



Press release

Hong Kong Shipowners Association
Shipping Dialogue and Luncheon with International Chamber of Shipping

Today (12 May 2025), at the invitation of the Hong Kong Shipowners Association (HKSOA), Secretary General Guy Platten and Secretary General Elect Thomas Kazakos of the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) visited Hong Kong for a Shipping Dialogue with HKSOA members. Over 130 key stakeholders, including ship owners, ship operators and industry experts from Hong Kong's maritime sector attended the event (held in the JW Marriott Ballroom), which was followed by a Luncheon in honour of the two distinguished overseas visitors.

During the event, Secretary General Guy Platten and Secretary General Elect Thomas Kazakos exchanged views with the audience on major issues of concern to the maritime community, including global decarbonization efforts in light of the deliberations of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Marine Environment Protection Committee 83rd session (MEPC 83), held from 7 April to 11 April in London and the many challenges faced by the shipping industry, given the recent geopolitical tensions and developments.

In his welcome remarks, HKSOA Chairman, Mr. Angad Banga JP, highlighted Hong Kong's role as a super-connector between East and West, and between regulators and the industry: "The Hong Kong Shipowners Association has long been a bridge between East and West, championing open dialogue and constructive cooperation across the global maritime community. Over the years, we have built strong partnerships with international institutions like the International Chamber of Shipping to address shared challenges – from decarbonization to seafarer welfare – while advancing policies that benefit the entire shipping industry. Our commitment to international collaboration remains unwavering, as we continue to position Hong Kong as a trusted, globally connected maritime centre."

In his speech, Mr. Banga referred to several collaborations between the two parties, including the ICS's 2019 decision, following the HKSOA's suggestion, to select Hong Kong to establish its first overseas office outside London. He also commended the very good response to the first Global Maritime Trade Summit, hosted by the ICS in Hong Kong last November, with the support of the Hong Kong SAR Government and the HKSOA.

On behalf of the HKSOA, Mr. Banga expressed his appreciation of the work of ICS Secretary General Guy Platten and extended a warm welcome to incoming ICS Secretary General Thomas Kazakos. “We are deeply grateful to Guy Platten for his outstanding leadership as Secretary General of the ICS,” said Mr. Banga. “His tireless advocacy, principled voice and global outlook have made a lasting impact on the industry, including here in Hong Kong. As we welcome Thomas Kazakos into this important role, we extend our warmest congratulations and full support. We look forward to working closely with Thomas to build on the strong foundation laid by Guy and to navigate the future together.”

Mr. Banga’s remarks about international cooperation were echoed by ICS Secretary General Guy Platten. “Cooperation is increasingly important now, as we are seeing a rise in protectionism and increased barriers to trade, which we highlighted at our joint Global Maritime Trade Summit during Hong Kong Maritime Week last year. Whether it’s tackling complex technical issues, like future fuels or advancing global initiatives to improve seafarer welfare, the ICS and the HKSOA will continue to work hand in hand to deliver real results for the industry.”

The incoming Secretary General of the ICS, Mr. Thomas Kazakos, shared his observations on the effective partnership between the ICS and the HKSOA. “Hong Kong remains a strategic maritime hub, and our partnership supports progress across the board, from port development to digitalization,” he said. Now that we have a global agreement for shipping’s path to decarbonization from MEPC 83, it is essential that key maritime players, like the ICS and the HKSOA, help governments build on this framework and provide certainty to stakeholders. I look forward to continued collaboration with the HKSOA to address our shared challenges and develop scalable solutions that will benefit the entire global shipping industry.”

The Shipping Dialogue was hosted by HKSOA Managing Director Sandy Chan and HKSOA representative on the ICS Kenneth Lam.

Notes for Editors

The Hong Kong Shipowners Association (HKSOA), incorporated in 1957, is a major industry association with about 200 corporate members, including ship owners, ship managers and marine service providers. Throughout the years, it has been a key driver of maritime decarbonisation and a strong advocate for shipping initiatives at all levels – local, national and international. In May 2024, as the rotational Chairman of the Asian Shipowners’ Association (ASA), the Association hosted the ASA International Shipping Forum. The event brought together over 300 key maritime leaders, from across Asia, in Hong Kong under the theme “Asia Shipping, Greener Together”.

The HKSOA is also an active member association of the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), the main global trade association for shipowners and operators, representing over 80% of the world’s merchant fleet. During Hong Kong Maritime Week 2024, with the support of the Hong Kong SAR Government and the HKSOA, the ICS launched its first Global Maritime Trade Summit in Hong Kong. The event was well received by the global maritime community, with nearly 300 delegates attending, including ministers, policymakers, senior representatives and CEOs from 28 countries, the European Commission and international organisations.

During the IMO's MEPC 83 session, held in April this year in London, a "Net-Zero Framework" was agreed. The main measures include (i) a global fuel standard for large ocean-going ships, requiring the ships to reduce their annual greenhouse gas emissions over time, and (ii) a global emissions pricing mechanism, requiring ships that exceed the emissions thresholds to purchase remedial units to balance their deficit emissions, while providing financial incentives for ships using zero or near-zero greenhouse gas emission technologies. To follow up on the IMO deliberations, on 16 April, the HKSOA hosted the "Symposium on Maritime Decarbonisation and Sustainability: From MEPC to Action". The event drew over 200 ship owners and key maritime professionals to hear first-hand from Hong Kong's IMO delegation, along with expert guidance to help them make their own plans for decarbonisation.

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