



*A new "bill of rights" – the ILO's Maritime Labour Convention – comes into force, ensuring protection for the world's 1.5 million seafarers and fair competition for shipowners.*

BRUSSELS (ILO News) – The International Labour Organization's [Maritime Labour Convention \(MLC, 2006\)](#)

comes into force on 20 August 2013, inaugurating a new era of decent work for seafarers and fair competition for shipowners in the global shipping industry.

"This Convention is a milestone in maritime history," said ILO Director-General Guy Ryder. "The product of tripartite dialogue and international cooperation, it enables decent working and living conditions for seafarers to be advanced, along with fair competition for shipowners in this, the most globalized of industries."

"I call on all countries with a maritime interest to ratify – if they have not yet done so – and urge governments and shipowners to work effectively to implement this Convention," Ryder added.

The new Convention becomes binding international law as of 20 August. It needed ratification by 30 ILO member States, representing more than 33 per cent of the world's gross shipping tonnage to enter into force. To date, more than [45 ILO member States](#) representing more than

70 per cent of global gross shipping tonnage have ratified the Convention\*.

The Convention has the full support of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), which represents seafarers, and the International Shipowners Federation (ISF), both of which played a key role during the five years of its development and in the adoption of the Convention at a special ILO International Labour Conference in 2006.

The MLC, 2006 also has the strong support of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), which oversees the global shipping sector, that moves some 90 per cent of world trade. **The European Union has adopted Directives to give effect to the Convention**, while the Paris MOU and the Tokyo MOU, which are port State control regional organizations have adopted MLC, 2006 compliant guidelines to strengthen port State control inspections.

"The coming into force of the MLC, 2006 is a unique event in the history of international maritime labour law," said Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry, ILO Director of the International Labour Standards Department. "It is now incumbent on all to ensure that ratification and legal implementation translate into law and practice so that the world's seafarers can truly benefit from the protection of the Convention and that shipowners who meet the decent work requirements of the Convention can enjoy the benefits it offers."

"It is also now urgent to ensure that all ILO member States with a maritime interest ratify the Convention," Doumbia-Henry stressed. "The ILO will continue to work with governments and with seafarers' and shipowners' organizations and other key actors in the maritime industry to help ensure that the goals of the MLC, 2006 are achieved."

The Convention brings together, in one place, international minimum standards aimed at ensuring decent work for seafarers, while helping to provide a level playing field for quality shipowners operating under the flag of countries that have ratified the MLC, 2006 by promoting competitiveness through ensuring reliable and efficient shipping. The goal is to make sure that decent working conditions go hand in hand with fair competition.

*\*On August 20, 2013, the MLC, 2006 becomes binding international law for the first 30 countries with registered ratifications on August 20, 2012. For all other countries that have ratified, it will enter in force 12 months after their ratifications were registered.*

## **ILO's Maritime Labour Convention comes into force**

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