

The Role and Impact of Piri Reis Maritime University of Turkey on MET of the Globe through the First International Mermaid Congress of MET Cadets/Academicians of the World as an İstanbul 2010 Cultural Capital of Europe Project

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Abstract Piri Reis Maritime University of İstanbul – Turkey and the National Maritime Association of Cadets of Turkey organised the very First International Mermaid Congress of Maritime Cadets at İstanbul, during May 21-25,2010. The occasion was an İstanbul 2010 – European Capital of Culture International Maritime Project uniting IMO – 2010 Year of the Seafarer and IMO Secretary General’s Go To Sea Campaign Spirit with the IMO STW 41 work on the Comprehensive Review of the STCW Convention and the Code in Manila Diplomatic Conference of June 2010. The Congress had a record attendance of 586 Cadets of 42 Nationalities ,from 67 MET universities of 32 countries of the five continents of the Globe. A Joint International Statement of the 2010 International Mermaid Congress reflecting the MET Cadets’ opinion on the Amendments and Resolutions of STW 41 is drafted to be declared at major MET platforms of the Globe throughout the year 2010.

Keyword : *IMO , STCW 2010 , MET Cadets, International Statement*

1. Introduction

The unique occasion of the very First International Mermaid Congress of the MET Cadets of the Globe is organised and hosted by the Piri Reis Maritime University of İstanbul-Turkey,named after the famous Ottoman Admiral and Cartographer of the XVth – XVIth Centuries, inaugurated by the Chamber of Shipping of Turkey through Turkish Maritime Education Foundation in 2008. The Co Organiser of the Congress is the National Maritime Association of Cadets of Turkey with approximately 4500 members from 18 Turkish Maritime Universities, Faculties, Colleges, Junior Colleges, and Vocational Maritime High Schools.

The First International Mermaid Congress is a İstanbul 2010- European Capital of Culture sponsored Project. The European Capital of Culture is a city designated by the European Union for a period of one calendar year during which it is given a chance to showcase its cultural life and cultural development. A number of European cities have used the City of Culture Year to transform their cultural base and, in doing so, the way in which they are viewed internationally. Conceding the view of European Parliament and approval by the Council of Cultural Ministers of the European Union on November 2006, İstanbul was announced to be the European Capital of Culture for 2010.

Maritime Projects to be accomplished within the scope of İstanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture Agency were targeted at;
Worldwide publicising of the nautical aspects of İstanbul, a city that is both United and divided by water;

Contributing to the preparation, development, and monitoring of national and international maritime projects, thereby
Transmitting İstanbul's maritime culture to the next generations.

While emphasis was made on the maritime culture of İstanbul, it was aimed that every Project and activity involved the participation of especially youth in order to create a new generation which is fond of the sea, maritime and water sports, and is sensitive on issues related to environmental and marine pollution.

The First International Mermaid Congress was elected as one of the most successful İstanbul 2010-Cultural Capital of Europe Projects among several hundred Project applications.

The philosophy and the mission of the Congress was to bring together Maritime Students and Academicians of the five continents of the Globe with different cultures and backgrounds to discuss and brainstorm the current MET issues of common interest of the Maritime Education World, and come out with solutions in the form of recommendations to be declared through a Joint International Statement in support of the Diplomatic STW Conference of Manila, Philippines in June 2010.

586 MET cadets and Academicians from five continents, 42 nationalities, and 67 MET Institutions participated at the First International Mermaid Congress which was a historical record. Overseas and Turkish participants all have been hosted at five star hotels throughout the Congress. Participants contributed to the three parallel sessions of MET, Naval Architecture, Maritime Administration/Management; took part in brainstorming, interactive workshops, and participated in the interactive Naval Architecture Boat Design Competition all during the five days of the Congress. Best presentations and life boat designs were awarded with Mermaid Congress Trophies.

All 586 participants of the Congress were taken for a boat tour of Bosphorus, waterway separating Europe and Asia as well as sightseeing tours of touristic and historical parts of İstanbul. Overseas visitors participated in the International Maritime Cadets Festival, and attended to two Concerts/shows which were considered as the highlights of the Congress, and were enjoyed utmost by all participants.

The Congress received extremely positive feedbacks from almost all overseas participants upon their return back home. Thus, International Mermaid Congress started a Very First in the history of the World MET. Several MET Universities from all five continents volunteered to host and organise the Second International Mermaid Congress in 2011, an idea inaugurated and presented to the MET World by Piri Reis Maritime University, and National Association of Turkish Cadets. The Arab Academy for Science and Technology and Maritime Transport – one of the most developed MET Universities of the World representing the 23 members of the Arab League, situated in Alexandria/Egypt is the most likely hosts of the Congress next year in 2011.

