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ENTWURF

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Anrede,

It is a matter of satisfaction that ECSA has brought together so many interested representatives to discuss and deliberate upon the issues of maritime transport, which is of great relevance for the growth of the economies of the world.

I would now like to take the opportunity to express some thoughts about the development of a future maritime policy for the EU.

In June 2006 the European Commission adopted its Maritime Green Paper.

The Green Paper sets the maritime agenda in Europe.

It illustrates which areas the European Commission considers worthwhile.

Among others this includes the development of the European shipping sector and the policies to be pursued in order to promote high standard shipping and contribute to economic growth and employment within the shipping sector.

The German Presidency of the EU-Concil appreciates and supports the integrative approach of this Green Paper and the Vision of the Commission to develop a framework for maritime policy accross-the-sectors for the first time together with the member states and stakeholders.

I think that this approach is the right one.

The main objective should be to find the right balance between the use of the oceans and sustainability.

Integrative maritime policy includes all maritime economic activities, and in doing so, it should aim at a sustainable and well-balanced relation between all economic uses as well as research and development.

To find this balance, spatial planning can offer viable tools.

The Green Paper deals with a broad variety of maritime issues ranging from fisheries and the environment to the development of coastal regions and shipping.

I will focus on shipping related issues and on questions being raised in the Green Paper in this respect.

This does, however, not mean that other aspects should be left aside when we have to decide which areas need to be addressed by European policies in the future.

At first, let me share some ideas on the aim of a Future EU-Maritime Policy

Europe has a longstanding and strong relationship with the oceans.

Because of our geographical location – surrounded by oceans - maritime industries in European countries grow and prosper.

Europe is leading in ports, shipbuilding, maritime services, shipping insurance and finance.

The globalisation of the past years, lead to a considerable increase in the international division of work, resulting in a continuing rise of the amount of goods being transported by sea.

And this development will continue.

In that respect shipping holds an enormous potential for further economic growth and employment.

Shipping ist a backbone for future european growth and prosperity.

The promotion of safe and sustainable shipping should be one of the top priorities to which all of us shall contribute.

It is of paramount importance that we develop a maritime policy for Europe aiming at growth and more and better jobs, thus helping to develop a strong, growing, competitive and sustainable maritime economy in harmony with the marine environment.

This can be for example achieved by:

- ensuring an international level playing field, taking on board equally challenging goals for all competitors,
- Effective implementation and enforcement of existing international rules
- promoting quality shipping and attractive jobs.

I am convinced, that a future maritime policy can be successful if it takes advantage of the respective comtetencies on regional, national and international levels.

Ladies and gentlemen,

please allow me to reflect on some other issues which are also mentioned in the Green Paper on Maritime Policy.

Competitiveness of the Maritime industry

How can European maritime Sectors remain competitive, including taking into account specific needs of small and medium sized enterprises?

Shipping is a crucial contributor to growth, it is an ENGINE for growth, that makes global trade easier and that creates jobs both within the maritime sectors and within other sectors of the industry.

I want to stress, that it is important, that

- shipping is based on quality operators and that
- maritime policy ensures the necessary stable framework for European shipping companies to take part in the development and growth associated with globalisation.

You all know that European shipping is facing strong **competition worldwide.**

One important element for backing growth within the sector in all our countries should be reliable and non-discriminatory **EU guidelines on state aid.**

But regulation and guidelines for the maritime economy in Europe should be in line with other international trading partners, so that *equal competitive terms* are ensured.

European shipping has to convince with quality.

Regulation therefore has to foster an environment that encourages quality and innovation.

Bearing in mind the development in global trade patterns, the European industry and the European citizens should not be dependent on foreign operators shipping imports and exports.

Europe needs a well-established and competitive shipping sector of its own.

To fulfill its functions properly shipping needs a stable framework and harmonized standards, which have to be observed worldwide.

The oceans are global.

That must be same for the legal frameworks and conditions as well.

Therefore it is necessary, that especially within the area of maritime transport and maritime safety the successful work within the existing international organisations must be continued.

It is NOT our aim to divide the oceans into safe and clean seas around European Union member states and „laissez faire“ for the rest of the world.

We want the same protection for comparable situations in the oceans worldwide.

Standards for safe ships and clean oceans have to be set in the IMO.

