



European Union

Statement

**ILO Governing Body, 323rd session
(12-27 March 2015)**

"Outcome of the Meeting of Experts concerning the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised) 2003 (N°185) (Geneva, 4-6 February 2015)"

(GB.323/LILS/4)

Geneva, 24 March 2015

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EU Statement

Thank you, Chairperson.

I speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

We support the IMEC statement.

The following countries align themselves with this declaration: Turkey, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia.

We would like to start by thanking the Office, and in particular the Labour Standards and the Sectoral Policies department, for the organization and preparation of the meeting of experts we had been calling for at March 2014 Governing Body.

We would also like to thank the Chairperson of the meeting of experts, the other Governments, the Seafarers, the Ship-owners as well as the Intergovernmental organizations that contributed to this meeting. Everybody provided engaged and constructive contributions to our discussions.

Let us recall that the solutions contained in Convention 185 of 2003, revising the first Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention of 1958, were intended to contribute to the improvement of security in the shipping sector and to promote decent living and working conditions of seafarers, as well as their rights as mobile workers. They aim at ensuring that seafarers working on board a ship have access to shore-based facilities and services to secure their health and well-being as provided for by the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, and the International Maritime Organization Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic, 1965, as amended.

However, as of today, the ILO Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention No. 185 has been ratified by only 30 ILO Member States. This raises some questions about the implementation of the convention.

The rationale for convening the meeting of experts was to discuss the various options available from different points of views: ratifying and non-ratifying states, flag states, port states, seafarers supplying states as well as the point of views of seafarers and shipowners.

In the meeting of experts, we underlined that the current Seafarer's Identity Document, including a two-dimensional barcode, is not globally interoperable with other biometric documents. We encouraged to follow the recommendations of ICAO DOC 9303 using a contactless chip for the storage of the biometric identifiers. We suggested to consider the inclusion of a chip for the storage of the biometric data in a mandatory way in order to facilitate reading and identification at ports.

In that meeting, we discussed technical issues that are not usually treated in this organisation. However the debates were fruitful and in general, agreement was reached to follow the technical approach of ICAO Doc 9303 for global interoperability of the Seafarers Identity Document.

We value the outcome of this meeting and have brought the results back to our capitals.

We are confident that the recommendations adopted will be welcomed by this Governing Body.

When implementing this decision, we would suggest to emphasize the provisions of the ILO Maritime Labour Convention on access to shore-based facilities and services.

Thank you, Chairperson.