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International Maritime Organization

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THE WORLD MARITIME UNIVERSITY

The World Maritime University, based in Malmö, Sweden, is one of the most exciting and ambitious projects ever undertaken by the International Maritime Organization.

The purpose of the University is to provide advanced training for senior personnel from developing countries who are involved in various maritime activities. Training of this type is normally not available in the developing countries and there is no comparable institution anywhere in the world.

The WMU will therefore fill an important gap in maritime training and in the years to come will have a marked and beneficial effect on the two areas of greatest concern to the Organization – the improvement of maritime safety and the prevention of marine pollution from ships. IMO recognizes that the improvement of personnel standards – on shore and at sea – is crucial if its regulations are to be effectively implemented.

Considerable progress has already been made towards improving training standards in the past. But these efforts have concentrated on training at relatively junior levels. The WMU will be the first international effort to provide training opportunities for personnel who have already reached positions of some authority – personnel, in fact, who in the years to come will become responsible for the effective implementation of IMO standards.

The manpower crisis

All the developing countries among IMO's 125 Member States have shown a great awareness of the need for tackling safety and pollution at an international level, through the adoption of conventions, codes and other recommendations under the auspices of IMO. But the majority of these instruments are highly technical in nature – a reflection of the increasing complexity of the shipping industry itself, which has changed more in the last 25 years than in any similar period in history.

Ships are bigger, faster and more versatile than they were. Their equipment is more complex. The cargoes they carry are more diverse. Ports and loading terminals are more sophisticated. At the same time, more and more nations
are becoming involved in shipping. Many of them are developing nations which recognize that the creation of a strong and efficient merchant marine can make an important contribution to national growth and economic independence.

All of these developments provide many opportunities. The technical changes which have occurred in the shipping industry during the last two decades (and which are likely to be even greater in the future) offer the possibility of greater efficiency and economy and - perhaps the most important of all - greater safety.

But these opportunities are accompanied by great challenges and difficulties. The nature of the shipping revolution means that those involved in the industry must possess far greater skills than their predecessors, otherwise they will be unable to take proper advantage of the technical opportunities now becoming available. This skill can only be acquired through extensive training followed by long experience.

Training of this type is of course essential for the personnel on board the world's ships. But in many ways it is even more important for the men and women in more senior posts - the administrators, teachers, inspectors and other key figures upon whom a nation's shipping industry depends.

The problem is that many countries, especially in the developing world, lack the trained personnel needed to fill posts at this level. To make matters worse, they often lack the means to train people of the right calibre to fill these posts.

It is a deficiency which could not only seriously handicap economic development in the country concerned but could have a disastrous impact upon maritime safety and marine pollution.

IMO has been aware of this problem for many years and has taken steps to help Member States to overcome it. Several years ago the Organization established a technical assistance programme designed to help countries wishing to improve their maritime activities. It soon became clear that the crucial problem was the shortage of proper manpower and while the recruitment of
expatriate staff did offer a solution of sorts, ultimately the problem could only be solved by training their own personnel.

These measures have done a great deal to help developing countries to train staff - especially sea-going staff - at a relatively junior level.

IMO has helped on shore as well. The Organization has consultants and advisers specializing in such subjects as maritime safety legislation, maritime administration, maritime laws, marine pollution and so on. All of them spend much of the year travelling to IMO member countries.

This has helped many countries identify difficulties and devise ways of overcoming them, but the basic problem still remains: the shortage of staff qualified to fill senior posts.

Despite the success of the IMO technical assistance programme in other areas, it became clear that a new approach was necessary if real progress was to be made. Some way had to be found to enable developing countries to train the required staff quickly and to the necessary high standards.

The creation of the University

In 1976, the Secretary-General of IMO, Mr C.P. Srivastava, visited Sweden for talks with representatives of the Swedish Government. Sweden had always given great support to the IMO technical assistance programme and during this visit there was considerable discussion about the problems developing countries were experiencing in finding personnel of sufficiently high calibre.

During the next few years, IMO organized a series of seminars on various technical subjects for representatives of developing countries. Many of these seminars were supported by the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) and some were held at the Merchant Marine Academy in Malmö, in southern Sweden.

These seminars and other efforts made by IMO to improve training were so successful that many of those involved began to consider ways of extending the programme still further. By 1980 serious consideration was being given to the idea of establishing a permanent centre in an established maritime country where students from developing countries could receive the advanced training that was denied them at home.
In November 1980 a seminar on the implementation of global training standards was held in Malmö, with financial support from SIDA. In connexion with the preparation of this Seminar, informal exchanges of views and discussions were held between the representatives of the Swedish government and the Secretary-General of IMO about possible Swedish support to the IMO technical assistance programme through further co-operation in the field of maritime training.

