



Governing Body

342nd Session, Geneva, June 2021

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Eighth item on the agenda

Report of the Director-General

First supplementary report: Urgent matters arising from the resolutions adopted by the Special Tripartite Committee established under the Maritime Labour Convention at its the fourth meeting, Part I (Geneva, 19–23 April 2021)

Summary: This document draws attention to two resolutions adopted by the fourth meeting (Part I) of the Special Tripartite Committee established under the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended (MLC, 2006), which require immediate action by the Office.

Follow-up action required: The Director-General is requested to contact the United Nations Secretary-General regarding the establishment of a UN task force to examine the implementation and practical application of the MLC, 2006 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Author units: International Labour Standards Department (NORMES).

Related documents: [GB.340/Resolution\(Rev.2\)](#); [GB.341/INS/INF/7](#).

▶ Introduction

1. The fourth meeting (Part I) of the Special Tripartite Committee (STC) established under the [Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended \(MLC, 2006\)](#)¹ took place online from 19 to 23 April 2021.
2. While the report of the Chairperson of the STC will be submitted to the Governing Body at its 343rd Session (November 2021), the two resolutions adopted by STC that require urgent action are submitted to the present session. The [final report](#) of the meeting can be consulted online.

▶ Resolution concerning the implementation and practical application of the MLC, 2006 during the COVID-19 pandemic

3. The operative section of this [resolution](#) reads as follows:

[The STC]

Requests the ILO to renew its call on Members to designate and treat seafarers as key workers and also to call on Members to take all necessary steps to ensure that seafarers:

- (i) can travel to and from their country or place of residence and their place of work,
- (ii) can transit between regions and States and within countries for the purposes of taking up employment, being repatriated, or for medical care including dental care ashore,
- (iii) are exempted from quarantine requirements, if any, upon arrival in the jurisdictions in which they join or leave their vessel, except where they test positive for COVID-19,
- (iv) can obtain medical care including dental care ashore when required,
- (v) can obtain shore leave and access to shore-based welfare services,
- (vi) are permitted to access training necessary for their employment, where it is available,
- (vii) are not required to stay on board a vessel longer than the period specified in their seafarer's employment agreement without their consent, and under no circumstances for longer than the maximum period of service stipulated by the MLC, 2006.

and to co-operate with each other to promote the wellbeing of seafarers and respect their fundamental rights and principles under the MLC, 2006;

Requests Members, in accordance with applicable national laws and regulations, to consider the acceptance of internationally recognized documentation carried by seafarers, including seafarers' identity documents delivered in conformity with the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention, 1958 (No. 108) and the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003, as amended (No. 185);

¹ The MLC, 2006 has been ratified by 98 Member States representing more than 91 per cent of the world merchant shipping fleet.

Requests Members, in accordance with applicable national laws and regulations, to consider temporary measures including waivers, exemptions or other changes to visa or documentary requirements that might normally apply to seafarers;

Requests that the ILO remind Members of the aforementioned Resolutions adopted by the ILO Governing Body and the UN General Assembly and of the IMO Recommended framework of protocols for ensuring safe ship crew changes and travel during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic;

Requests the ILO to call on Members to ensure that seafarers are provided with access to COVID-19 vaccination at the earliest opportunity as well as to promote the mutual acceptance of vaccine certificates, where issued, including when in transit to or from their ships and when taking shore leave, in order to protect their health and safeguard their ability to carry out their duties as key workers maintaining global supply chains;

Calls on Members and shipowners' and seafarers' organizations to work jointly to ensure the promotion and respect for seafarers' rights under the MLC, 2006;

Further recommends that the ILO Governing Body convey the contents of this Resolution to the United Nations Secretary-General with a request to convene an ad-hoc UN Inter-Agency Task Force to examine the implementation and practical application of the MLC, 2006 during the pandemic, including its impact on seafarers' fundamental rights and on the shipping industry.

► Resolution concerning COVID-19 vaccination for seafarers

4. The operative section of this resolution reads as follows:

[The STC]

Calls upon Members, in consultation and cooperation with shipowners' and seafarers' organizations, to carry out a mapping exercise, in order to assist with the procurement of adequate supplies of vaccines for the inoculation of seafarers in their country of residence or other appropriate location;

Calls upon all relevant UN bodies to recognize the need for a collective approach to secure the number of vaccines identified as being required by the mapping exercise;

Calls upon governments, in accordance with their national vaccination programmes, to make supplies of WHO Emergency Use List (WHO-EUL) vaccines available for seafarers on ships visiting ports in their territories, in order to facilitate necessary crew changes and minimise disruption to global supply chains;

Calls upon governments to consider establishing vaccination hubs for seafarers in ports where there is sufficient capacity, where significant numbers of ships call and where sufficient supplies of WHO-EUL vaccines can be made available;

Encourages States to accept vaccines given to seafarers by other States, particularly if a national, regional or other form of vaccine certification is required to permit movement of individuals;

Encourages governments, in consultation with shipowners' and seafarers' organizations and in coordination with the WHO and IMO, to consider the possibility of establishing an international programme for seafarers that will facilitate access to vaccination ashore, including where seafarers are joining or leaving a ship or taking shore leave; and

Calls upon Members to ensure that seafarers are provided with access to COVID-19 vaccination at the earliest opportunity.

▶ Draft decision

5. **The Governing Body, recalling its [Resolution concerning maritime labour issues and the COVID-19 pandemic](#), adopted on 8 December 2020:**
 - (a) **took note of the resolutions adopted by the Special Tripartite Committee established under the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended (MLC, 2006), at its fourth meeting (Part I – April 2021);**
 - (b) **renewed its urgent call on all Members to pursue and intensify their efforts, including in relation with the vaccination of seafarers and access to medical care ashore, to solve the crisis faced by the maritime sector as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; and**
 - (c) **requested the Director-General to convey the contents of the resolution concerning the implementation and practical application of the MLC, 2006 during the COVID-19 pandemic to the United Nations Secretary-General with a request to convene an ad-hoc UN interagency task force to examine the implementation and practical application of the MLC, 2006 during the pandemic, including its impact on seafarers' fundamental rights and on the shipping industry.**