

PRESS RELEASE

BLACK SEA MOU HELD ITS TWENTY-SECOND PORT STATE CONTROL COMMITTEE MEETING MEANS VIRTUALLY

Istanbul, Turkey – In the light of the current tense geopolitical situation, representatives of the Port State Control Committee, the governing body under the Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control in the Black Sea Region (BS MoU), by virtual means, for the Twenty-second session from 12 to 13 April 2022.

The meeting was chaired by Captain Alexandar ILIEV - Harbour Master of Port Burgas, Bulgaria.

Captain ILIEV officially declared the opening of the meeting and made a welcome speech. In his opening speech, Capt. Iliev firstly welcomed all delegates. Expressing that the Region is passing through difficult days, Capt. Iliev recalled the common understanding of main principles for PSC and stressed the fundamental role of port State control for the high level of vessel safety standards that are essential for safe and clean seas. He also revealed the convincement on the continuing role of the Black Sea MoU to be the important part of the international cooperation and efforts for safe and clean Oceans.

The twenty-second meeting of the Port State Control Committee was attended by all the 6 member Authorities of Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine and observers of Moldova, the Mediterranean MoU, the Paris MoU, the Indian Ocean MoU, the Tokyo MoU and the Viña del Mar Agreement attended to the meeting as observer. Observers of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Riyadh MoU, the Abuja MoU, USCG, Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution were unable to attend. The Tokyo MoU, the Indian Ocean MoU and the Viña del Mare Agreement were honoured the BS MoU with their participation into the PSCC for the first time since the BS MoU established.

The main objective of the Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control in the Black Sea Region is to establish an effective PSC regime in the Black Sea region through cooperation and harmonization of the PSC activities of the member Authorities. It aims protection of the unique Black Sea natural resources at eliminating sub-standard shipping, so as to promote maritime safety, to protect the marine environment and to safeguard working and living conditions on board.

The Committee considered and revised the list of follow-up actions emanating from the previous meeting. The Committee also considered BS MoU and Members performance analysis using regional MoUs BGW list and targeting system data presented in the respective annual reports. The Committee agreed further global analysis of the performance of the member States ship fleet using inspection and detention data of the PSC regimes.

The Committee discussed matters relating to PSC technical procedures and guidelines, the Concentrated Inspection Campaigns, the information system and information exchange, evaluation of works done by intersessional technical groups and technical cooperation activities.

The Committee decided to explore the need of a port State control regime for fishing vessels, looking at fishing vessels statistics and expected future developments such as the possible entry into force of the Cape Town Agreement.

Furthermore, the Committee considered to review of its Principle of Access of BSIS Data and the Dissemination of PSC data and agreed to investigate to share inspection data in bulk to registered users by the BS MoU website.

The Committee considered and adopted amendments to the Relevant Instruments to incorporate of the Protocol of 1992 to amend the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, 1969, as amended (CLC PROT 1992) and the Nairobi International Convention on the Removal of Wrecks, 2007 (NAIROBI WRC 2007); to the harmonization of the Memorandum as a result of withdrawal or abrogation of ILO instruments; Ship Risk Profile (SRP) and Selection Scheme under the New Inspection Regime (NIR) contained in Annexes of the Memorandum for further clarification, which will become effective from 1 January 2023. The Committee also agreed to amend and update the Port State Control Manual of BS MoU.

For the protection of the unique Black Sea natural resources to eliminating sub-standard shipping, taking into account the New Inspection Regime, the Committee decided to further work on implementing Banning Procedures and also decided to further amendment to the Memorandum on methodological inspection issues.

The Committee considered the report of the Concentrated Inspection Campaign (CIC) on Stability in General carried out from September to November 2021. This report will be published on the BS MoU website in the near future. The Committee reviewed and approved arrangements and preparations for the joint CIC with the Paris MoU and Tokyo MoU on STCW; and agreed to carry out CIC on STCW during the period of 01 September - 30 November 2022. The Committee nominated Maritime Administration of Bulgaria to act as campaign coordinator. The Committee considered possible topics for future CICs and agreed to carry out a CIC on Fire Safety in 2023, CIC on Crew Wages and Seafarer Employment Agreement under the MLC in 2024, CIC on Ballast Water Management in 2025.

The Committee, in PSC perspective, considered the sensitive situation in the Region and the received latest information from the International Maritime Organization, and to reduce the suffering of seafarers and their families, the Committee decided to advised its port State control officers to take a pragmatic and practical approach where an expired documentation is presented, considering the exceptional nature of the situation, and also decided to issue a Guidance on repatriation of seafarers due to the very hectic situation.

The Committee re-elected Alexandar ILIEV - Harbour Master of Port Burgas, Bulgaria, as the Chair and Capt. Laurentiu ZANFIR, Head of Maritime Safety Department Romanian Naval Authority, as the Vice Chair of the Committee.

The 23rd meeting of the Port State Control Committee will be held in Constanta, Romania in April, 2023.

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