The IMO has successfully demonstrated its ability to tackle difficult questions and to forge workable and sustainable global rules.

Take for instance, air pollution from ships.

This is not only caused by ships calling at ports in Europe, but also by ships passing European coastlines.

Therefore IMO initiatives should be supported, not least in order to ensure an international level playing field and a global market for ships of high quality standard.

EU countries should co-operate to ensure that air pollution is kept high on the IMO agenda.

In this regard, it should be our goal to work towards challenging international standards.

Experience shows (i.e. MARPOL Annex VI) that once rules have been agreed in the IMO, it is possible to strengthen these rules as technology progresses.

Therefore, even if specific requirements might sometimes have to start at a low(er) international level in order to ensure global unity, this still can lead to better overall results than unilateral regional action.

But everyone should know that there is a special form of subsidiarity:

If IMO fails in setting these standards the EU should do it !

Other important factors for successful European maritime policy are: **Knowledge, technology and innovation**

Research programmes could be established to support innovations in the fields of energy efficient engines on vessels including the promotion of new hull designs and optimisation of shipping routes.

The EU and its member states should continue to focus on a modal shift from land transport to maritime transport.

This includes research on possibilities for improving ports and the related infrastructure and administrative procedures.

We all know:

Shipping is an environmentally friendly carrier.

Furthermore, research could be initiated on an EU level whether the use of residual products from the oil industry as fuel in shipping is the best way or whether alternative ways of disposing of oil residues could be envisaged.

Other interesting research topics are the “clean ship” concept and the „clean port“ concept.

Ladies and gentlemen,

let me come to another key point:

Maritime Skills and Employment

Focussing on maritime skills and competences is essential, because both factors are necessary for creating growth and employment in the European maritime clusters.

There is no doubt about one clear-cut interdependence:

well qualified and motivated staff – and quality shipping!

Therefore also the image of the seafaring profession needs to be improved to attract more employees.

We need to ensure a high quality and positive image of the maritime educations and a high degree of employability and mobility of the maritime graduates.

If European seafarers are well qualified, experiences show that they will have good employment opportunities and remuneration at sea and in land based maritime industries.

The number of Europeans employed in shipping and in shipbuilding for the past years, has gone down – despite good economic performance and growth in the sectors.

We must find out the reasons, why these professions have to fight the **image of being** an **antiquated, unprogressive** and **insignificant** industry in Europe.

Complaints about the poor working conditions and quality of life of seafarers have to be addressed.

However, we do finally have an international ILO instrument for seafarers and we should all commit to putting that into force as soon as possible.

Vessels flying the flags of Member States should have competent and highly qualified seafarers, who are provided with good working and living conditions.

Member States' efforts should focus on ensuring a high quality of the maritime educations, and a high degree of employability and mobility of the European maritime graduates.

High educational standards will increase the value and productivity of European Seafarer and thereby **increase** his **compe-titiveness in comparison with other seafarers**.

Further restrictions with regard to manning of vessels is not the way forward to ensure the competitiveness of European ships or the employability of the European seafarers.

Without the possibility of hiring seafarers – including European ones - on “home/residence conditions” European ship-owners will not be competitive and they might register under non-European flags or use non-EU seafarers.

The Member States should therefore continue to promote international education and training standards and ensure that IMO’s white list becomes an efficient control method.

Appropriate education and training is the foundation for a maritime career, both at sea and on the shore side.

Seafarers with relevant educational qualifications should find it easier to secure subsequent employment, especially if they have qualifications additional to the STCW requirements.

Clusters

All EU Member States are of the opinion, that the maritime policy for the EU should be anchored within the Lisbon Strategy.

I strongly support this and will make sure it is a baseline for our, the German EU-Presidency work.

The Maritime industries can co-operate and exchange information within maritime clusters and thereby together further develop the maritime industries with valuable synergies.

In particular, the industries can benefit mutually from the know-how, skills and maritime competencies which are generated from the shipping industry to be used by companies on land and thereby generate more growth and jobs.

Although the primary responsibility for profitable growth is placed on the industries themselves, the Commission could support the maritime clusters by facilitating the exchange of best practices and by improving coordination of maritime issues between different branches of the Commission all addressing selected maritime issues.

The regulatory framework

From the economic point of view, the **regulatory framework** for the work of maritime companies is a **key factor for their global competitiveness**, for their growth and employment prospects.

