

First of all, I would like to stress the importance that the OECD and its member states place on the work being done in the various United Nations bodies, and especially in the International Maritime Organization in London, as we believe that this work will have major impacts on the protection of the marine environment, the enhancement of maritime security and the protection of its resources (such as fishing stocks).

The OECD has undertaken considerable economic and policy analyses of these issues, and are very pleased to have the opportunity of providing you with brief details of these activities for possible inclusion in the report on oceans and the laws of the sea to be provided by the UN Secretary-General to the General Assembly.

The OECD principal interests in the General Assembly's Resolution are those that relate to the safety of navigation, Flag State implementation and fisheries and these are principally reflected in Part VIII of the Resolution (paragraphs 23 to 41).

### *Maritime*

This organisation is already participating through the Maritime Transport Committee Secretariat in the "Consultative Group on Issues Arising from the Sinking of the Oil Tanker *Prestige*", which was established as an initiative of UN Secretary-General. I understand that this task force is ready to circulate its draft report, and the OECD will be responding to that report once it is received.

With respect to the matters considered under the General Assembly Resolution, I would like to advise you that the OECD has given a high priority to both issues of substandard shipping and maritime security, the latter especially since the events of 9/11. The Maritime Transport Committee (MTC) has already completed a number of activities related to these issues, and a further series of projects remain on its current programme of work. These are outlined in more detail below.

With respect to *maritime security*, the MTC has completed two major reports, the first dealing with the ownership and control of ships, and the second dealing with risk factors, and the economic impacts of security measures. Both of these reports have been made public.



The MTC has also considered a draft report on measures that could be considered by shipping registers and governments to increase transparency in the ownership and control of ships, and a discussion paper based on this draft report has been widely circulated for comment before being reconsidered by the Committee at its next meeting.

This work has direct relevance to the matters contained in paragraphs 28, 29, 33, 36 and 38 of the Resolution.

With respect to *substandard shipping*, the Committee has for some years carried out a continuing economic and policy analysis of various aspects of substandard shipping. As part of this work the Committee has released a Policy Statement on Substandard Shipping which was endorsed by all MTC members, and which covers a number of matters relevant to the UN's Resolution.

The Policy Statement specifically addresses Flag State performance, including the need for reviews (in the IMO) of flag state performance as well as the availability of means of enforcing mandatory requirements and the clarification of the rights and obligations of both Flag and Port States

The Policy Statement also urges MTC members to work in all available forums to encourage the rigorous and uniform application of all internationally accepted rules and standards. These elements are covered in paragraphs 26, 27, 29, 30, 33, 34 and 35 of the General Assembly Resolution.

As a separate initiative, the MTC is considering actions that it can take, in consultation with the IMO, on clarifying the role of the "genuine link" between the ship and its Flag State. This issue is specifically addressed in paragraph 28 of the Resolution.

Finally, the MTC is also considering the possibility of enunciating policy objectives for the protection of coastal states, which are the final (and generally innocent) victims of incidents involving substandard ships. This issue is generally covered in Part X of the Resolution "*Marine environment, marine resources and the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems*".

### *Fisheries*

The OECD Committee for Fisheries decided in 2003 to undertake a major project analysing illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities. Its objective is to address IUU fishing from a multidisciplinary perspective, with particular emphasis on identifying the key economic and social driving forces behind IUU fishing.

It is anticipated that a range of possible measures against IUU fishing will be assessed with the aim of supporting and complementing existing international measures. The first step in this project is an international workshop which will take place at the OECD in Paris on 19-20 April 2004. This workshop is also a means for ensuring continued coordination between international agencies with responsibilities for addressing IUU fishing issues.

I hope this information is helpful and look forward to our continued and fruitful cooperation in the field of ocean affairs.