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**NOTE**

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	EU Waterborne Transport Sector – Future outlook – Draft ministerial declaration

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In view of the Shipping Working Party meeting on 31 January 2020, delegations will find attached a Presidency draft of the ministerial declaration on maritime transport policy.

In preparation for the above-mentioned Shipping Working Party, written contributions from delegations are welcome.

**EU Waterborne Transport Sector – Future outlook**

*Towards a carbon-neutral, zero accidents, automated and competitive*

***EU Waterborne Transport Sector***

We, Ministers responsible for waterborne transport policy of the European Union Member States and the European Economic Area, under the chairmanship of Oleg Butković, Minister of Transport of Croatia and in the presence of Adina-Ioana Vălean, Commissioner for Mobility and Transport, on the occasion of the Informal Ministerial Meeting in Opatija, on 11 March 2020,

- **Emphasizing** the vital role of waterborne transport to the EU economy and global trade and its importance to the functioning of the internal market;
- **Highlighting** EU's leading position in providing safe, sustainable and modern waterborne transport services and operations;
- **Recalling** that clean, safe and secure seas and oceans are of fundamental importance for global free trade and the EU's economy;
- **Recognising** the need for urgent action to address the major challenges of climate change, environmental sustainability and the digital transformation of the waterborne transport sector;
- **Stressing** the importance of waterborne digital agenda and its significance for further development of global trade and competitiveness of European Union in the world as well as strengthening of internal market;
- **Noting** the challenges that the waterborne transport sector is facing in relation to necessary introduction of new energy efficient technologies and behaviours;
- **Acknowledging** the importance of adequate education and training of seafarers in the rapidly changing waterborne transport environment;

- **Taking into consideration** the discussions at the High-Level Ministerial Maritime Conference held in Opatija on 10 March 2020;
- **Recalling** the Council Conclusions on the priorities for the EU's maritime transport policy until 2020 and on exploiting the full potential of inland waterway transport;

**have agreed to work towards:**

## **1. A carbon-neutral and zero pollution waterborne transport sector**

- 1.1 **WELCOME** the Commission's Communication on the European Green Deal which aims to accelerate progress towards a fully sustainable EU waterborne transport sector within a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 and where economic growth is decoupled from the use of resources and **WELCOME** all the national strategies and plans aiming to decarbonise the waterborne transport sector and **CALL UPON** the Commission and Member States to build on best practices, intensify and coordinate efforts in deploying a comprehensive framework to accelerate the transition to a carbon neutral waterborne transport sector.
- 1.2 **STRESS** that climate mitigation action at global level is of utmost importance including a robust enforcement at a global level with the aim of maintaining a level playing field. **NOTE** the importance of further work in the IMO on achieving 2050 emission reduction objective coupled with a vision for the complete decarbonisation; **URGE** the Commission and Member States to stand united and mobilise the necessary resources to actively steer the effective implementation of the Initial IMO GHG Emissions Reduction Strategy and its forthcoming review.
- 1.3 **STRESS** the commitment to effectively implement the global sulphur cap and **ENCOURAGE** the Commission and Member States to support the deployment of zero-emission vessels for short-sea and inland navigation journeys in the near future.

- 1.4 **ENSURE** adequate funding in support of research and development through the existing and new EU financial mechanisms, with the aim to make available clean alternative fuels, innovative technologies and sustainable ship designs. **EMPHASIZE** the need to provide financial support for investments on onshore power supply and other clean alternative fuels bunkering infrastructure.
- 1.5 **WELCOME** the Commission's proposal for the establishment of a Just Transition Mechanism, including a Just Transition Fund, to ensure that the transformation into a carbon-neutral waterborne transport sector occurs in a fair and inclusive way, leaving no one behind.
- 1.6 **REITERATE SUPPORT** to the clear vision for green and climate-neutral ports, including the provision of shore-side electricity, alternative fuels, adequate facilities for the reception of ship-generated waste and hinterland connections to rail and inland waterway transport, reducing pollution of air and water and ensuring biodiversity.
- 1.7 **EMPHASIZE** the need to develop carbon neutral EU port clusters through the promotion of green initiatives on port operations, vessels and energy industrial production.
- 1.8 **SUPPORT** designation of emission control area (ECA) across the Mediterranean Sea basin in 2022 with participation of EU member states and third states to minimize shipping emissions and achieve significant health and environmental benefits and **CONSIDER** the possibilities of EU financial mechanisms facilitating the creation of this zone.
- 1.9 **RECALL** the need to launch a follow-up programme to NAIADES II by the end of 2020 at the latest to ensure the continuity of the measures and **SUPPORT** the Commission to develop such a programme to further enhance the environmental sustainability of inland waterway transport in Europe.