As a result of these discussions, at the beginning of the seminar the Minister of Transport of Sweden made an important statement relating to the establishment of an international University of Maritime Sciences and Technology in Sweden designed to provide up-to-date training in various maritime activities for students from developing countries.

The seminar was attended by delegates from 45 developing countries who concluded the meeting by adopting a resolution requesting IMO and the United Nations Development Programme - which acts as the main funding agency within the United Nations system - to support the idea of establishing such an institution. The resolution referred to the 'enormous need' of developing countries for administrators, teachers, surveyors, examiners and other senior personnel, stating that a minimum of one or two years in a suitable academy would be necessary to acquire the extensive training needed.

From this point events moved swiftly. In Sweden the government began considering possible sites for the proposed university, finally opting for Malmö. In IMO itself the idea attracted wide support. IMO's senior technical body, the Maritime Safety Committee, welcomed the proposal, as did the Marine Environment Protection Committee and in November 1981 the IMO Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution authorizing the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps for the establishment of the University at Malmö.

The proposal for establishing the university had thus been unanimously supported. The next problem to be dealt with was finding the money to pay for it.

It was calculated that the University would cost $3.6 million a year to run and IMO set about raising this sum. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) agreed to provide preparatory financial assistance. The Swedish
government followed up by agreeing to pay $1 million annually and UNDP then agreed to provide a further $800,000 annually for the duration of the current UNDP cycle. Other IMO Member States also responded to the appeal with great generosity. Norway offered an annual contribution of $200,000. Greece and Italy agreed to provide $50,000 and Denmark $40,000 initially.

In addition to governments and organizations, the city of Malmö itself is giving the WMU project enthusiastic backing. The authorities have provided the University with its facilities, in the shape of the former Malmö Merchant Marine Academy, where activities have gradually been phased out over the last few years. The city also provided an apartment block called the Henrik Smith House, in the centre of Malmö, for use as residential quarters. Finally, arrangements were made to enable students at the WMU to have access to the superb sports and social facilities at the recreation centre located only a few minutes from the University site.

One other feature of the WMU project was the speed with which it was brought into being. The idea did not receive formal approval from the IMO Assembly until November 1981. Since then financial support has been secured: physical facilities have been provided; a board of governors has been named; academic and administrative staff appointed; curricula worked out; and a charter prepared. Barely 15 months had passed between the start of the project when, in February 1983 an Agreement concerning the establishment of the University was formally signed by the Secretary-General of IMO and the Swedish Ambassador in London, His Excellency Mr. Leif Leifland.

Following approval by the Swedish government this Agreement became effective on 1 May: six weeks later, the first students arrived in Malmö.

The aims of the World Maritime University

These can best be stated by quoting the Charter of the WMU, which says:

"The World Maritime University shall be the international maritime training institution for the training of senior specialist maritime personnel in various aspects of shipping and related fields concerning the improvement of maritime safety, the protection of the marine environment and the efficiency of international shipping, in furtherance of the purposes and objectives of the International Maritime Organization as a specialized agency of the United Nations."

/...
In order to achieve these objectives, the Charter says that the University shall:

"provide interested countries, and in particular developing countries, with the most modern and up-to-date facilities for the training of their high-level maritime personnel in all areas of shipping and related maritime activity including

(i) teachers and instructors for maritime training institutions
(ii) examiners for maritime training courses, certificates and qualifications
(iii) senior maritime administrators
(iv) technical administrators and senior managerial personnel
(v) marine accident investigators
(vi) maritime surveyors
(vii) specialists in naval architecture, marine science and technology and related disciplines
(viii) technical port managers and related personnel."

The University will also:

"help to establish an internationally recognized cadre of experts in the major aspects of shipping, including visiting professors, lecturers, consultants and other experts to provide suitable knowledge and assistance to developing countries and other governments as appropriate, on problems relating to maritime safety, efficiency of navigation and the prevention and control of marine pollution."

Finally, says the Charter, the University will

"help in developing a uniform international system for the training of experts in the maritime field as a means of facilitating and promoting international co-operation in shipping and related maritime activities."

The courses offered

The World Maritime University will conduct two-year and one-year courses.
Normally satisfactory completion of a two year course will result in the student receiving a Master of Science degree, while one year courses will lead to the granting of a Certificate.

From 1984 it is expected that courses will ordinarily run from February to December, with a December-February break in the two-year courses.

Two-year courses leading to M.Sc degree will be offered in the following subjects:

- General Maritime Administration
- Maritime Safety Administration
- Maritime Education
- Technical Management of Shipping Companies

Consideration is being given to offering courses in Technical Port Management at a later stage.

One-year courses leading to the grant of a Certificate will be offered in the following subjects:

- A course for technical officials engaged in maritime safety administration
- A course for the technical staff of shipping companies.

