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70 nations learn maritime safety at a unique UN school in Malmö

Jan Thorsson
70 NATIONS LEARN MARITIME SAFETY AT A UNIQUE UN SCHOOL IN MALMÖ

On the sixth floor of a building with a good view of the harbour of Malmö and the Sound there is a complete and modern ship's bridge. This is an important feature in a unique school for students from developing countries.

"This is the best school in the world", says Nicolaos Charalambous from Cyprus. Nicolaos Charalambous is one of 156 students from more than 70 nations who are attending the World Maritime University at present.

They are studying maritime safety and how to prevent pollution of the seas by ships.

The school is under the auspices of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), which is a UN agency.

ONLY IN SWEDEN

This is quite a new type of school. There is no comparable education to the one at the World Maritime University anywhere else in the world.

That the school ended up in Malmö is due to the fact that Sweden has always given strong support to the IMO. The immediate cause was a conference held under the auspices of SIDA in 1979.

Behind it all were the great difficulties of the developing countries to find competent people in their own countries to take care of maritime safety. At the conference the idea of a school was born. The Secretary General of the IMO took contact with the Swedish government in 1980 and the school became a reality.

Three years later the first students arrived. They completed their Master of Science degrees last autumn.
CIVIL SERVANTS

Nicolas Charalambous is not a typical student at the school. Firstly he is only 26 years whilst the average age is 35. He is also different in that his background is in the private sector. Most of the students are civil servants in their countries, often at a high level. They have been sent to the school in Malmö, for example to become experts and advisers to their governments.

MARITIME SAFETY

Khalid Sidik from Saudi Arabia is an example of this. He normally works in Jeddah in the Ministry of Communications. He is 30 and, like Nicolas Charalambous, has been at sea before he became a civil servant.

"Here we receive both teaching and training in maritime safety from the best teachers that can be found", says Khalid Sidik.

The university has a permanent faculty but most of the lecturers come from all the corners of the world. They are top men in their respective fields and lecture without remuneration.

"Our students already have an academic background when they come here", says the Rector, Erik Nordström. "But I have seldom seen more motivated students. They see themselves not only as students but as representatives of their countries and therefore do not want to fail."

Most students have indeed been successful. A couple have had to return home without their degrees, usually at an early stage. The reason has been that they did not have sufficient proficiency in English, which is the teaching medium.
A UN IN MINIATURE

"A side-effect of the education is that we establish so many contacts in different countries by attending this university", says Nicolaos Charalambous. "This will help us in our work later on. Besides, we learn a great deal about other traditions and customs, which creates tolerance. We are a UN in miniature here."

The only thing the students of the World Maritime University do not discuss with each other is politics.

Jan Thorsson

Picture Khalid M.A. Sidik from Saudi Arabia, left, and Nicolaos Charalambous from Cyprus on the bridge with the simulator at the World Maritime University.
70 länder lär sjösäkerhet vid unik FN-skola i Malmö

MALMÖ (sv:d) På ett ställe i ett hus med gula målningar i ett hjartat av Malmö finns en skola för sjösäkerhet. Den är en unik skola för studenter från alla länder.

Det är ett av de nya salon i Malmö. De har några av de lärande som står bakom projektet.

Att lära sig sjösäkerhet är ett stort behov i alla länder. Man kan lära sig sjösäkerhet i flera skolor i Sverige. Men den här skolan i Malmö är den enda i Sverige som lär sjösäkerhet.

Skolans namn är FN-skolan. FN är en akronym för Förenta Nationernas Organisationer.

FN:s skolans mål är att ge studerande en grundläggande kunskap om sjösäkerheten. De ska läras hur man ska hantera ett fartyg och vad som sker om ett fartyg går sönder.

FN-skolan har flera avdelningar. En av dem är den som lär sjösäkerhet. De har några av de lärande som står bakom projektet.

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