



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS, GENEVA



56TH REGULAR SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Introduction of A/HRC/56/L.4.Rev1 on “Promoting and Protecting the Enjoyment of Human Rights by Seafarers”

11 July 2024, 3:00 PM

Delivered by:

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Permanent Representative

Speaking time: 3 minutes

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I have the honor to present with 28 co-sponsors, for the kind consideration of the Council, L.4.rev1 *“Promoting and protecting the enjoyment of human rights by seafarers”*.

Seafarers are the backbone of the global shipping industry. This is an industry that carries 90% of world trade. Seafarers are essential workers that help keep vital supply chains and commerce flowing.

While the seas separate us, seafarers bring all of us, our societies, our people, our commerce, our products closer together.

Life at sea is fraught with risks to seafarers' rights, safety and well-being. Crisis situations from pandemics to attacks against commercial ships compound these risks.

L.4.rev1 addresses the silent human rights situation in the maritime industry. It urges stakeholders to respect the rights and freedoms of seafarers at all times and to eliminate all forms of forced or compulsory labor. It also calls on states to designate seafarers and other maritime personnel as key workers.

In their work, seafarers oftentimes brave dangers, but this should be a choice, especially when life itself is at risk. L.4.rev1 is unprecedented in that it affirms this right.

Two percent of the world's shipping crew are women, and this number is growing. L.4.rev1 recognizes the need for the maritime sector to prepare for a future with greater inclusivity. It calls for an enabling environment where women seafarers are safe and their rights protected.

While L.4.rev1 went through early, wide and inclusive consultations, we did encounter a bit of rough seas in the process, but with the support of partners and an abiding commitment to amity and cooperation, we charted a course to what we believe is a balanced, cohesive and meaningful text.

We are particularly grateful to the delegations who had early concerns and whose flexibility and understanding allowed us to be where we are now.

With L4, this council lends its weight and moral authority to uphold the rights and dignity of 1.9 million seafarers who toil silently in faraway waters to help keep our societies going, crisis or no crisis, in good times and in bad.

We thank our co-sponsors and hope council members will join us in arriving and adopting consensus on this resolution.

Thank you very much, Mr. President. **END**