Conference: YCMUN

Committee: International Maritime Organization

Agenda Item:

Topic 1: Rise of Megaships

Topic 2: Convenience of Flags

Country: Dominion of Canada

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**Position Paper**

As the delegation of Canada, we are more than honored to be a part of this precious conference. We strongly believe that our committee and agenda items are clearly very considerable. So we are open to any cooperation, to make significant improvements…

More than 80% of global trade is transported by international shipping to individuals and communities around the world. The International Maritime Organization, or IMO, is a specialized department of the United Nations charged with examining maritime safety, environmental and security. It is responsible for providing a fair, practical, widely accepted, and effectively implemented regulatory framework for the maritime sector. Growth of the maritime infrastructure, energy efficiency, maritime education and training, new technology and innovation, maritime security and maritime traffic management are some of the issues that the development and implementation of global standards covering, through IMO.

Subject 1: Rise of Megaships

The development and operation of megaships have become a significant concern for the maritime community. It require a comprehensive international approach to ensure the safety, security, and environmental sustainability of global shipping. Megaships, characterized by their enormous size and capacity, have demonstrated economic advantages in terms of efficiency. However, their grand size poses challenges to maritime safety and environmental sustainability. The potential risks associated with these vessels include various problems.

Canada is one of the countries that has the largest interest in international seaborne trade. We, like many other countries, follow international maritime regulations and standards set by IMO. Canada's approach to mega ships is likely embedded within its broader maritime policies, focusing on safety, security, and environmental sustainability. Our country, being a member state of the IMO, actively participates in discussions and contributes to the development of regulations that address challenges posed by mega ships.

Canada emphasizes the need for robust regulations and standards to mitigate the associated risks. International collaboration is essential to ensure that safety measures are not compromised in pursuit of economic gains. Canada proposes the establishment of an international working group within the International Maritime Organization to propose amendments or new measures that address the unique challenges posed by megaships. This group should consider factors such as enhanced navigation protocols, emergency response procedures, and environmental safeguards to strike a balance between economic interests and the safety of global maritime operations.

Subject 2: Convenience of Flags

The second issue of concern is the convenience of flags in the maritime industry, which has implications for vessel registration, regulatory compliance, and enforcement of international maritime laws. In general, flags of convenience (FoCs) refers to the process in which a ship owner registers their vessel in a nation other than their nation of origin. Ship owners use flags of convenience for a variety of purposes. Owners who register offshore may be subject to taxation in a different country, most likely at a reduced rate. But tax avoidance can lead to unequal playing fields in the shipping industry and has a significant financial impact on the home country of the ship owner.

Canada recognizes the legitimate reasons for choosing a flag of convenience, such as cost savings and operational flexibility. However, the abuse of this practice raises concerns and difficulties in enforcing international regulations. We, as a member state of the International Maritime Organization), we follow the IMO conventions and guidelines related to the registration and use of flags in the shipping industry. The IMO has established guidelines to ensure that vessels flying the flags of its member states adhere to international standards, promoting safety, security, and environmental sustainability.

In the context of flags of convenience, we are seriously concerned about the potential abuse of this practice, which can lead to many problems. We support international efforts within the IMO to address these concerns and strengthen regulations related to the use of flags.

To address this issue, we propose the reinforcement of existing IMO guidelines and the development of mechanisms to ensure stricter adherence to safety and environmental standards by vessels registered under flags of convenience. A comprehensive review of the current FoC system should be undertaken, with the aim of identifying and closing regulatory loopholes that allow for the exploitation of soft standards.

We encourage the establishment of an international registry or database that tracks vessel registration, allowing for increased transparency and accountability in the maritime industry. This would facilitate better cooperation between flag states, port states, and coastal states to ensure that vessels flying flags of convenience meet international standards and adhere to their responsibilities under international law.

In conclusion, we believe that addressing the rise of megaships and the convenience of flags requires a collaborative effort within the International Maritime Organization. By working together, we can strike a balance between economic interests and the safety, security, and sustainability of the global maritime industry. Canada definitely stands ready to actively participate in discussions and negotiations to achieve these common goals.

Thank you.

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