

20 March 2020

**KEEPING GLOBAL MARITIME TRADE MOVING THROUGHOUT THE COVID-19 CRISIS**

**TO:  
GOVERNMENTS ATTENDING THE G20 MEETING ON COVID-19 ON  
TUESDAY 24 MARCH**

*As the COVID-19 pandemic takes hold it is vital that all governments keep maritime trade moving by continuing to allow commercial ships access to ports worldwide.*

We are writing on behalf of the International Chamber Shipping (ICS), which represents the world's national shipowners' associations and over 80% of the world's merchant shipping tonnage, and the International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH) which speaks for the global port industry.

As the COVID-19 pandemic takes hold, it is important for G20 Governments to fully understand that around 90% of global trade is transported by commercial shipping, which moves the world's food, energy and raw materials, as well as manufactured goods and components – including vital medical supplies and many products sold in supermarkets, items that are necessary (due to complex supply chains) for the preservation of many jobs in manufacturing – without which modern society simply cannot function.

In this time of global crisis, it is more important than ever to keep supply chains open and maritime trade and transport moving. Leadership from the G20 in calling for a co-ordinated approach by governments, working in conjunction with the UN International Maritime Organization, WHO, and other relevant agencies is therefore of the utmost importance.

We therefore call on the G20 to highlight the critical importance of this issue, ideally by including a short reference to this matter in any communiqué issued in connection with the meeting on 24 March.

Yours faithfully,



Guy Platten, Secretary General  
International Chamber of Shipping



Patrick Verhoeven, Managing Director  
International Association of Ports and Harbors