The Joint International Statement of the Congress denoting the Brief Review of the World MET Cadets/Academicians perspective on STW 2010 Amendments and Resolutions is already presented by the Author [1], [2] in Tokyo to the Japan Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism Delegation to the Diplomatic Conference in Manila as well as at the STW 2010 Diplomatic Conference of IMO in Philippines in June 2010. Following the presentation of the Joint International Declaration of İstanbul 2010 at Busan Korea at the IAMU Conference, declaration of the Joint Statement of the International Mermaid Congress will be carried out at IMLA Conference[3] at Shanghai Maritime University of P.R. China in October 2010.

2. MET Issues of common interest raised and discussed at the Cadet Workshops

2.1 Seafarers Examination System for the Certificate of Competence (COC) – Oral / Written Examinations

More importance should be given in MET to oral examinations as they provide cadets with an opportunity to use their communicative skills. Standardized objective criteria of evaluating the cadets performance should be implemented. Furthermore, there should be one standardized international examination which is taken by everyone. cadets may not have the language skills to take a standardized test. Even some lecturers lack the level of English to successfully complete the examination.

2.2 Attracting New Entrants and Retaining Officers in the Sector

Salaries of officers should be increased and more social facilities should be provided for the officers as cadets believed that under the current economic conditions, an increasing number of seafaring officers are attracted primarily by the economic incentive versus any great attraction to the life at sea. The ILO MLC 2006 provisions regarding salaries should be extended to include officers.

2.3 E-Learning and Distance Learning Applications in MET

MET e-learning and distance learning applications are beneficial since they are time-saving. However, e-learning is not always practical because internet connections on board are rare and expensive. E-learning can never replace books and in-class learning and the human touch entirely, but rather e-learning should be considered as an enhancement to distance learning.

2.4 Developing Web-based Networks of MET Institutions

It is necessary to develop web-based networks that give information about MET institutions and provide an opportunity to discuss problems that MET cadets have. Also an international foundation of maritime cadets should be established.

2.5 Shortage of Officers with Seafaring Background for Shore Duties

The salary of shore officers should be increased to ease the shortage of officers with seafaring background for shore duties. Collaboration with shipping companies will also improve this situation.

2.6 University Degree Essentials in MET

English and practical maritime-related skills are the essentials in MET. Training programmes are not enough. University degrees are essential for career progression.

2.7 Shortage of Seafaring Officers – Feasible Solutions

Seafarers need more opportunities to practice and gain experience. Ship owners must invest more funds in education. The mobility of seafarers internationally should be improved by relaxing government regulations on who can serve where.

2.8 Improving Human Performance Onboard

The basic problems are the shortage of qualified sea officers, financial issues, employers' indifference to crew's well-being, and the high cost of hiring people from Western Europe. Possible solutions include improving the life standards and facilities on ships through improved access to the internet, and psychological support.

2.9 Standardization of Onboard Training

When countries are compared, on the global scale, the systems are nearly the same with some differences in terms of facilities and education/training systems and their duration.

2.10 Mutual Use of Simulator Facilities and Training Vessels

Although there is rather limited availability, the simulators are very helpful. The cadets request more simulators and more frequent utilisation opportunity since theory must be accompanied by practice. For some countries, the training period should be longer, as they need more practice and experience in real life situations. Cadets must serve on some kind of real vessel to gain real practice. In-class and simulator experience doesn't replace real ship-board experience.

2.11 Applying Workshop Skills Training Ashore or On Board

The adequacy of workshops depends on the needs and expectations of people. There was no unanimous view on which kinds of workshops are most helpful.

2.12 Regimental System, Discipline, Uniform – The Cadet Perspective

Overall, this is a cultural topic – some cultures accept uniforms as standard, and essential, while others reject uniforms in educational academies altogether.

Most of the cadets shared the idea that a regimental system should be applied to build up discipline on board where cadets from various origins and backgrounds come together. It was also mentioned that it is essential to wear uniforms at school and on board to ensure discipline. On the contrary, one of the cadets didn't agree with the other cadets, saying that there is no need to have a regimental system as strict as the military regimental system.

Wearing a uniform helps in the classroom to create a feeling of being on a team, and a uniform commands respect, and encourages students to respect each other.