In addition to the above, the University will also provide short term courses of four to six weeks duration dealing with particular subjects.

The University will also provide language courses. All instruction at the WMU will be in English and for students who need to upgrade their proficiency in that language, special nine-week courses will be held prior to the regular maritime courses.

Organization of courses

The teaching methods to be used at the World Maritime University have been carefully designed to meet its special requirements and will take full advantage of modern technologies and teaching methods.

The courses will include a number of compulsory units together with a number of optional subjects which can be selected by the student. This
approach will ensure that key subjects are covered but will at the same
time allow sufficient flexibility to cater for the needs of students from
different countries and organizations.

Courses will include:

* Lectures
* Tutorials
* Laboratory work
* Demonstrations
* Case studies
* Projects
* Industrial experience.

While students will spend most of their time at the University,
arrangements will also be made for them to extend their experience by field
trips to other cities and institutions within Sweden and abroad. These visits
will be one of the most important features of the whole project and were one
reason why Malmö was selected as the site for the University. Not only does
the town have its own airport but it is within easy reach of Copenhagen, one
of Europe's major international airports. Travel to other countries will
therefore be relatively easy.

This field work will vary according to the requirements of individual
students but could involve visits of a few days up to about two weeks.
Students will be in small groups accompanied by an expert tutor. The following
are some of the activities which will be considered under this heading.

* Study courses with major classification societies
* Visits to ports
* Visits to shipbuilding companies
* Visits to shipping companies
* Short sea voyages
* Visits to maritime training academies and other institutions
* Special courses at technical institutes.

The number and duration of these visits will vary according to the
course and degree. For the Master of Science degree, for example, it is
expected that most visits will take place during the second academic year.
But they will be an essential part of all courses at the University and will
enable students to gain first-hand experience of many activities which would
be impossible simply at the University itself.
It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the World Maritime University is an essential practical institution designed for students who have already proved their abilities and have been selected for further promotion. While courses will include a considerable amount of traditional classroom work, the practical content will be much greater and more varied than in normal post-graduate studies.

**Board of governors**

The University will be supervised by a Board of Governors, the chairman of which will be Mr. C.P. Srivastava, the Secretary-General of IMO. The members of the board have been chosen for their pre-eminence in shipping and related areas and have also been chosen to give a wide representation to both developed and developing maritime nations.

**Professional faculty**

The academic and administrative work of the University will be directed by the Rector, a highly qualified professional with long experience in maritime training. He will be assisted by eight full-time academic staff each specializing in a different field, and coming from all over the world.

The faculty will comprise the following sections: Nautical Sciences; Maritime Safety and Administration; Maritime Technology; and Marine Environment Protection.

In addition to the full-time academic staff, the University will rely heavily on short-term visiting professors and lecturers to cover certain specialized subjects. The University will arrange for the services of these specialists who, not available on a long-term basis, can as top persons in their field provide a valuable teaching resource. The combination of full-time staff and these visiting professors and lecturers will thus allow the University to have more comprehensive coverage of the complex maritime field as well as give the students access to the very best people in their respective professions.

It is very encouraging that during the preparatory phase many renowned persons in maritime transport have indicated their willingness to serve the University from time to time as professors and lecturers.

In addition to the full-time professors, the Rector will be assisted by an administrative staff including course administrators who will be especially
involved in aiding the professors and visiting lecturers as well as the students in the conduct of the University's course work.

Living accommodation

Students at the University will be provided with their own individual apartments in the Henrik Smith House, a building in the centre of Malmö which has been put at the University's disposal by the Malmö municipal authorities. The building contains 160 flats, each containing cooking and bathroom facilities, together with an indoor garage, restaurant, sauna, recreation and television rooms and other amenities. The building will be fully staffed and in practice will offer many of the advantages of a hotel - at a rent which will be only a fraction of the normal rate. The building has been completely redecorated and refurnished.

Social facilities

The Malmö authorities have also arranged for students at the University to be allowed to use the modern recreation centre, situated only a few hundred yards from the World Maritime University itself.

The building contains an indoor swimming pool, ice rink, bowling alley, squash and badminton courts, restaurant and other facilities.

Conclusion

The first students arrived in Malmö in mid-June this year. By mid-1984 the World Maritime University will be fully established, with between 150 and 200 students on courses ranging from a few weeks to the maximum of two years.

Already the project has caught the imagination of many involved in shipping and especially those concerned with improving maritime safety. For the project is virtually unique - a genuine international effort in which the traditional maritime nations are giving their experience and in many cases their financial backing as well to help the developing world make shipping safer and the oceans cleaner and at the same time raise the level of management, efficiency and general maritime expertise. IMO confidently expects that the benefits of this imaginative and positive venture will soon be felt.