‘As the World Maritime Day theme for 2016 so rightly acknowledges, shipping is indispensable to the world – and is set to remain central to world economic growth as we make the inevitable transition towards an era of clean and sustainable development,’ said IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim in his annual World Maritime Day Message on 29 September.

Shipping is indispensable to the world. That is the message being shared around the world on 29 September as IMO and the global maritime community celebrated the annual World Maritime Day.

World Maritime Day is an official United Nations day. Every year, it provides an opportunity to focus attention on the importance of shipping and other maritime activities and to emphasize a particular aspect of IMO’s work.

Each World Maritime Day has its own theme. For 2016, the theme was chosen to focus on the critical link between shipping and the everyday lives of people all over the planet, and to raise awareness of the role of IMO as the global regulatory body for international shipping. The importance of shipping in supporting and sustaining today’s global society gives IMO’s work a significance that reaches far beyond the industry itself.

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), around 80% of global trade by volume and over 70% of global trade by value are carried by sea and are handled by ports worldwide. These shares are even higher in the case of most developing countries.

A single ship can carry enough grain to feed nearly four million people for a month; another, enough oil to heat an entire city for a year, and others can carry the same amount of finished goods as nearly 20,000 heavy trucks on the road. Ships are among the engineering wonders of the modern world.

Shipping is the only truly cost-effective and sustainable delivery mechanism for international trade and the global economy. People all over the world rely on ships to transport the commodities, fuel, foodstuffs, goods and products that are so vital in their everyday lives.

Added Secretary-General Kitack Lim in his annual World Maritime Day Message: ‘As the World Maritime Day theme for 2016 so rightly acknowledges, shipping is indispensable to the world – and is set to remain central to world
economic growth as we make the inevitable transition towards an era of clean and sustainable development.

‘This is a message that needs, and deserves, a wider audience. Almost everyone in the world today relies on shipping to some extent – but very few are aware of it.’ He urged all those involved in shipping to take the opportunity to highlight this vital industry, on which so many depend.’

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also issued a message for World Maritime Day: ‘The importance of shipping in supporting and sustaining today's global society makes it indispensable to the world, and to meeting the challenge of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.’

Individual governments have been encouraged to mark the World Maritime Day, on a date of their choosing but usually in the last week of September.

**Social Media**
Governments, organizations, companies and training institutes, as well as individuals, are encouraged to let IMO know how World Maritime Day is being celebrated, using the hashtag #WorldMaritimeDay @IMOHQ

**World Maritime Day Parallel Event**
The World Maritime Day Parallel Event will be held in Turkey in November 2016.