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WMU in the News

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The early history of WMU

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3 August 1988

To: All Staff

From: Rector

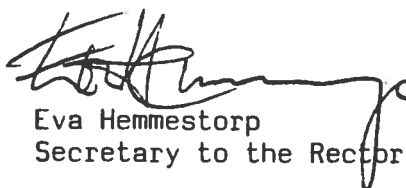
The early history of WMU

Just before my annual leave I went through a number of old files and I found the attached lecture describing the many difficulties which had to be overcome before WMU got off the ground. It has been written by the first Administrator of WMU Mr. Lennart Alarik who served as a legal officer in the Ministry of Transport and Communications. I think that the contents will interest all staff and I am therefore making a copy available to each one of you.

As you can see the lecture was given in June 1982. Mr. Alarik did not serve as Administrator for long - he met a tragic death only a few weeks before the inauguration of WMU on 4 July 1983.

Erik Nordström

Dictated by the Rector and signed in his absence.


Eva Hemmestorp
Secretary to the Rector

World Maritime University - an International University
in Sweden

In my work as legal officer in the Ministry of Transport and Communications I often have work projects which last a long time from the very beginning to the end. Several of these projects follow a certain routine. If you have a problem within the responsibility of a Ministry, make use of the genuine Swedish way of solving problems. Appoint a committee. That's what we often do, or at least did before Ulf Adelsohn

2

was our Minister. Several of my work projects start with a letter to the Ministry from an Agency or an Organization calling for a committee to investigate a specific piece of legislation. It results in the appointment of a committee or a special investigator or - what nowadays is most common in our Ministry - the formation of a working group. You then take part, usually as an expert, in the work of the committee or the working group for 1, 2 or 3 years and then report is presented to the Minister. After that I have, as a rule, to write a bill to the Parliament. A project of this type can last 1-5 years, sometimes even more than 5 years. Typical for these projects is that you often, in rough outline, can predict what will be the result of the work.

One of my on-going projects, which already has become one of the long-term sort, is of a quite different type than the projects I have just mentioned. It has been, and still is, quite impossible to predict the outcome of the project. I have now worked with it for almost two years and, if we can stick to the time-table, there is still one year of work to be done. The project I'm talking about is an unusual one. It is the question of the establishment of an international university in Sweden - the World Maritime University. This University is planned to be located in Malmö and to be inaugurated next summer. The main objectives of the University are to establish a high-level maritime training institution for maritime professors, administrators, surveyors and inspectors from developing countries. The University will be

a subsidiary of IMD, which is short for International Maritime Organization, United Nations Special Agency for maritime affairs. The organization was until 22 May 1982 called IMCO, the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization. As regards IMO it is important, has it been pointed out, to pronounce it [ai m ou] and not [i m ou], as [i m ou] means potatoe in Japanese.

It all started with a wrong decision by the Swedish Parliament. The year was 1978. The government had presented a bill to Parliament regarding the education of ships officers. This education should be a part of the Swedish "högskole"-system. In the bill there was a discussion about the possibility of concentrating the education from five to three Merchant

Marine Academies. Several members of Parliament at once started to work in order save the Academy in their region. The result was that Parliament, without analysis of the needs of the shipping industry, decided to close down the big Academies in Stockholm and Malmö, which meant that the Academies in Gothenburg, Härnösand and Kalmar survived.

When the headmaster of the Merchant Marine Academy i Malmö faced the new situation he started to think that the facilities of the Malmö Academy could be used for the training of seafarers from developing countries. In Malmö there had been short courses of 3 weeks duration each for several years with participants from developing countries. These courses had dealt with the prevention of marine pollution from ships. The

headmaster, Mr. Sölve Arvedson, had started these courses in co-operation with IMO and with the financial support of the Swedish International Development Authority, SIDA. Mr. Arvedson, who has a considerable experience of maritime training in different countries, started to discuss informally his idea of a permanent school in Malmö for the training of maritime personnel from the developing world with representatives of developing countries and experts from IMO. The interest for the idea was overwhelming.

I was first contacted by Mr. Arvedson in May 1980 and we had a discussion about the project. We agreed that Mr. Arvedson should produce a first draft of a project document regarding the University. Mr. Arvedson also told me that an IMO/SIDA

Seminar on "The Implementation of Global Maritime Training Standards for the Enhancement of Marine Pollution" should take place in Malmö in November 1980 and that he needed a VIP to open the Seminar, in the first place the Minister of Transport and Communications. I asked Mr. Adelson and he promised to open the Seminar.

