

Press Release

Future Priorities for EU Maritime Transport Policy

"The Athens Declaration offers support to the European Manufacturing and Shipbuilding Industry"

Brussels 8 May 2014

At an informal Maritime Ministerial Meeting of the EU Member States, which took place on Wednesday 7th of May 2014 in Athens, the 'Athens Declaration' has been adopted. The Member States in the presence of Vice President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Transport Mr. Sim Kallas and IMO Secretary General Mr Koji Sekimizu discussed and agreed upon a set of policy priorities for the maritime transport sector which is at the core of the declaration.

EU Member States and EEA Countries will give prominence to European maritime industries and aim to support the growth and sustainability of European shipping and manufacturing sectors. Key priorities within the 'Declaration', which have been identified, are:

- Securing long term competitiveness of the EU's Maritime Industry
- Increasing employment in the maritime sector
- Allowing free access to markets.
- Emphasising the EU's leading role in maritime technology & innovation.
- Improving environmental, safety and social performance of shipping at EU and international level
- Implementing environmental, social and safety requirements

"SEA Europe welcomes the initiative of the Greek Presidency to reaffirm the importance of the maritime sector for the prosperity of Europe" Mr. Douwe Cunningham, Secretary General of SEA Europe said. "The recognition that Europe should be a world leader in maritime research and innovation of new technologies strikes a particular chord with the European technology manufacturing industry. The solutions for overcoming many of the environmental, safety and societal challenges stem from the European manufacturers' innovative evolution of the smallest equipment to integrated systems and complex specialised vessels".

In recognition of the need to reinforce targeted R&D and innovation efforts the industry has been working together to develop a Public Private Partnership with the European Institutions named *Vessels for the Future*. A comprehensive road map has been put together to conduct further research into solutions for safer, more efficient and cleaner ships and focussing the opportunities Horizon 2020 can offer to the sector.

Furthermore SEA Europe has together with the European Commission in 2013 launched the LeaderSHIP 2020 strategy which forms the basis for the maritime technology industry's policies in the coming years, emphasising the importance of the sector for Europe. Four key pillars were identified which are largely reflected in the 'Athens Declaration'. These are: Employment and skills; Improving market access and fair market conditions; Access to finance; and Research Development and Innovation.



Athens Declaration:

The text of the Athens Declaration and background information can be found at:

<http://www.gr2014.eu/news/press-releases/athens-declaration-sets-eu-future-maritime-transport-policy-priorities>

SEA Europe Background Note:

SEA Europe brings together CESA and EMEC and represents an industry which generates more than €72 billion turnover annually and offers employment in high profile jobs for more than 500 000 Europeans. The association represents close to 100% of the European shipbuilding industry in 18 nations, encompassing the production, maintenance, repair and conversion of all types of ships and floating structures, commercial as well as naval including the full supply chain with the various producers of maritime systems, equipment material, and services.

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