Regimental structures made a great difference in discipline in classrooms in Bulgaria. When the regimental system was removed from the merchant marine students, discipline suffered.

2.13 Expectation from Ship Owners – Accommodation Provisions for Trainees

Cadets agreed that they should have their own cabins. More recreational facilities should be provided for them. The cadets feel that onboard management should pay more attention to them and it should always be remembered that they are cadets, not officers or experienced seafarers. Ship owners should ensure their training/working conditions onboard and provide more opportunities for cadets to get a chance to go on board vessels as is their right.

Practical ways should be found to obligate ship owners to provide positions for cadets, such as involving ship owners in determining the number of cadets accepted into maritime education institutions, in exchange for their agreeing to provide them opportunities for experience at sea.

2.14 Internal and External Communications Onboard, Oral and Written

Nearly all of the cadets in this discussion group agreed that there should be a standardized examination for oral skills, and ship officers on board should communicate correctly as they are required to lead the cadets to use it correctly, too. An oral examination in Maritime English has to be mandatory in all countries. It is very important to have a global solution to internal and external communication problems.

3. Joint International Statement of the International Mermaid Congress of Istanbul 2010, European Capital of Culture

RECALLING the draft amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (the STCW Convention) and its associated Code, and that such draft amendments have been approved by the Sub-Committee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping (STW);

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that the proposed amendments are historically significant in that they are the very first major revisions of the two instruments since their adoption in 1995, this following on the original 1978 Agreement;

CONSIDERING that fraudulent certification of STCW training endangers lives, ships and cargo, and exemplifies the substandard level of professionalism from which the MET community wishes to distance itself;

RECOGNIZING that true compliance with the Convention and its Code can only be achieved by an effective standardized auditing process (internally or externally, performed by recognized monitoring agents affiliated with competent and authorized bodies);

CONSIDERING safety at sea and maritime productivity require mariners to be in good health, and that accidents, incidents and even fatalities have been attributed to seafarers suffering from poor health;

RECOGNIZING basic competencies among able seafarers are too often missing on deployment and relevant, enhanced skill sets are needed;

ACKNOWLEDGING that current MET requires an inordinate amount of time for celestial navigation lessons when it is believed that more attention should be paid to the more technologically relevant automatic radar plotting aids and radar use skills;

RECOGNIZING that while marine environmental training has increased significantly in some quarters of the industry, effective training in this area is not yet widespread enough;

SUPPORTING THE STANDPOINT that leadership and teamwork are crucial to promote for MET to improve shipboard management;

ACKNOWLEDGING inadequately controlled congested seaways pose significant risks to shipping and the environment;

SUPPORTING THE STANDPOINT THAT it is critical to protect the health and future of our marine environment;

RECOGNIZING the need for clear enforceable near-coastal requirements;

CONSIDERING modern ship technology places high demands on marine engineers, yet current MET does not address this adequately;

RECOGNIZING the changing role of radio operators;

UNDERSTANDING the need for specialized knowledge is a reality in increasingly specialized ship designs and functions;

RECOGNIZING shipboard manning reduction trends demand complete attention of seafarers to perform tasks at hand, and that not all training can take place shipboard;

CONSIDERING that seafarers face dangers not only from the industrial setting and weather risks inherent in their environment, but also from increasing risks associated with terrorism and piracy;

And TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION the majority of shipping accidents can be attributed to human error, including a substantial number caused by alcohol use, drug use, and insufficiently rested crew;

IN SUPPORTING the Sub-committee's proposed amendments to the STCW Convention;
THE 586 MARITIME EDUCATION AND TRAINING STUDENTS/CADETS AND ACADEMICIANS FROM 67 MARITIME INSTITUTIONS FROM 32 COUNTRIES ASSEMBLED FOR THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE INAUGURAL 2010 INTERNATIONAL MERMAID CONGRESS IN ISTANBUL, 2010 EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE, HEREBY SUPPORT THE PROPOSALS:

RECALLING CHAPTER 1, - AS REGARDS GENERAL PROVISIONS, THAT

1. measures to prevent fraudulent practices associated with competency certificates be improved;
2. the evaluation process of the Convention compliance be strengthened; AND
3. seafarers' medical fitness standards be heightened and applied uniformly.