## 2. Digital transformation

- 2.1. **ACKNOWLEDGE** the opportunities created by the digital transformation of the waterborne transport sector; **SUPPORT** the ongoing work in relation to Marine Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS) and **ENCOURAGE** the Commission to propose the appropriate legal framework and the relevant technical standards to enable the operation of MASS in the EU, including initiatives to facilitate the parallel operation of conventional and MASS ships. **SUPPORT** the development of a fully digital administrative environment for waterborne transport that will reduce costs for the operators and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of national administration.
- 2.2. **PROMOTE** the uptake of electronic certificates for the registration of ships under EU Member States Flags; the electronic verification of certificates for ships and crewmembers in the context of port state control procedures; and the uptake of electronic crew and vessels documents for inland navigation. **ENCOURAGE** the Commission to consider proposing relevant amendments to the existing legal framework.
- 2.3. **HIGHLIGHT** that complete and timely implementation of the European Maritime Single Window Regulation will enable harmonized, fast and complete reporting of formalities by the declarants, including electronic cargo manifest, thus opening up perspective of the European Maritime Transport Space without Barriers and improvement of the efficiency and attractiveness of the maritime transport sector. **CALL UPON** the Commission and Member States to build on the experience of the establishment of a European Maritime Single Window environment to further enhance simplification procedures at EU level and to promote similar initiatives at global level.
- 2.4. **URGE** the development of paperless ports necessary for achieving full benefits of European Maritime Single Window environment.
- 2.5. **EMPHASIZE** the need to work towards a connected, cooperative and automated inland waterways transport, integrated into the digital transport ecosystem and **ENCOURAGE** the full digitalisation and further automation of port operations and links with the various modes of transport to ensure the most efficient use of port capacity.

2.6. **RECOGNIZE** that above steps should be taken with a view of maintaining and extending the policies of open data and data sharing, single data delivery, accelerated innovation and standardization processes necessary for interoperability as well as data economy.

2.7. **CONSIDER** of utmost significance the development of Waterborne Digital Roadmap by 2021 facilitating integrated and harmonized approach towards realization of waterborne digital agenda. **CALL UPON** coherent actions and efforts of Commission, Member States and the industry with the aim to facilitate the digital transformation.

### 3. Competence and training of future seafaring

3.1 **CALL UPON** the Commission and Member States to intensify efforts for an ambitious revision of the STCW Convention in response to the current challenges and increased technological demands, whilst reflecting the deployment of the necessary skills for seafarers, and **REAFFIRM** the importance of the European Social Dialogue in maintaining high working conditions and social protection for the waterborne transport workforce.

3.2 **ENCOURAGE** the Commission and Member States to enhance cooperation between industry, education and training providers to ensure that European seafarers and waterborne transport professionals are equipped with the right skills for the rapidly changing waterborne transport environment. **SUPPORT** initiatives to increase employment opportunities on-board and ashore, development of measures for improving seafaring education, training and assessment to adjust to new technologies, as well as to promote the attractiveness of the professions in the waterborne sectors among young women and men.

3.3 **ACKNOWLEDGE** that the verification of certificates of competency and endorsements issued to seafarers is essential from the point of view of preventing unlawful practices associated with the issuance of such certificates as well as supporting Port State Control activities.

3.4 **ENCOURAGE** further digitalisation and creation of the system of electronic certificates.

#### 4. Zero accidents

- 4.1 **UNDERLINE** the importance of cultivating a maritime safety culture of zero accidents by 2050 and **CALL** the Commission and Member States to exploit fully the synergies that will derive from the green and digital transformation of the waterborne sector.
- 4.2 **WELCOME** the conclusions and recommendations of the maritime safety fitness check and **ENOURAGE** the Commission to strengthen the EU legislative framework with a view to further increase the effectiveness of EU Member States responsibilities as flag, port and coastal states.
- 4.3 **ACKNOWLEDGE** EMSA's pivotal role in assisting the Commission and supporting Member States to effectively meet their obligations as flag, port and coastal states and **CALL UPON** the Commission to consider options for further strengthening EMSA's capability in performing its technical and operational tasks on safety, security and sustainability of EU shipping.
- 4.4. **CONSIDER** , in terms of safety, the importance of Cape Town Agreement of 2012 on the Implementation of the Provisions of the 1993 Protocol relating to the Torremolinos International Convention for the Safety of Fishing Vessels, 1977.

#### 5. A world-leading waterborne transport sector in the EU

- 5.1 **ACKNOWLEDGE** that the EU faces unfair trade practices and limited market access in certain third countries and **STRESS** the need for coordinated action to safeguard EU maritime interests and collectively promote free and reciprocal access to international maritime services. **CALL** the Commission and Member States to intensify efforts to maintain a global level playing field and create the conditions for a thriving EU waterborne transport sector in an increasing international competitive environment.
- 5.2 **RECOGNISE** the role of EU State Aid Guidelines to Maritime Transport in maintaining the competitiveness of the EU shipping sector, having in mind global developments, trends and challenges.