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Circular Letter No.4204/Add.35/Rev.4
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To: All IMO Member States
United Nations and specialized agencies
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO

Subject: **Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Designation of seafarers as key workers**

1 In view of the ongoing crew change crisis, which is impacting seafarers as well as other marine personnel,* the Secretary-General wishes to draw the attention of Member States to the matter of designation of these professionals as key workers, referring in particular to the provisions of:

- .1 resolution MSC.473(ES.2) – *Recommended action to facilitate ship crew change, access to medical care and seafarer travel during the COVID-19 pandemic*, adopted by MSC on 21 September 2020;
- .2 resolution A/75/L.37 – *International cooperation to address challenges faced by seafarers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to support global supply chains*, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 1 December 2020; and
- .3 resolution GB.340/Resolution(Rev.2) – *Resolution concerning maritime labour issues and the COVID-19 pandemic*, adopted by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office on 8 December 2020.

2 Resolution MSC.473(ES.2) states, in operative paragraph 1.2:

- "1 URGES Member States and relevant national authorities to: ...
- .2 designate seafarers as 'key workers' providing an essential service, in order to facilitate safe and unhindered movement for embarking or disembarking a vessel and consider legal possibilities for accepting internationally recognized documentation carried by seafarers as evidence of their status as 'key workers', and for the purpose of their travel and movement for crew change;"

* Other marine personnel may include, inter alia, fishing vessel personnel, marine pilots, marine surveyors, marine superintendents, offshore energy sector personnel, offshore support personnel and port workers.

3 Resolution A/75/L.37 states, in operative paragraph 3:

"3. Urges Member States to designate seafarers and other marine personnel as key workers;"

4 Resolution GB.340/Resolution(Rev.2) states in operative paragraph 1, inter alia:

"1. Urges all Members, in accordance with applicable national laws and regulations, to: ... designate seafarers as "key workers", for the purpose of facilitation of safe and unhindered movement for embarking or disembarking a vessel, and the facilitation of shore leave, and when necessary, to shore-based medical treatment;"

5 By the date of this Circular Letter, the Secretary-General has received 55 notifications from Member States and two from Associate Members that they have designated seafarers as key workers, as listed in the annex.

6 Member States that have not yet done so are strongly encouraged to take action to address this issue and designate seafarers as key workers as a matter of urgency.

ANNEX

**LIST OF MEMBER STATES AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERS
THAT HAVE DESIGNATED SEAFARERS AS KEY WORKERS**

AZERBAIJAN	LIBERIA
BAHAMAS	MARSHALL ISLANDS
BANGLADESH	MOLDOVA
BARBADOS	MONTENEGRO
BELGIUM	MYANMAR
BRAZIL	NETHERLANDS
CANADA	NEW ZEALAND
CHILE	NIGERIA
CROATIA	NORWAY
CYPRUS	PANAMA
DENMARK	PHILIPPINES
DOMINICA	POLAND
EGYPT	REPUBLIC OF KOREA
FINLAND	ROMANIA
FRANCE	SAUDI ARABIA
GABON	SINGAPORE
GEORGIA	SOUTH AFRICA
GERMANY	SPAIN
GHANA	SWEDEN
GREECE	THAILAND
INDIA	TURKEY
INDONESIA	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF)	UNITED KINGDOM
IRELAND	UNITED STATES
ITALY	YEMEN
JAMAICA	
JAPAN	Associate Member:
KENYA	FAROES
KIRIBATI	HONG KONG (CHINA)
LEBANON	
