

Report of the UN Secretary-General on Oceans and Law of the Sea, 2013

SUBMISSION BY ILO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The world's oceans and seas make a significant contribution to international trade and global food security. Their contribution, however, is dependent on the labour of those who man the world's merchant ships and commercial fishing vessels. There are over 1.2 million seafarers and nearly 40 million fishers that make their livelihoods at sea.
2. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has always recognized the importance of seafarers and fishers, and is particularly well-positioned to address the social aspects of the uses of the world's oceans and seas. It brings together representatives of governments, and employers and workers from the maritime sectors to discuss living and working conditions, and to develop international labour standards and policies to promote decent work for all seafarers and fishers.
3. The primary focus of the ILO in the shipping and fishing sectors recently has been on the promotion of international labour standards and guidelines. Three ILO Conventions are of particular importance to the law of the sea in this regard – the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006), the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003 (No. 185), and the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188).
4. The MLC, 2006, sets out comprehensive rights and protection at work for the world's seafarers, and secures economic interests in fair competition for shipowners. Entry into force of the MLC, 2006, is dependent on its ratification by at least 30 ILO member States with a total share in the world gross tonnage of ships of 33 per cent.
5. On the 20 August 2012, the 30th ratification of the MLC, 2006, was received having already met the tonnage requirement. The MLC, 2006, will enter into force on 20 August 2013. As of 28 June 2013, the Director-General of the ILO has registered 39 ratifications by ILO member States representing 69 per cent of the world fleet by gross tonnage.
6. The Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003 (No. 185) has been in force since the 9 February 2005, and has been ratified by 24 ILO member States. The objective is to facilitate entry by seafarers into the territory of member States for the purposes of shore leave, transit, transfer or repatriation. It is recognized that identity documents will improve maritime security as well as access to shore facilities and shore leave, which are vital elements of seafarers' general well-being
7. The Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188), was designed to ensure decent work for all fishers with regards to their conditions of service, accommodation and food, occupational safety and health (OSH) protection, medical care and social security. The Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188) will come into force 12 months after the date on which the ratifications of ten ILO member States, eight of which are coastal States, have been registered with the ILO.

8. As of 28 June 2013, the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188), has been ratified by four ILO member States; Argentina (15 September 2011), Bosnia and Herzegovina (4 February 2010), Morocco (16 May 2013), and South Africa (20 June 2013).