When I first heard Mr. Arvedsons idea of an International Maritime University it was quite natural for me to support it. I could still remember the requests for help from representatives of developing countries presented to the developed world at the 1978 IMO Conference on Standards of Training and Watch-keeping for Seafarers. That Conference adopted the first international convention establishing

minimum professional standards for the training of seafarers, the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, the so-called STCW Convention. When the convention enters into force - it is expected to do so in 1983 - there is a need for every shipping country to comply with the regulations laid down in the convention. That means that the crews on board merchant ships have to be trained and certificated in accordance with the provisions of the convention. A ship with a crew which is not provided with appropriate certificates may be detained in foreign ports as being a substandard- vessel. The calls for help from delegates of developing countries were easy to understand. Many of these countries need trained and experienced maritime personnel, training facilities etc. to be

able to live up to the convention standards, which also was demonstrated by a provision of technical assistance and the promotion of technical co-operation in the convention. Under these circumstances what could be better - I thought~~tt~~ - than an International Maritime University with the objective of high-level training of future lecturers at merchant marine academies, of maritime administrators and of specialists in other technical maritime fields.

The real work with the project, as far as the Ministry is concerned, started in September 1980. Since then we have had a working-team consisting of Mr. Gösta Lind af Hageby of our international department and myself. Mr. Lind has worked for several years within IMO as a Swedish representative to

10

various conferences and committee-meetings and he has a broad experience of IMO-related matters.

Today, almost two years afterwards, we can certify that we and Mr. Arvedson have met many difficulties and obstacles on our way, and several times we have felt that it was not possible to carry the project through. But now everything is looking much better. I will not bore you with all details of our work but give you some information about the main points of our work with the project.

In September 1980 Mr. Lind and myself received from Mr. Arvedson the first draft of the project document. The draft contained a background to the proposal, institutional frame-

work, categories from which students will be recruited, curricula and project budget. After lengthy discussions with Mr. Arvedson we produced a 2nd and a 3rd draft. According to the 3rd draft the activities of the University will consist of:

1. Two-year courses: for maritime administrators and future lecturers at merchant marine academies (nautical, engineering and electronical subjects).
2. One-year courses: for ships inspectors and maritime accident investigators, and in ship management.
3. Special courses with a duration of 2-5 weeks related to

12

certain aspects of maritime safety and marine environment protection.

Experience has told us that a lot of people have misunderstood one of the basic ideas of the project. They have thought that the University is intended to train seafarers from the developing countries like the various merchant marine academies^{m/} do, for instance train seafarers to become masters or chief engineers. That is quite wrong. The University is intended to be a high-level global University, which does not exist today, and the students will be recruited from the following categories.

1. Master mariners.
2. Chief engineers.
3. Naval architects.
4. Government officials engaged in maritime affairs.
5. Government officials engaged in ship inspection.
6. Naval officers.
7. Coast guard officers.
8. Technical staff of shipping companies.
9. Pilots.

The draft also contains a rather detailed information about the contents of the various courses as well as information about the staff of the University. In the 3rd draft it was suggested that the costs for the project should be paid

14

mainly by UNDP, United Nations Development Programme, but also by Sweden ^{h/}through SIDA.

In the beginning of November 1980 we had the IMO/SIDA Seminar on Training in Malmö I mentioned earlier. Our Minister, Mr. Ulf Adelsohn was going to open the Seminar at 10 a.m. on the 3rd of November, a Monday morning. I suggested that we should go by night-train to Malmö due to the risk of fog at Sturup airport, but Ulf Adelsohn refused. He couldn't think of wasting a whole night on a train. Nor could he think of such an early rise in the morning that we could be able to catch the morning flight to Malmö at 7.15. Instead Ulf Adelsohn - I only tell you this to give you an idea how ministers sometimes plan their work - ordered a small private jet from

Swedair for the day at a cost of nearly 20 000 SEK. He was then able, in addition to the opening of the Seminar i Malmö, to have a meeting with the civil aviation authorities at Sturup in the afternoon. We were 7 passengers when we left Bromma airport in the morning, including two secretaries and a newspaper journalist. Although we were met by car at the landing strip of Sturup we arrived a quarter of an hour too late to the City Hall of Malmö, where almost 100 persons were waiting. After speeches by Mr. Adelsohn, the Director-General of SIDA and the Secretary-General of IMO, Mr. Adelsohn had to hurry to Sturup. Afterwards I heard that the people at Sturup thought that there were no time left for discussions with Mr. Adelsohn after lunch and sightseeing. That about planning in order to save time.

16

In his speech Mr. Adelsohn announced the plans of establishing an International Maritime University in Sweden. He stated, for the Swedish side, that he was positive to the project and added that the City of Malmö had offered to make the Merchant Marine Academy available for the purposes of a future IMO University. Mr. Adelsohn also invited the participants of the Seminar to give their views on the project before the end of the week, so as to assist IMO and Sweden in assessing the potential of the project.

