

# Confederation of European ShipsMasters' Association

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**To:** EU Commission for Transports  
EU Parliament Groups  
EMSA  
French Ministry of the Sea  
(France being president of EU)

**Subject :** Situation in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov

The situation in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov is becoming more complicated with the developments of the military operations in the area. There are a lot of seafarers on more than 100 foreign-flagged cargo vessels stranded in Ukrainian waters in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov “in the middle of the line of fire”. The International Chamber of Shipping and unions have already called for the immediate creation of safe “blue corridors” to enable the ships and their crews to leave without risk of missile or mine strikes. The IMO, which held an emergency meeting last week to address the situation, estimates that up to 2,000 seafarers could be affected. Among them there are a lot of European shipmasters and seafarers. Their families are extremely upset for their life as well as their physical well-being. The food on board stranded ships is decreasing daily and so far there are no possibilities for the shipowners to supply provisions on board the ships and to arrange safe crew changes.

Bearing in mind the existing situation CESMA as well as all the maritime community in our european countries require EU Institutions and Representatives to urge IMO as specialized agency of the United Nations and global standard-setting authority for the safety, security and environmental performance of international shipping to raise the matter in the UN and it’s Security Council and to make diplomatic steps to arrange blue corridors to supply provisions and ensure safe repatriation of seafarers on board ships stranded in the Sea of Azov and Black Sea ports in the area with military operations. The ships are flying flags of countries not engaged in the conflict and that’s why they should have the right of safe passage as per the UNCLOS.

With that letter CESMA intends once again to express our hope that all International Institutions will ensure safe withdrawal of all the commercial ships from the dangerous area of Sea of Azov and Northern Black Sea and merchant seafarers will continue their work on board ships and will return safely at home upon completion of their contracts.

Yours Very Truly:



Capt. Dimitar Dimitrov

CESMA President

IMO Goodwill Maritime Ambassador for Bulgaria,