

**Media Release – 19 October 2021**

## **Time to recognise the value of the dry bulk sector says INTERCARGO**

As news headlines underscore the quality and flexibility of the bulk sector fleet in meeting the challenges of current trade disruptions, Dimitris Fafalios, Chairman of INTERCARGO believes that now is the time to re-evaluate the image of the bulk carrier sector and recognise the commitment of INTERCARGO members to a safe, efficient, high quality and environmentally sound dry bulk shipping industry.

Bulk carriers employ hundreds of thousands of seafarers and carry more cargo deadweight to more diverse ports than any other shipping sector. They deliver essential goods even to the most isolated and distant ports and adapt their tramp trading patterns as demand dictates.

Speaking at the organisation’s semi-annual meetings in London last week, Fafalios highlighted the importance of seafarers in the supply chain, and the role that they play in easing the strain on world trade. “This is a complex global issue but there is no doubt that we are relying on properly vaccinated, mentally and physically fit seafarers to contribute to the solution.

“Universal commitments for collective action are imperative to resolve the seafarers’ humanitarian crisis and to keep global trade moving,” Fafalios said. “Coordinating a worldwide vaccination programme for seafarers is an urgent priority. While the efforts of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and global maritime bodies must permeate every area of the shipping industry, urgent action outside the maritime sphere is needed by government leaders at the highest level, ultimately leading to the recognition of seafarers as key workers. We must hope that the global press coverage that we are seeing will facilitate that.”

INTERCARGO’s Annual General Meeting, Executive Committee and Technical Committee met both virtually and in person in London over two days, with the meetings presided over by Chairman Dimitris Fafalios, Vice Chairman Spyros Tarasis, Vice Chairman Uttam Kumar Jaiswal, and Technical Committee Chairman Tom Keenan.

Top of the agenda was the need to urgently resolve the humanitarian crisis faced by seafarers under COVID-19. Issues debated also included initiatives for the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and the ESG agenda; the implementation progress of DryBMS as the quality standard for the dry bulk sector; the safe carriage of cargoes; bulk carrier design standards; the investigation of bulk carrier casualties; ballast water management; implications of the sulphur limit on fuels; and piracy threats.

INTERCARGO also presented its **2020/2021 Annual Review** to the membership, which can be downloaded [here](https://www.intercargo.org/annual-review-2020-2021)<sup>1</sup>. Following a doubling of the Association’s membership during 2016-2019, the last 18 months has seen membership stabilised at historic high levels.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.intercargo.org/annual-review-2020-2021>

In order to express its appreciation to all members for their continued support and especially those who, under the current circumstances, were unable to enjoy the networking opportunities afforded by face-to-face meetings, the Association has also created a special **electronic compilation of promotional material** from its members, which is available on a dedicated webpage [here](#)<sup>2</sup>.

Secretary General Kostas G. Gkonis said, “INTERCARGO’s badge of quality is widely recognised by the industry. We thank our members - comprising more than 220 forward thinking companies from across 30 different countries - for their continued support of our Association’s collective efforts for the benefit of our sector and in the service of societies at large.”

The Association will hold its next semi-annual meetings in March 2022.

**About INTERCARGO:** International shipping is vital for the global economy and prosperity as it transports approximately 90% of world trade. The dry bulk sector is the largest shipping sector in terms of number of ships and deadweight. Dry bulk carriers account for 43% of the world fleet (in tonnage) and carry an estimated 55% of the global transport work. Please view the [2021 Dry Bulk Shipping video: Sustainably serving the world’s essential needs](#)<sup>3</sup>.

The International Association of Dry Cargo Shipowners (INTERCARGO) unites and promotes quality dry bulk shipping, bringing together more than 220 forward thinking companies from 30 countries. INTERCARGO convened for the first time in 1980 in London and has been participating with consultative status at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) since 1993. INTERCARGO provides the forum where dry bulk shipowners, managers and operators are informed about, discuss, and share concerns on key topics and regulatory challenges, especially in relation to safety, the environment, and operational excellence. The Association takes forward its members’ positions to IMO, as well as to other shipping and international industry fora, having free and fair competition as a principle.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.intercargo.org/agm-2021-our-members](http://www.intercargo.org/agm-2021-our-members)

<sup>3</sup> [www.intercargo.org/video-2021](http://www.intercargo.org/video-2021)