The answer to that question from the participants of the Seminar was given in the form of a resolution supporting the establishment of an International Maritime University in

Malmö. The participants - who were representatives from 45 developing countries, selected invitees from 7 developed countries as well as lecturers from 12 different countries - expressed their unanimous and strongest support for the proposal which would be of the greatest benefit for the developing countries.

When the proposed University had been publicly known through media we had our first real draw-back. We got a regional dispute about the location in Sweden of such a University. Several members of Parliament introduced bills in Parliament and suggested that the University should be located in Gothenburg. The main reasons for these suggestions was that Gothenburg has, and will have in the future, a merchant

marine academy and that the city of Gothenburg is the big shipping centre in Sweden.

Objections against Malmö were also raised from other Ministries. The Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs held the view that the University ought to be located in Gothenburg and operate in close co-operation with the merchant marine academy there and have the benefit of using their facilities. The representative of that Ministry also told us that they were not prepared to allow the International University to use facilities in Malmö belonging to the State. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that Sweden, when it comes to UNDP development programmes, always had held the view that industries, training centres etc. intended for the benefit of deve-

loping countries should be located in developing countries. The representative of that Ministry could not see that there was any reason to make an exception in this case. When I told him that Mecico was interested to get the University, he replied that he would prefer that the University was located in Mecico.

Yet another problem was the financing of the project. The representative of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs declared that there would be great problems to get money from UNDP. As the global and regional funds of UNDP are small compared with the funds allocated to the various developing countries, it seemed necessary to ask a number of these countries if they were prepared to spend parts of their funds on the Univer-

sity. Mr. Pierre Vinde, former Under-secretary of State in the Ministry of Finance and now one of the leading men in UNDP in New York, confirmed to me that this procedure was the only conceivable.

In order to be able to decide which alternative - Malmö or Gothenburg - was the best one Mr. Adelsohn instructed me to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of the alternatives with special reference to the budgetary implications. In my report I concluded that it was possible, with regard to the facilities needed for the project, to locate the University to either Malmö or Gothenburg and that there was no significant difference between the two cities with regard to the project-costs. After a comparison between the two alter-

natives Mr. Lind and myself recommended Malmö. The most important difference between the two alternatives is Mr. Arvedson, whose experience and unique international contacts makes him indispensable for the work as project manager and, later on, ^{t/}recor for the University.

With the different views expressed by the officials of our Ministry and those of the Ministry of Education it was not easy for Mr. Adelsohn to make up his mind. It was quite evident, however, that he personally had a preference for Gothenburg. In the middle of April 1981 the Secretary-General of IMO visited Mr. Adelsohn and Mr. Wikström in Stockholm and discussed the project with them. Mr. Adelsohn declared that he was prepared to get a quick solution to the localization-

question. He also informed the Secretary-General that he should go to Washington in May and that he should try to meet the Administrator of UNDP for a discussion about possible UNDP contributions to the project.

Two weeks later there was a cabinet crisis - after the famous "wonderful night" - and the Conservatives left the government. Nothing had been decided upon the University. We had to start again with a new Minister and a new Under-Secretary of State at the end of May. But in June the Centre Party had its Assembly and after that Sweden was closed for holidays. No progress was made during the summer.

In August we again had deputations from Malmö and Gothenburg in our Ministry. In September, at last, we could make some progress in our work. We visited Hans Blix, Under-secretary of State in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. After some discussion he promised that the Swedish contribution to the project could amount to 1/3 of the total costs, but not more than one million dollars a year. One of the conditions for such a contribution was that the developing countries of their own will preferred to have the University located to Sweden.

In October the Secretary-General of IMO had discussions with leading UNDP officials in New York and with the Swedish mission to the United Nations. A positive outcome of these

discussions was that the Administrator of UNDP accepted that the University could be located in a developed country and that contributions from UNDP could be made available from global or regional funds. A prerequisite for UNDP-contributions was, however, that it was clearly demonstrated that developing countries had a genuine interest in the project and that the University should become a truly international institution.

After that IMO was going to prepare a document with a description of the project, to be used in the forthcoming contacts with developing countries and to serve as information material at the IMO Assembly in November 1981. It was quite evident that there was a strong need for an answer from

the Swedish side to the question of the location of the University. Now it proved to be rather easy to solve this problem. The Minister of Transport and Communications, Mr. Elmstedt, decided himself that the proposed University should be located in Malmö.

Seven months has passed since then and the project has, during this period, been rather successful.

At the IMO Assembly in November 1981 the Secretary-General informed the delegates on the progress made in respect to the proposed University and asked for comments. The result was overwhelming, at least for us in the Swedish delegation. A great number of developing countries supported the project

26

strongly and I'm quite sure that never before in IMO had so many kind words been said about Sweden at the same time.

The Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution regarding the proposed World Maritime University which states, inter alia, the following:

THE ASSEMBLY

BEING AWARE that the rapid technological developments in shipping have produced increased needs for better education and training of maritime personnel,

BEING CONCERNED about the acute shortage of qualified instructors for staffing many existing maritime academies and new institutions being established in developing countries, and the nonavailability of the needed numbers of maritime administrators, examiners, surveyors and inspectors,

CONVINCED of the vital necessity of such trained personnel in the running of safe and efficient merchant marines, the operation of efficient ports and sound maritime administrators in general,

NOTING with appreciation that facilities for a high-level maritime training institution for the benefit of developing countries will be made available in Malmö, Sweden,

NOTING WITH SATISFACTION the warm welcome and strong support expressed by the representatives of developing countries for the establishment of such an institution in Sweden,

1. EXPRESSES its sincere gratitude to the Secretary-General for his wise and timely initiative in indentifying the critical need for a global high-level maritime training institution;

2. REQUESTS the Secretary-General to take all further necessary action for the establishment of the World Maritime University;

3. AUTHORIZES AND REQUESTS the Secretary-General to take all appropriate and necessary steps for securing the requisite financial support, especially from the United Nations Development Programme;

4. APPEALS to the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to give the highest priority to his consideration of this extremely important project with a view to providing necessary financial support.

After the Assembly-meeting the Secretary-General of IMO has devoted much of his time to the project. One more visit to UNDP in New York, a meeting with Mr. Elmstedt in Paris, participation at a meeting of the UNDP Governing Council in

Geneva, and many contacts with developing countries. A research has been carried out by IMO in order to obtain, from the developing countries, specified wishes regarding the various courses and the number of presumptive students. During a formal ceremony at IMO Headquarters on 19 February 1982, the Chairman of the Financial Board of the City Government of Malmö presented to the Secretary-General a document stating the undertaking of the city of Malmö in the realization of the project. In a letter of 19 March Mr. Ullsten, Minister for Foreign Affairs, gave the formal answer of the Swedish government as regards the size of its financial contribution, namely one third of the costs of the project with an upper limit of one million US dollars per year, provided the contribution by UNDP will be of at least the same size.

During the work there have been numerous contacts between the Secretary-General of IMO and his Secretariat and our Ministry. In Sweden we have had several meetings with other Ministries and, of course, with representatives of Malmö. One important issue with respect to the budget for the project was the question of taxation for the staff of the University. In our deliberations with the Ministry of Finance we claimed that the staff ought to be exempted from tax on salaries. This should be in conformity with what is prescribed for officials in the United Nation Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies. The same applies to the agreement between IMO and the Government of United Kingdom regarding the headquarters of the Organization. This was not easy to swallow for the Ministry of Finance. As an

alternative they proposed, on grounds of principle, Swedish tax on the salaries. The total amount of tax should then be paid back to the University. This procedure was not acceptable to IMO and at last the decision was made to grant the staff exemption from income tax.

The University project was recently discussed in Geneva at the meeting of the UNDP Governing Council. On 27 May the Secretary-General of IMO was invited to address the meeting. After he had presented the University project, representatives of 31 countries gave their comments to the project. 30 of these, from all parts of the world, gave their strongest support to the project. After that it was quite astonishing to hear one of the top officials of UNDP - contrary to his

earlier views on the project - raise a lot of objections against it. The Secretary-General of IMO reported to Mr. Lind last week that he was very disappointed about that but, as he said, not disturbed. He will go on fighting for the project and after all it doesn't seem possible for the Administrator of UNDP to neglect the opinions of Governing Council member countries. After that we have got additional information stating that UNDP is now looking for money for the project from various regional funds.

As you have understood a lot of work still remains to be done. The most important task now is to secure financing ^{from} ~~form~~ UNDP. If we succeed in doing that I think that we can hope that the University will become a reality. Among the things

34

needed will then be a headquarters agreement between Sweden and IMO as well as a bill to the Parliament. A lot of work has to be done in Malmö to prepare everything for the start of the University.

It has been fascinating to work with this very special project. I will end my speech by quoting the conclusions from this newly printed IMO-broschure regarding the World Maritime University:

Shipping is international by nature and a great deal of its success and its safety depends on international co-operation among national maritime administrations all over the world. It is also a capitalintensive industry. It is, therefore, vital

for its success that Third World countries' senior maritime officials are properly trained and fully qualified .

In most cases, each of these countries needs only a few nationals who are specialized and aware of the most modern technology in the specific fields of shipping. The availability of the services of such experts would ensure safe and economical shipping activities as well as efficient protection of the marine environment for the benefit not only of the country concerned but also of international trade everywhere in the world.

The proposed World Maritime University would therefore make a contribution of exceptional value in the global endeavours of all nations for safer shipping and cleaner oceans in a world characterized by the growing use of modern technology.

Alank + Juni-83.