

10-22-1983

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### Recommended Citation

Whitaker, Gillian, "IMO gives "high priority" to training" (1983). *WMU in the News*. 165.  
[http://commons.wmu.se/wmu\\_news/165](http://commons.wmu.se/wmu_news/165)

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## IMO gives 'high priority' to training

LLOYD'S LIST  
9-22-83  
p. 3

From Gillian Whittaker, Athens

THE implementation of international shipping conventions is impossible unless the human element is given primary importance, Mr Chandrika Srivastava, secretary general of the International Maritime Organisation, said yesterday.

He said this was one reason why IMO was giving high priority to maritime training.

Mr Srivastava was speaking at the opening ceremony of a three-day seminar on the implementation of Marpol 73/78.

Mr Srivastava said the seminar arranged by the Greek Ministry of Merchant Marine, was timely because Greece's ratification of Marpol enabled the convention to be put into effect by securing the required 50% of world tonnage.

He said the fact that 21 of the 27 conventions drawn up by IMO were in force or scheduled to go into force was "a unique record."

But he added: "We must not develop new instruments any more. We must devote attention to the question of effective implementation of instruments that have been developed already."

Greek Minister of Merchant Marine Mr George Katsifaras, said marine pollution was a particular

significance to Greece taking into account both the country's large merchant fleet, and the fact that it has some 15,000 kilometres of coastline.

Mr Srivastava spoke of the work of the World Maritime University at Malmo, and during a joint press conference with the minister later said that Greece was among the countries which had indicated their support for the university. He added that the university aimed to provide job training in various countries which would include Greece.

Asked if there was a possibility of a later extension of the Malmo facilities, Mr Srivastava said it was necessary to first establish the main institution firmly but "it is perfectly possible that when the demand increases, and if facilities are available, branches will emerge."

Mr Katsifaras said the seminar, at which members of IMO are presenting various papers connected with the application of Marpol, was being held in order to inform and promote interest among officials and members of the Greek shipping community.