WE FURTHER RECOMMEND, RECALLING CHAPTER 2- AS REGARDS THE MASTER AND DECK DEPARTMENT, THAT

1. certification requirements for able seafarers be updated to be in line with current required skill sets;
2. MET navigation training requirements be changed to favour modern technology such as automatic radar plotting aids and radar application, over outdated methods such as celestial navigation;
3. greater focus be given to effective marine environment awareness training for pre-service and in-service mariners;
4. MET include standardized leadership and teamwork courses; AND
5. awareness of the importance of vessel traffic services be promoted.

WE FURTHER RECOMMEND, RECALLING CHAPTER 3 - AS REGARDS THE ENGINE DEPARTMENT, THAT

1. near-coastal requirement regulations be clarified;
2. greater focus be given to effective marine environment awareness training for pre-service and in-service mariners;
3. MET include standardized leadership and teamwork courses;
4. competencies for engineers be modified in line with contemporary professional requirements; AND
5. there be improved certification requirements for able (engine) seafarers.

WE FURTHER RECOMMEND, RECALLING CHAPTER 4 - AS REGARDS RADIO COMMUNICATIONS AND RADIO PERSONNEL, THAT

1. Radio Communications and Radio Personnel be renamed Radio Communications and Radio Operators; AND
2. such chapter be updated to reflect current regulations including reference to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual.

WE FURTHER RECOMMEND, RECALLING CHAPTER 5 - AS REGARDS STANDARDIZING SPECIAL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR PERSONNEL ON CERTAIN KINDS OF SHIPS, THAT

1. specialized requirements be developed for seamen serving on board specific types of tankers, notably liquefied gas tankers; AND
2. regulations for personnel on "ro-ro passenger" and "passenger ships" be combined to cover all "passenger ships".

WE FURTHER RECOMMEND, RECALLING CHAPTER 6 - AS REGARDS EMERGENCY, OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY, SECURITY, MEDICAL CARE AND SURVIVAL FUNCTIONS, THAT

1. where training cannot be adequately conducted, new security training requirements be developed; AND
2. there be training specific to anti-piracy defence.

WE FURTHER RECOMMEND, RECALLING CHAPTER 7 - AS REGARDS ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION, THAT

1. changes to other chapters be reflected within this chapter

WE FURTHER RECOMMEND, RECALLING CHAPTER 8 - AS REGARDS WATCHKEEPING, THAT

1. requirements be updated and expanded regarding hours of work and rest; AND
2. there be new requirements for the prevention of alcohol and drug abuse.

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

We, the assembled at the May 2010 International Mermaid Congress in Istanbul, do also hereby express our support for and acknowledgement of the Sub-Committee in its approving for submission to the Manila Conference 2010 thirteen draft resolutions relating to:

1. The contribution of the International Labour Organization (ILO);
2. The development of guidelines to implement international standards of medical fitness for seafarers;
3. Revision of model courses published by the International Maritime Organization;
4. Promotion of technical knowledge, skills and professionalism of seafarers;
5. Attracting new entrants and retaining seafarers for the maritime profession;
6. Promotion of technical cooperation;
7. Transitional provisions and early implementation of the revised STCW Convention and Code;
8. Promotion of the participation of women in the maritime industry;
9. Accommodation for trainees aboard ships;
10. Verifications of certificates of competency and endorsements;
11. Standards of training and certification and ship's manning levels;
12. Future amendments and review of the STCW Convention and the Code;
13. Recommendation of measures to ensure the competency of masters and officers on ships operating in polar waters.

BE IT RESOLVED ON THIS DATE THAT IN SO DECLARING THE ABOVE, we the assembled bring forth the mutual sense of the 586 MET students/cadets and participating academicians of 67 maritime universities/maritime education institutes from 5 continents, 32 countries, representing 41 nationalities in attendance at the inaugural 2010 International Mermaid Congress held in Istanbul in May. We, the undersigned, are of great diversity in origin but of one mind in resolution as to our support, a singular beacon of hope for smoother seas in our global human community.

Signed on behalf of the assemblage mentioned heretofore,

4. Participant Universities of the First International Mermaid Congress

Institution	Country
Admiral Makarov State Maritime Academy	Russia
Admiral Ushakov Maritime State Academy (AUMSA)	Russia
Antwerp Maritime Academy	Belgium
Arab Academy for Science & Technology and Maritime Transport (AAST -MT)	Egypt
Australian Maritime College	Australia
Bahçeşehir University, Maritime Junior College	Turkey
Batumi State Maritime Academy	Georgia
Constanta Maritime University	Romania

