



RESOLUTIONS FROM 31st CESMA Annual General Assembly 29th MAY 2026–BILBAO, SPAIN

CESMA members attending CESMA 31st AGA agreed the following resolutions which are considered to be of primary importance for shipmasters:

Resolution 1: Criminalisation of Shipmasters.

The Assembly noted that the issue of criminalising seafarers, especially shipmasters, remains a significant concern. Shipmasters and seafarers are arrested because of their positions on board, despite evidence relating to other persons. This is particularly relevant for drugs found on board. CESMA recommends ship owners and/or operators to always provide legal assistance to shipmasters who are detained by local authorities due to an incident, until a final verdict is reached.

Resolution 2: Strait of Hormuz (SoH) and Arabian/Persian Gulf (APG).

The Assembly has noted with deep concern the complicated situation in the Strait of Hormuz (SoH) and the Arabian/Persian Gulf (APG) and that more than 20,000 seafarers are trapped in the APG despite international laws giving freedom of navigation.

The seafarers on these merchant vessels, which are not equipped for military operations or even security reinforcement (apart from those provided for under the ISPS Code – passive means of defense – preventing any reaction to a drone or missile attack) can be considered hostages of hostile nations.

Among the human consequences of this state of affairs, most of the stranded vessels are no longer able to produce potable/drinking water; the same with regard to the supply of food and fuel; and the ships thus blocked are for the most part prohibited from crew changes.

CESMA urgently calls on the EU Commission as well as the EU States to take all the necessary decisions to return to the free navigation of vessels in the SoH and the APG and thus facilitate the supplies and relief necessary for life, well being, and work on board.

Resolution 3: Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

The Assembly, having noted the risks and dangers when navigating in the Gulf of Aden, Red Sea, and Northern part of Indian Ocean due to the resurgence of piracy, asks the EU Commission of Transport and EU States Flag Authorities to do all possible to ensure safe passage in these waters. CESMA also asks European owners to minimize/avoid transiting such areas until they are considered to be fully safe for navigation.

Resolution 4: Artificial Intelligence (AI) on ships.

CESMA recognises that artificial intelligence can support shipmasters and enhance operational efficiency, situational awareness and decision-making on board, provided that its use remains safe, transparent and subject to effective human oversight. CESMA therefore calls on EU regulators to draw up a clear legal framework for the development, deployment and use of AI in shipping, ensuring that innovation can progress while maintaining safe ship operations, the master's overriding authority and responsibility, proper training, cybersecurity, accountability and compliance with international maritime safety standards.

Captain D. Dimitrov
President

29th May 2026

Captain H. Ardillon
Secretary General