.1

Output: No related provisions

Action to be taken: Paragraph 15

Related documents: C/ES.29/11 and Circular Letters Nos.3710 and 3739

Background

1 The International Maritime Organization (IMO), through Circular Letter No.3710 of February 2017, advised Member States of the timeline of activities for 2017, highlighting that World Maritime Day would be celebrated on 28 September and encouraging Member Governments and international organizations to organize, wherever possible, suitable events to celebrate the Day and inform the Secretariat as early as possible of any planned activities.

2 The theme for 2017, "Connecting Ships, Ports and People", was presented in the Circular Letter. It brought to the public's attention the existing cooperation between ports and ships to maintain and enhance a safe, secure and efficient maritime transportation system.

3 Through Circular Letter No.3739 of July 2017, the IMO Secretariat distributed a background paper on the given theme, summarizing all aspects of major relevance to that theme.

4 In its celebrations for World Maritime Day, Argentina reaffirmed the importance of the theme by involving the maritime community and the general public.

Action taken

5 In this context, the Argentine Coastguard provided on its official website a hyperlink through which the message sent by the IMO Secretary-General to all Member States was broadcast, with Spanish subtitles, to a wider audience.

6 In addition, at the request of IMO, social media participation was encouraged via Twitter, by using the hashtag #WorldMaritimeDay.

Ceremonies and commemorative events

7 On 28 September 2017, the traditional World Maritime Day tribute was held at the Santo Domingo Convent in Buenos Aires, organized by the Argentine Naval League and attended by delegations from the training institutes of the Argentine Coastguard and the Argentine Navy, as well as by staff of both institutions, together with officers of the merchant navy and special guests.

8 Following the obligatory formalities, the official message of the IMO Secretary-General was read out, and the *Rumbo al Mar* march took place, after which a floral tribute was placed at the monument housing the remains of General Manuel Belgrano, founder of the National Nautical School, which is named in his honour. A minute's silence was observed in homage to the seafarers who lost their lives during the course of the past year.

9 In addition, a solemn thanksgiving mass was conducted by the Military Diocese and attended by the national authorities, senior trade union figures from the maritime sector, national fleet and ports, and a number of professionals from the naval sector.

10 The main event in celebration of World Maritime Day, attended by members of the maritime community, members of the public and representatives of the national authorities, was held at the Naval Centre, presided over by the Director-General of the Legal Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Argentina, Minister Mario Javier Oyarzábal.

11 At that event, following the reading of the IMO Secretary-General's message, speeches were made by Mr. Oyarzábal and the Director of Maritime Interests of the Argentine Navy. Both speakers highlighted the role of maritime activity, noting that the connection between ships, ports and people was vital to that activity and demanded adaptation to current circumstances in order to maintain safety.

Other events

12 It should be recalled that the World Maritime Day Parallel Event took place in Panama City from 1 to 3 October 2017. In addition, as part of the celebrations for the centenary of the Panama Shipping Register, the XXIV Meeting of the Committee and the IX Meeting of information centre directors and technical working groups of the Viña del Mar Agreement took place, coinciding with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Latin American Agreement on Port State Control of Vessels (Viña del Mar Agreement). That Agreement was signed within the framework of the Operative Network for Regional Cooperation among Maritime Authorities of South America, Cuba, Mexico and Panama (ROCRAM), initially comprised of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela, which represented an important step in the maritime safety and security of the Latin American region.

13 The event was opened by the Minister of Maritime Affairs of Panama, Mr. Jorge Barakat Pitty, and was attended by the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Mr. Kitack Lim, and the Secretary of the Viña del Mar Agreement, Prefect-General Mr. Luis Alberto Arroz. During the event, the role of the port State was highlighted as one of the most effective programmes that States have at their disposal to ensure that ships navigate safely, that waters are protected through minimizing the effects of ship-based pollution, and that crews enjoy good living and working conditions on board, with flag States bearing prime responsibility for guaranteeing that their ships meet international standards.

14 The purpose of the meeting was to renew the commitment and contribution of the maritime authorities in the region with a view to eradicating the operation of substandard ships calling at Latin American ports and to avoiding possible issues that may have an impact on the safety and security of international shipping and on the marine environment.

Action requested of the Council

15 The Council is invited to take note of the information contained in this document and to consider the importance at national level of the celebrations for World Maritime Day, which strengthen the commitment of those involved in the Argentine maritime sector to continue organizing activities to mark World Maritime Day in the years to come.
