

## International Women's Day in the Maritime Industry will highlight safety to create optimal work environments.



**Language**  
English

The International Day of Women in the Maritime Industry, to be celebrated worldwide on May 18, aims to promote the hiring, retention and empowerment of women in the maritime sector, as well as a barrier-free work environment. Before the celebration, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) scheduled an international symposium for Friday, May 17 at its London headquarters under the motto "Safe Perspectives: Women forging the future of maritime

security,” an event which will be broadcast live on the IMO YouTube channel.

IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Domínguez stated that “the goal is not only to pay tribute to women's successes, but also to advocate for equal opportunities and unlock the full potential that a diverse workplace offers, highlight and raise awareness about the challenges they face: discrimination, disparities and limitations regarding their professional opportunities. The maritime sector offers a multitude of perspectives for women, ranging from seamanship to engineering, from law to logistics, and beyond... We must lead by example, serving as role models by striving to create work environments inclusive, empowering and safe for women.”

#### OMI symposium details

The opening of the symposium (2:30 p.m.) will be led by Arsenio Domínguez - IMO Secretary General and Elpi Petraki - President of WISTA International.

Later (2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.) there will be a Roundtable: “Rethinking maritime security” that will be moderated by Michelle Sanders, IMOGENder Network / Alternate Permanent Representative of Canada to the International Maritime Organization. Participating as panelists: Dorothea Ioannou, CEO, SCB, Inc., Managers of the American P&I Club; Karin Orsel, President, European Community Shipowners Association; Gemma Capone, Marine Pilot Loadmaster/Marine Assurance Specialist; Carolina Riesco, Partner, Goldenberg & Riesco / Maritime Law Advisor and Helio Vicente, Director, Employment Affairs International Chamber of Shipping.

The program also includes the following activities:

15.45 – 16.00: Presentation – Diversity@Sea pilot project

16:30 – 17:10: Informal conversation – A holistic approach to safety at sea.

17.10 – 17.30: Gender Equality Award Ceremony.

Participating: Jaquelyn Burton, Master Mariner and Head of Creative Design, Kongsberg Maritime and Zhiwei Zhao, Director, Seafarers Research Institute, Dalian Maritime University.

In addition, the event will present the Diversity@Sea project of All Aboard Alliance, in which 11 shipping lines participate, each of which tests a series of measures on board one of the ships in its fleet to promote inclusion, including that the crew be made up of at least four women. This considering that, according to the IMO, only 29% of the global maritime workforce and only 20% of national maritime authorities are women. While the female gender represents less than 2% of seafarers worldwide.

To conclude the symposium, the first IMO Gender Quality Award will be presented to Despina Panayiotou Theodosiou of Cyprus, former president of the Women's International Shipping and Trading Association (WISTA International).

Theodosiou was selected by the IMO Council in November 2023 for her work on gender equality and women's empowerment throughout her tenure as President of WISTA International.

It is worth mentioning that the annual IMO Gender Equality Award was created in 2023 to

recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the advancement of gender equality and the empowerment of women in the maritime sector.

**Fecha:**

Tuesday, May 14, 2024

**Autor(es):**

MundoMaritimo

**Tomado de:**

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