

PRESS RELEASE



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For immediate release

Asian shipping interests must speak up, says Korean Register CEO

According to **Mr Oh Kong-Gyun, Chairman and CEO of the Korean Register of Shipping (KR)**, the size of the Asian shipping and shipbuilding industries is such that they should occupy a more prominent and influential position in the international regulatory process than they currently do.

Generating a louder voice for Asian shipping had been a central theme of Mr Oh's recent IACS chairmanship and one that he is keen to continue now his tenure at IACS is complete.

Mr Oh was addressing an international forum of senior shipping people who had gathered to participate in SIMS, a Korean Register conference organised with the support of the Ministry of Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs, the Korea Shipowners' Association, the Korea Shipbuilders' Association and the Korea Marine Equipment Association. Its primary aim was to further the promotion of safety and the protection of the environment through quality shipbuilding.

Speaking on the theme of safety, Mr Oh was quick to highlight - against the backdrop of the economic recession and the current poor shipping markets - that all those involved in shipping *"cannot let quality be downgraded in these troubled times, this has to be first and foremost in our thinking."* He went on to say, *"we must continually push ahead with our commitment to invest both time and resources into improving the design, construction and operation of ships"*.

One area where Korea is well represented at international level is through conference keynoter **Chai Lee-sik, Dean at the Korea University College of Law and also the current chairman of IMO's legal committee**. Chai was keen to highlight the current work of his committee which included the welfare and legal protection of seafarers, liability for pollution at sea, and the eradication of piracy. Chai also

explained that there had been calls to establish an appropriate legal mechanism to address the liability issue, including unlimited liability relating to classification services.

The twin conference themes of *maritime safety and environment* and *shipbuilding and quality* featured a range of international expert speakers including **Dr Peter Swift**, managing director, Intertanko; **Captain Phil Davies**, director, OCIMF; **Niels Bjørn L. Mortensen**, chief marine technical officer, BIMCO; **Beom-shik Park**, executive managing director Korea P & I Club; **Rob Lomas**, secretary general, Intercargo; and **Simon Stonehouse**, chairman of the Joint Hull Committee; **Dr Sang-rai Cho**, vice-president, Ulsan University, **Mr Byung-se Yoo**, executive director, KOSHIPA.

The conference was attended by around 150 practitioners from many maritime sectors including ship operators, ship builders, classification, industry organisations and administrations.

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Notes to editors

The Korean Register of Shipping is an IACS member classification society established in 1960 with the purpose of promoting safety of life, property and the protection of the marine environment. Until July 2009, KR held the chairmanship of the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) and now holds the office of vice-chairman (immediate past chairman).

The second Seoul International Maritime and Shipbuilding Conference was held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel, Seoul Korea on 17 September 2009. *Conference proceedings are available from Ms Yoonna Choi.*

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