



Fifth meeting of the Special Tripartite Committee established under Article XIII of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended

Geneva, 7–11 April 2025

► Draft Resolution on Recognizing Seafarers as Key Workers

Submitted by Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden

The Special Tripartite Committee (STC) established under Article XIII of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended (MLC, 2006),

Having met in Geneva from 7 to 11 April 2025 for the Fifth Meeting of the Special Tripartite Committee.

RECALLING the essential role of seafarers in maintaining global supply chains and ensuring the continuous and uninterrupted movement of goods, energy, food, and medical supplies, which is more pronounced in times of global crisis,

RECALLING resolution 75/17 on “International cooperation to address challenges faced by seafarers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to support global supply chains”, adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly on 1 December 2020,

RECALLING resolution A.1160(32) on “Comprehensive action to address seafarers’ challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic”, adopted by the IMO Assembly, on 15 December 2021,

RECALLING ALSO resolution 56/18 on “Promoting and protecting the enjoyment of human rights by seafarers”, adopted by the Human Rights Council on 11 July 2024,

ACKNOWLEDGING the challenges faced by seafarers during the COVID-19 pandemic, war in Ukraine, situation on the Red Sea, including extended time at sea, danger to personal safety and security, restricted access to medical care and shore leave, which highlighted the necessity of safeguarding their rights and well-being,

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, ensuring decent working and living conditions for all seafarers,

NOTING that force majeure should not be used to prolong non-compliance with the MLC, 2006 and other international labour standards for any longer than is absolutely necessary,

REITERATING the numerous statements by the UN and UN System Organization emphasizing, inter alia, the need to designate seafarer as “key workers” and ensure their access to medical care, facilitation of travel, thus preserving their welfare and rights.

NOTING also all initiatives taken by the International Labour Organization, its Member States, shipowners’ and seafarers’ organizations, and other relevant organizations to promote safe and decent living and working conditions for seafarers:

1. Calls upon Members of the International Labour Organization to recognize seafarers as key workers providing an essential service and to develop and implement coordinated policies for the safety and protection of their national and non-national seafarers during public health emergencies of international concern.
2. Requests the International Labour Organization to coordinate with other relevant UN bodies on this issue.
3. Calls upon Members of the International Labour Organization to ensure that seafarers have access to unrestricted movement across borders, facilitated by visas in accordance with the applicable national legislation and procedures.
4. Emphasizes the importance of swift and safe repatriation processes for seafarers in compliance with the provisions of the MLC, 2006.
5. Urges Governments and shipowners to ensure seafarers’ timely and unrestricted access to medical care, including the provision of vaccinations, to the extent possible, within a State’s national vaccination programmes, and access to medical care during a public health emergency of international concern.
6. Encourages the development and implementation of programs focused on mental health support, recognizing the unique challenges faced by seafarers, particularly during prolonged periods away from home.
7. Encourages robust collaboration between governments, shipowners’ and seafarers’ organizations to enhance communication and rapidly address and resolve issues affecting seafarers’ status and working conditions, including with regard to sexual assault and sexual harassment (SASH).
8. Reaffirms the commitment of the ILO STC Members to advocate for the well-being and rights of seafarers within international fora, promoting initiatives that recognize their indispensable contributions to global maritime commerce.