Danish Maritime University (DAMARU)	Denmark
Naval Academy	Turkey
Dokuz Eylül University, Maritime Faculty	Turkey
Ecole Nationale de la Marine Marchande (ENMM) de Nantes	France
Fisheries and Marine Institute of Memorial University of Newfoundland (FMIMUN)	Canada
Galatasaray University Maritime Junior College	Turkey
Gdynia Maritime University (GMU)	Poland
Girne American University	NRNC
Ho Chi Minh City University of Transport (HCMC-UT)	Vietnam
Hochschule Wismar University of Applied Sciences - Technology, Business and Design (HSW-UTBD)	Germany
Istanbul Technical University Faculty of Naval Architecture and Ocean Engineering	Turkey
Istanbul Technical University Junior College	Turkey
İstanbul University	Turkey
Italian Maritime High School	Italy
Jade University of Applied Sciences WOE	Germany
Karadeniz Technical University Faculty of Marine Sciences	Turkey
Kobe University	Japan
Kocaeli University Karamürsel Maritime Junior College	Turkey
Kocaeli University Yıldız Bilge Barbaros Maritime College	Turkey
Korea Maritime University	Korea
Latvian Maritime Academy	Latvia
Mapua-PTC College of Maritime Education and Training (CMET)	Philippines
Mersin University Maritime Junior College	Turkey
Massachusetts Maritime Academy	United States
Mokpo Maritime University	Korea
Netherlands Maritime University	Netherlands
Newcastle University	United Kingdom
Nicola Y. Vaptsavov Naval Academy (NYVNA)	Bulgaria

Odessa National Maritime Academy (ONMA)	Ukraine
Odessa National Maritime University (ONMU)	Ukraine
Ordu University, Fatsa Faculty of Marine Sciences	Turkey
Örtadođu Technical University	Turkey
Ovidius University	Romania
Özel Eryetiř Reis Maritime Vocational High School	Turkey
Pendik Anadolu Maritime Vocational High School	Turkey
Piri Reis Maritime Vocational High School	Turkey
Piri Reis University	Turkey
Rize University Turgut Kiran Maritime College	Turkey
Satakunta University of Applied Sciences (SUAS)	Finland
Shanghai Maritime University	China
Szczecin Maritime University (SMU-P)	Poland
Technical University of Catalonia Barcelonatech	Spain
The Baltic Fishing Fleet State Academy	Russia
Tüdev Maritime Training Center	Turkey
Uludađ University Gemlik Asım Kocabıyık Maritime Junior College	Turkey
University of Athens	Greece
University of Cantabria - Escuela Tecnica Superior de Nautica (UC-ETSN)	Spain
University of Greenwich	United Kingdom
University of Ljubljana	Slovenia
University of Rijeka	Croatia
University of Rostock	Germany
University of Strathclyde, Glasgow	United Kingdom
Varna Technical University	Bulgaria
Yakın Dođu University Maritime Faculty	TRNC
Yalova Üniversitesi Yalova Maritime Junior College	Turkey
Yıldız Technical University Maritime and Naval Architecture Faculty	Turkey
Ziya Kalkavan Maritime Vocational High School	Turkey
Zonguldak Karaelmas University Maritime College	Turkey

5. Conclusion

International Mermaid Congress , an İstanbul 2010 Cultural Capital of Europe Project , organised and hosted by Piri Reis Maritime University of İstanbul – Turkey and National Association of Turkish Maritime Cadets, and sponsored by the Turkish Chamber of Shipping and several other members of the Turkish Maritime Sector achieved a very first in the history of World MET.

586 MET Cadets and Academicians from 5 continents, 42 Nationalities, and 67 MET Institutions participated in the Congress and took part in brainstorming, interactive workshops ,and declared a Joint Statement denoting the World MET cadets' opinion on the Amendments and Resolutions of STW 41 drafted to be declared at major MET platforms of the Globe throughout the year 2010 denoting their support to the outcome of the IMO Diplomatic Conference in Manila, Philippines.

References

[1] Sag,O.K. , '*A Brief Review of the World MET Cadets /Academicians perspective on STW 2010 Amendments through the First International Mermaid Congress of Piri Reis Maritime University of Turkey*' , Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of Japan STW Committee , Tokyo Japan , (June 18, 2010)

[2] Sag,O.K. , '*A Brief Review of the World MET Cadets /Academicians perspective on STW 2010 Amendments through the First International Mermaid Congress of Piri Reis Maritime University of Turkey*' , IMO STCW Diplomatic Conference, Philippine International Convention Center (PICC),Manila, Philippines, (June 23, 2010)

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