



Press Release

Asian Shipowners' Association (ASA) Ship Insurance and Liability Committee (SILC)

“Maritime Leaders Reaffirm Appeal for Fair Treatment of Seafarers Amid Ongoing Criminalisation—Focus on International Cooperation as Türkiye Cases Rise”

Hong Kong, 19 November 2025 — In a powerful call to action, The Asian Shipowners' Association Ship Insurance and Liability Committee (ASA SILC) convened its annual meeting in Hong Kong, where members expressed serious and continued concern regarding the criminalisation of seafarers—particularly in light of recent cases reported in Türkiye.

While the Committee welcomes the adoption of new guidance by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and International Labour Organisation (ILO) on the fair treatment of seafarers, recent developments suggest that more work is needed to ensure these standards are consistently implemented and applied at the national level. Shipowners observe that, despite positive intent, tangible improvements to protect seafarers facing criminal investigation or prosecution remain slow.

This year's meeting featured in-depth briefings from the Korea Shipowners' Association (KSA) and the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), both outlining pressing challenges and exploring constructive paths forward. The Committee recognises the ongoing engagement of authorities and partners and acknowledges that resolving the underlying issues requires close international collaboration, transparency, and a commitment to due process.

ASA SILC notes with particular concern the increase in cases involving lengthy detentions of seafarers in Türkiye. These developments highlight the urgent need to reinforce fundamental legal safeguards—including fair and timely legal proceedings, access to independent representation, and the presumption of innocence—especially in complex cross-border contexts.

Seafarers remain at the heart of global trade and economic well-being. ASA SILC renew the call to:

- Ensure full and effective implementation of the IMO/ILO Guidelines for fair treatment of seafarers in all jurisdictions,
- Enhance awareness and training for government and judicial authorities handling maritime cases,



- Strengthen legal procedures to enable swift, fair, and transparent resolution of incidents,
- Facilitate ongoing constructive dialogue and cooperation between governments, industry, and seafarer welfare organisations.

The Committee extends its readiness to work with all stakeholders to support best practice and to safeguard the rights and dignity of seafarers everywhere.