



CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE
INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON
STANDARDS OF TRAINING,
CERTIFICATION AND WATCHKEEPING
FOR SEAFARERS, 1978

STCW/CONF.2/INF.9
25 June 2010
ENGLISH ONLY

**CLOSING ADDRESS BY
MR. NEIL FRANK R. FERRER,
PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE**

Friday, 25 June 2010

Mr. Secretary-General, Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, distinguished delegates and observers, media representatives, ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to declare that we have now completed the task assigned to us by this Conference, which was to adopt a comprehensive set of proposed amendments to the 1978 STCW Convention and Code. I should like to express my profound thanks and appreciation to all of you for this achievement.

That we have been successful in what we had set out to achieve this week is attributable to the positive and constructive spirit that has prevailed throughout this Conference and the pragmatic and cooperative approach taken by everyone.

While, quite naturally, we had some differences of opinion on some complex and sensitive issues, nevertheless, a willingness to appreciate and understand the viewpoints of others has been in evidence and this has allowed us to come up with effective compromise solutions.

I am confident, therefore, that the comprehensive set of amendments that we have adopted by consensus would be fully and effectively implemented in due time, for the benefit of the international maritime community, particularly to seafarers from all over the world.

Distinguished delegates,

That we have been able to accomplish our task in the very limited time available to us is in no small measure attributable to the hard work and commitment of everyone involved.

In striving for a successful outcome of this Conference, we have been very fortunate in having had at our disposal extremely able and efficient Officers, supported by an equally able and dedicated Secretariat.

In this regard, I wish to pay a special tribute to the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole, Admiral Peter Brady of Jamaica, who patiently guided us in our deliberations and whose wisdom, expertise and experience greatly helped us to reach the meaningful and balanced decisions that were ultimately endorsed and accepted by the Conference. I also wish to thank

Admiral Brady for his able leadership of the Sub-Committee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping (STW) and the excellent preparatory work accomplished by the STW Sub-Committee leading to this Conference.

My special thanks also go to the Vice-Chairmen of the Committee of the Whole, Mr. Sibrand Hassing of the Netherlands and Mr. Zheng Heping of China, for their very valuable assistance and positive contributions in our work this week.

I would like also to express my sincerest appreciation to the Chairman of the Drafting Committee Ms. Mayte Medina of the United States, together with her Vice-Chairmen, Mr. Bradley Groves of Australia and Capt. Mohammad Ali Shahba of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and all the members of the Drafting Committee, for the diligent and expeditious way in which they have set about preparing the final drafts of the amendment texts, Conference resolutions and Final Act for consideration by the Plenary, and for the high quality of these drafts.

My special thanks also to the Chairman of the Credentials Committee, Mr. Levan Chichinadze of Georgia, together with all the members of the Credentials Committee, for their valuable assistance in examining the Letters of Credentials of delegates to this Conference and reporting to us in good time.

And, of course, I must express my deep thanks to my dear colleagues, the five Vice-Presidents of the Conference, namely Ambassador Dwight C.R. Gardiner of Antigua and Barbuda, Mr. Koffi Bertin Tano of Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. Rajeev Gupta of India, Admiral Giancarlo Olimbo of Italy and Mr. Abdel Hafiz Kayssi of Lebanon, whose support I value so highly.

Distinguished delegates,

I also wish, on behalf of all of us, to extend my utmost thanks to the Secretary-General and his colleagues, in particular the officers and staff in the Maritime Safety Division, headed by Mr. Koji Sekimizu; the Conference Division, led by Mrs. Olga O'Neil; the Legal Affairs and External Relations Division, together with the interpreters, the translators, the staff of the Documents and Conference Sections, and those many other members of the Secretariat working behind the scenes with the usual dedication, often going that extra mile and working long hours. All of them have been unfailing in serving the needs of this Conference and thus, undoubtedly, in facilitating the accomplishment of our task this week.

While it is not possible to mention everybody by name, I wish to extend special thanks to Captain Ashok Mahapatra, who, like a true captain in charge of his ship, has steered this whole project of revising the STCW Convention and Code quietly, but with a firm and expert hand, from the start of our work in 2006 right through to this week's Conference. Thank you very much, Ashok, for your tremendous hard work, which have greatly contributed to making our task this week possible.

Lastly, I wish to convey my heartfelt thanks to all the members of the Philippine National Organizing Committee, the management and staff of the Philippine International Convention Centre, and all colleagues in Government, including the private sector, for the immense hard work and assistance you have graciously extended to support this Conference.

I am quite sure that delegates to this Conference would have fond memories of their stay in Manila – not only for the meaningful work that we have accomplished this week but, more importantly, for the warm welcome and hospitality that everyone experienced.

I have a very long list of people I would like to thank from the Philippines, but I wish to express my special thanks to Secretary Anneli R. Lontoc of the Department of Transportation and Communications, Secretary Marianito D. Roque of the Department of Labor and Employment and Ambassador Antonio M. Lagdameo, the Philippine Ambassador to the Court of St. James's and Permanent Representative to the IMO, for the invaluable guidance, leadership and support they have extended to us in the Philippine delegation and Organizing Committee, and to me personally. Thank you very much for all your support, and for your trust and confidence.

Distinguished delegates,

Before I close, I wish, once again, to express my deepest gratitude to all of you, for the great honour and privilege you have given to me, and to my country, the Philippines, in serving as the President of this Conference. I am extremely grateful for the support and cooperation you have all extended throughout this week.

Thank you very much.

Mabuhay!
