



**FONASBA**

**THE FEDERATION OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF  
SHIP BROKERS AND AGENTS**

Friday, 12 June 2020

**MARITIME INDUSTRY STATEMENT ON SEAFARER REPATRIATIONS**

At this very moment, 1.2 million seafarers are on over 55,000 ships across the world ensuring that global supply chains remain open and countries are kept supplied with the food, fuel, raw materials and goods that we all rely upon, including the supply of vital medical equipment. This fragile supply chain and global trade is now at threat of logjam due to government inaction and bureaucracy.

Seafarers are trapped onboard ships isolated from COVID-19 but also isolated from family and friends. Under normal circumstances, 200,000 seafarers alternate every month ensuring safe and sustainable working standards. But government bureaucracy and a lack of political leadership has meant that 400,000 seafarers are stranded, leaving the supply chains we rely upon at critical risk of collapse.

Seafarers have gone the extra mile, extending their tours of duty, and have kept working to keep us all supplied. The shipping industry has done its homework and put in place 12-step protocols, which governments have been given by the UN. But still seafarers remain trapped. This cannot go on; we cannot take these heroes of global trade for granted anymore.

Seafarers do not represent a risk; their job keeps them in quarantine and socially distant. They are key workers and need to be treated as such as without them our global economy will just grind to a halt. States have a duty to protect human rights that are 'built on the fundamental obligation of governments. Government leaders must cut through the bureaucracy, lift the continuing imposition of travel restrictions on these key workers and focus on this issue now. The solutions do not need money; they do not need complicated negotiations, this is simple. The time for leadership is now.

About FONASBA:

FONASBA is the global representative organisation for the ship agency and ship broking professions. Established in 1969 it now has 73 members in 63 countries, including all major maritime and trading nations. Its remit is to "promote and protect the professions of ship agency and ship broking worldwide", a task which it undertakes through dialogue with its member associations and its consultative status with IMO, UNCTAD, UNCITRAL and the World Customs Organisation, as well with the European Commission and other regional bodies. FONASBA also enjoys reciprocal memberships with the Baltic Exchange, BIMCO, the Comité Maritime International, INTERCARGO, INTERTANKO, the International Port Community Systems Association, indemnity insurer ITIC and the Shipbrokers' Register and works closely with all other maritime sector bodies, both internationally and in Europe.  
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