

## Candidature of Thailand for the Election to IMO Council for 2010-11

Situated in the midst of South East Asia and Greater Mekong Sub-region, Thailand has claimed herself as a fast-growing trading centre and a potential gateway which significantly contributes to both regional and national development. With her boundary adjacent to the sea, approximately 90% of her international trade volume relies on maritime transport, a certain part of which is efficiently served by her national merchant fleet.



Towards the thirty sixth year of being a member of IMO and the fourth year of being a member of IMO Council, Thailand has seen itself more adhering to the implementation of IMO instruments than ever. Like many other countries, it has been facing with more challenges and major issues, to name a few, prevailing economic recession, fluctuation of fuel prices, environmental issues and impact caused by transport sector, and threats to international shipping as a result of acts of piracy in certain areas. Nevertheless, Thailand has seriously taken its constant efforts with strong determination to overcome its obstacles and strived for better implementation of IMO instruments.

As a member of IMO Council during the past three years, Thailand has actively taken up several activities, aiming primarily at enhancing the capability of international maritime community to implement IMO instruments and standards more effectively.

### **Maritime Safety and Security**

- **Long Range Identification and Tracking System (LRIT)**

The adoption of new SOLAS amendment on the Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) System. Realizing such concern, Thailand requested the technical assistance from IMO in organizing a regional seminar on LRIT with a view to enhancing knowledge and understanding of how to implement LRIT on 27-28 March 2008 in Bangkok. It also proposed to include LRIT matter as a regular agenda to be discussed at the ASEAN Maritime Transport Working Group Meetings, where ASEAN Member Countries are encouraged to exchange their experiences and practices in preparation for the implementation of LRIT. As the timeline of LRIT implementation, all necessary arrangements for the implementation are now in good progress. Thai vessels are capable of transmitting the LRIT information to the Data Center and ready to join the LRIT system. Thailand has chosen to establish its national data center and expected that the whole process of LRIT will be ready for implementation by IMO's timeline.

- **Piracy in Somalia and the Gulf of Aden**

Thai vessels are among those affected by the acts of piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia and the Gulf of Aden as three vessels were captured and the crews were taken hostage for ransoms. In response to the incident, Thailand has developed guidelines for shipowners / operators whose vessels sail through the said area providing suggestions on how to avoid or protect themselves from the attack of pirates or armed intruders. In view of this, Thailand supports the resolutions of the UNSC Resolution 1803 (2008), Resolution 1816 (2008) and Resolution 1838 (2008) which call upon interested Member States to take active part in the fight against piracy on the high seas off the coast of Somalia by deploying their naval vessels and military aircraft. As a country affected by the acts of piracy in the said area, the delegation of Thailand also attended the International Conference on Piracy around Somalia on 10 – 11 December 2008 in Nairobi, Kenya, where it supported the decisions of the Conference in dealing with the issue by multi-approaches to ensure effective and sustainable solutions in the long term.

As a party to the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ship in Asia (ReCAAP), Thailand has assumed the chairmanship of the ReCAAP Council during 2009 – 2010. It strongly supports the efforts made by the African States in having an agreement similar to ReCAAP as a regional cooperation framework to fight against piracy off the coast of Somalia.

- **Joint patrol in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore**

The air and sea joint patrol operations in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore among the three littoral states, namely, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore started in 2005 with a view to ensuring maritime safety and security in the area. Thailand has also been invited to join the operations as its lower southern region forms part of the Straits. Thailand signed the SOP and TOR of the joint patrol operations in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore on 18 September 2008. The sea operations have commenced since October 2008 while the air patrol has started since January 2009.



- **Water traffic monitoring by VTS and CCTV**

The expansion of Thailand's international seaborne trade as a result of the need for an efficient and effective traffic control system to monitor the increasing vessel traffic at Thailand's major ports. To effectively cope with this situation and better comply with IMO requirements, Thailand has established the Vessel Traffic Control and Maritime Security Centre (VTCMSC) under the Marine Department at Laem Chabang Port. The Vessel Traffic Management and Information System (VTMIS) project, consisting of surveillance systems and communication systems, has been established for enhancing capability of VTCMSC and expected to be operational in 2010. To establish a complete water traffic monitoring system, a full range of closed circuit television system (CCTV) to monitor water traffic on the Chao Phraya River, where Bangkok Port is located, has just been installed at the Marine Department and operational since April 2009.



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