

Mr António Guterres
Secretary-General
United Nations
405 East, 42nd Street
New York, NY, 10017
United States of America
Via email: sgcentral@un.org

December 21, 2020

Enabling critical crew changes on sea transportation to protect global supply chains and seafarers' health and safety

Dear Secretary-General Guterres,

We write as a group of international investors representing US\$2 trillion of assets under management. Collectively, we are invested in every part of the shipping transportation value chain, including ship owners, logistics providers, management companies and charterers.

It is clear for some time now that a significant humanitarian crisis is underway at sea, with strict national movement restrictions impacting the ability of existing crews aboard commercial vessels to disembark and replacement crews to take their place. As of late September 2020, it is estimated that over 400,000 seafarers remain stranded at sea, many of them past the expiry of their fixed-term contracts and beyond the maximum continuous service period permitted by international maritime convention. A further 400,000 seafarers remain ashore waiting to relieve them, often with little or no pay. The International Chamber of Shipping has estimated that the number of seafarers affected could soon reach one million if this issue is not addressed urgently.

This issue is presenting significant health and safety concerns to the already elevated mental and physical stress seafarers are facing and has the potential to result in major safety risks when exhausted seafarers handle dangerous or perishable cargoes. The environmental consequences of a serious maritime accident involving these cargoes could be catastrophic for our oceans and our security.

As investors, it is clear that this is no longer solely a shipping industry problem nor a crisis that the shipping industry can resolve on their own. Shipping is responsible for 90% of global trade and holds the key not just to a global economic recovery from the devastation of COVID-19, but to maintaining our current way of life.

We recognise that any solution here has to be premised on a multi-lateral approach aimed at facilitating seafarer movement while protecting local communities from re-infection risk. As investors, we acknowledge our responsibility with regard to the companies of which we are lenders or owners to raise our concerns and seek constructive responses. However, this is not sufficient of itself and governments must also classify seafarers as the "key workers" they surely are to enable them to continue to perform their essential services in a safe and secure manner. We are encouraged by the resolution recently adopted by the UN Assembly urging Member States to designate seafarers and marine personnel as key workers, and that a handful of countries have begun to do so. Yet many more are needed to follow through if we are to find a global solution to this crisis. Moreover, as Covid-19 vaccines are being rolled out with varying degrees of access across countries, we look to the leadership of the UN to ensure key workers including seafarers are included in the priority groups by their respective governments and that a complementary arrangement can be made by the UN or the IMO to secure a reasonable supply of vaccines for seafarers to effect immediate crew change where it is (over)due.

While we believe vaccinating a critical mass of the seafarer population is the most effective way of resolving the crisis, other efforts need to continue before its materialization. In consultation with key marine organisations such as the International Labor Organization and the International Transport Workers' Federation, we have identified the clear need for the following measures to be put into effect:

- Continuing to call for the official designation of seafarers as "key workers" and the establishment of systematic processes to enable safe crew changes such as safe corridors and testing regimes
- Raising awareness, through a targeted publicity campaign, of the scale and risks that this crisis is already creating for seafarers and sustainable supply chains
- Sharing the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) 12-step protocol with relevant entities to facilitate universal implementation
- Ensuring seafarers should not spend more than the legal maximum of 11 months on board and limiting any unavoidable crew contract extension
- Urging charterers, especially those that charter vessels on a frequent basis, to be flexible with route deviation requests from shipping companies to facilitate crew change and to consider financial support for the costs of crew repatriation

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The signatories will engage our relevant portfolio companies to communicate our expectations around these measures. We believe that the sustainability of the maritime industry and the humane treatment of seafarers affects all investors as well as our portfolio companies that depend on these workers.

We will continue to support your efforts in calling on governments to take immediate action and to preserve the long-term sustainability of our global supply chains.

Yours sincerely,

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Fidelity International

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CIO
Achmea Investment Management

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Caisse de pension Hewlett-Packard Plus
Caisse de pensions de l'Etat de Vaud (CPEV)
Caisse de pensions du personnel communal de Lausanne (CPCL)
Caisse de pensions ECA-RP
Caisse de prév. des Fonctionnaires de Police & des Etablissements Pénitentiaires
Caisse de Prévoyance de l'Etat de Genève CPEG
Caisse de Prévoyance des Interprètes de Conférence (CPIC)
Caisse de prévoyance du personnel de l'Etat de Fribourg (CPPEF)
Caisse de prévoyance du personnel de l'Etat du Valais (CPVAL)
Caisse intercommunale de pensions (CIP)
Caisse paritaire de prévoyance de l'industrie et de la construction (CPPIC)
CAP Prévoyance

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CIEPP - Caisse Inter-Entreprises de Prévoyance Professionnelle
Etablissement Cantonal d'Assurance (ECA VAUD)
Fondation de la métallurgie vaudoise du bâtiment (FMVB)
Fondation de prévoyance Artes & Comoedia
Fondation de prévoyance du Groupe BNP PARIBAS en Suisse
Fondation Interprofessionnelle Sanitaire de Prévoyance (FISP)
Fondation Leenaards
Fondation Patrimonia
Fonds de Prévoyance de CA Indosuez (Suisse) SA
Fonds interprofessionnel de prévoyance (FIP)
Gebäudeversicherung Luzern
GVA Gebäudeversicherung des Kantons St. Gallen
Luzerner Pensionskasse
Nest Sammelstiftung
Pensionskasse Römisch-katholische Landeskirche des Kantons Luzern
Pensionskasse AR
Pensionskasse Bank CIC (Schweiz)
Pensionskasse Basel-Stadt
Pensionskasse Bühler AG Uzwil
Pensionskasse Caritas
Pensionskasse der Basler Kantonalbank
Pensionskasse der Stadt Winterthur
Pensionskasse Pro Infirmis
Pensionskasse Schaffhausen
Pensionskasse SRG SSR
Pensionskasse Stadt Luzern
Pensionskasse Stadt St. Gallen
Pensionskasse Unia
Personalvorsorgekasse der Stadt Bern
Prévoyance Santé Valais (PRESV)
prévoyance.ne
Profelia Fondation de prévoyance
Prosperita Stiftung für die berufliche Vorsorge
Rentes Genevoises
RP - Fonds institutionnel
Secunda Sammelstiftung
St. Galler Pensionskasse
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Université de Genève (UNIGE)
Verein Barmherzige Brüder von Maria-Hilf (Schweiz)
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