



## **ECSA SEMINAR “European Shipping a Global Industry Serving European and Global Trade”**

**Brussels, 6 March 2007**

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The following concluding remarks can be drawn on the basis of the presentations made at the seminar:

- Though it was not a seminar on the Commission’s Green Paper on a Future Maritime Policy for the EU, many speakers, in particular Ministers and Secretaries of State made reference thereto and explained the position of their Government on the way forward with the future European maritime policy. All of them expressed support for a holistic approach of a future maritime policy for the EU.
- A further development of European shipping should be looked at in the context of the EU’s Lisbon Policy, which aims at making Europe the most competitive economy in the world by 2010,
- All speakers acknowledged the global nature of shipping, including European shipping, and its importance to global trade and to the European economy. It was also confirmed that shipping plays a key role within the wider maritime cluster.
- As a global industry, shipping needs to be governed by global rules, adopted through the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in London and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva. In this connection support was expressed for ECSA’ proposal to promote and monitor with Member States as well as through bilateral contacts with third countries the ratification of international conventions.
- Vice President / Transport Commissioner Jacques Barrot asked support for the EU’s attempt to have an EU observer status in IMO. However, Governments are reluctant to this Commission initiative and some of them felt that the current 1994 Agreement between Member States and EU Institutions, providing the basis for coordinating positions in view of IMO meetings, should be maintained.
- It was stressed that investments in ports and hinterland connections will be needed to increase efficiency in ports and port services and to tackle problems such as port congestion. An appropriate European ports policy will be of key importance in this respect.
- European shipping needs a stable regulatory framework which safeguards its competitive position on a world-wide basis. The 2004 Community Guidelines on State aid to maritime transport are an important step in the right direction.

## European Community Shipowners' Associations

- The EU as well as Member States have to establish a framework which sets the conditions to attract young people to a seafaring career and which provides them with sufficient career opportunities when they come onshore. Labour protectionist measures will be counterproductive and should therefore be avoided.
- Support was expressed for Commissioner Günther Verheugen's policy to simplify existing EC legislation and to cut red-tape.
- Shipping is still the most environment friendly transport mode but it was acknowledged that significant endeavours will have to be made to improve the shipping industry's record in terms of air emissions, in particular in terms of NOx and SOx. However, the shipping industry is proactive and different options are being looked at. In this respect, solutions need to be holistic and to be dealt with through IMO (Marpol VI).
- Further efforts should be made to improve the image of shipping towards the general public, not yet fully aware of the importance and good performances of shipping.

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