Therefore, the international regulatory environment must be simple and of high quality.

In the light of the rather comprehensive legislative measures, which have been adopted in recent years in Europe and in view of the new proposals by the Commission, which are presently under consideration, there is in general **no need for additional regulatory measures**.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am sure that we all are of the opinion, that when new regulation is introduced, administrative burdens for companies and national administrations should be kept to a minimum and if possible be reduced.

Administrative workload must be **proportionate** with the legislative aim.

And it **should also avoid distortions of competition**.

Regional regulatory work in parallel to the international initiatives **must be avoided.**

All regulatory measures should allow and encourage innovation whenever possible.

Existing rules and regulations within the maritime policy framework should be simplified and adjusted where appropriate in order to enhance competitiveness and to avoid bureaucracy.

Obsolete and unnecessary regulations must be identified and abolished.

Whatever incentives in favour of quality shipping we wish to create within the EU, it should not lead to an EU register.

Recognition of and efficient implementation of flag state responsibilities supplemented by an effective control measures Port State Control are means of ensuring safety, the environment and security.

Existing tools to pro-mote quality shipping should be supported – such as the revised targeting system of substandard ships in Port State Control.

Incentives in favour of attracting quality shipping should be compatible with the community guidelines on state aid.

Quality of Life in Coastal Regions

How can the attractiveness of coastal regions be maintained while promoting the maritime sectors?

This question leads to safety and security matters and it points to the development of Short Sea Shipping and Motorways of the Sea.

All of these issues are highly relevant from a shipping perspective and consequently I will point some of them out .

Emissions

I think that we all do agree that shipping in principle is a highly environmentally friendly form of transport and that it is a very safe mode of transport, too.

Nevertheless, in the past there were some large-scale accidents, which highlighted the fact that the seaborne transport of oil and noxious substances can pose a risk to coastal regions and the marine environment.

And it is a fact that the world is facing climate changes. Although the transport of goods by sea creates a low amount of CO₂-emissions compared to the amount of tonnage, which is being transported, maritime transport should also contribute to the reduction of emissions.

In order to address emissions it is of vital importance that the EU Member States as well as the Commission stay committed to supporting initiatives which are taking place within the IMO and which will help to reduce emission levels.

Therefore, input should be given into the ongoing deliberations on the revision of MARPOL Annex VI, regarding emissions.

It is also necessary to further stimulate the debate on CO₂ emissions in IMO.

We should not risk a bad result there due to perceived lack of European interest.

Some words to the Land/Sea Interface

Germany supports that in principle the **competition between ports in the EU** should not be regulated on European level.

In connection with the question of development of ports the Green Paper mentions **Short Sea Shipping** and **Motorways of the Sea** as something, which should be further promoted within an integrated EU transport system.

That is a very welcome proposal.

At the same time it has to be stressed that the promotion of Short Sea Shipping and Motorways of the Sea should be in compliance with international regulation (IMO / ILO / ISO).

Equal access for all shipping operators needs to be ensured.

Any distortion of competition must be avoided.

We should not do at home what we criticise and try to prevent in other sea areas, which is a closed shop approach to regional sea transport.

International initiatives for ship recycling

Let me turn to a point which is getting more and more attention, and rightfully so.

This is ship recycling.

The work in the IMO-Maritime Environment Protection Committee regarding ship recycling is very important and promising.

We should give more support to that work.

This means we should aim to create one single international ship recycling instrument in the framework of IMO.

Experiences from ILO and the Basel Convention should be incorporated.

The new instrument should cover seagoing ships generally and clarify the transfer of ships for recycling between jurisdictions.

In the period until such a new instrument comes into place, ship-owners should continue work on best practice and guidelines in order to ensure an environmentally sound management of the recycling process.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I gave some views on the role of the future maritime policy for Europe in the field of shipping.

From the conference today I expect further interesting ideas and suggestions, which we can take up at our European conference regarding maritime policy in Bremen in May this year, and which we then can hand over to the Commission as well as to the following Portuguese Council Presidency as guidance for their further work in the second half of 2007.

Since your contributions are essential in the process, I invite you to come to Bremen for our Conference on May, 2.-4.

We encourage your help to further carve out useful maritime policy elements with us.

Thank you for your attention!