

International Maritime Organisation  
Attn. Mr Kitack Lim, Secretary-General  
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**Subject: Seafarers are key workers**

Dear Mr Secretary-General,

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of the crisis on seafarers, Belgium has taken measures as a flag state and as a port state to facilitate crew changes, the transit of seafarers and access to medical care for seafarers. Belgium duly recognizes the central role of seafarers, not only in the maritime sector but also in the world's economy.

In accordance with the guidelines issued by the International Maritime Organisation and the European Commission, Belgium allows seafarers to travel, to be in transit, to join a ship or to return back home.

It would be appreciated if you could bring this to the attention of the IMO Member States and Associate Members and add Belgium to the list of countries that have designated seafarers as key workers.

Yours sincerely,

*Eugeen Van Craeyvelt*  
*Director-General*