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22 February 2008

**TO: ALL IMEC MEMBERS**

**IMEC(08)12**

Dear IMEC Member,

**Security Situation Nigeria: IBF Security Guidelines and Action Plan**

IMEC circular (08)08 of 13 February advised Members that a meeting with ITF was planned in Berlin on 19 February to discuss a demand from ITF for a declaration that Nigeria was an "area of warlike operations" and that Article 17 of the IBF Framework Collective Bargaining Agreement, should be invoked. This Article provides for payment of a war bonus and the right to repatriation from ships proceeding to such areas, plus other measures.

Following advice received from Members, and other organisations, about the security situation in the ports and offshore maritime installations in Nigeria, it was argued that the situation did not warrant the area as being subject to the protection to seafarers afforded by Article 17. It was nevertheless accepted that certain ports and areas of Nigeria were high risk and that employers should take precautions in respect of ships operating in these areas.

The IBF has therefore approved Security Guidelines and an Action Plan for deep sea merchant ships that might visit the region as part of an international voyage. A copy of this document is attached.

Members are requested to implement the recommendations in the attached IBF Security Guidelines and Action Plan on ships they operate that may visit ports or offshore installations in Nigeria.

**David Dearsley**  
**Secretary General**

# **Security Situation: Nigeria**

## **IBF Security Guidelines And IBF Action Plan**

### **Scale of The Security Problem**

An analysis of reported incidents in Nigeria conducted by IMEC suggested that the number of shore and sea-based incidents involving abductions (and subsequent release after payment of ransom) of foreign workers had increased from 72 in 2006 to 172 in 2007. No abductions have been made in 2008, but an Argentinean aircrew member was shot and killed on the main road to Lagos Airport on 6 January in what appears to have been an attempted robbery.

So far as maritime-related incidents were concerned, the IMEC analysis suggested that there had been 21 such incidents in 2006, 14 in 2007 and 4 in 2008. However, most of these incidents affected small craft associated with the oil industry and rigs, pumping stations and other fixed oil installations.

While one IMEC member reported nearly 50 vessel calls in various Nigerian ports over the past six months without any security problems arising, there have been at least four incidents in the past two years involving deep sea commercial merchant ships. One of these incidents, in January 2006, resulted in the abduction of a full Filipino crew that were subsequently released unharmed.

While the number of incidents is currently, therefore, relatively small, extreme vigilance is recommended in visiting Nigerian ports, particularly in the most affected areas.

### **Location of The Incidents**

For deep sea merchant ships, it appears that the ports of Warri and its approaches via Forcados, and Bonny, Onne and Port Harcourt are the areas where extra security should be exercised, as well as the Niger Delta areas of Nunn, Fishtown and Brass.

The Filipino crew that was abducted as reported earlier, were seized in the Chanomi Creek, which connects the Escrados and Forcados Rivers near Warri. Other recent incidents affecting merchant shipping have occurred in the Bonny waterway near Onne and Port Harcourt.

The major ports of Lagos and Appapa have not experienced any reports of security incidents. However, there have been reports of incidents involving oil industry craft some considerable distance offshore from Bonny, Forcados and Escrados

### **Security Guidelines**

Companies operating vessels or installations in Nigeria or offshore that are involved with the oil industry will have introduced their own security arrangements to safeguard their personnel given the nature of the risk and their detailed local advice. These recommendations therefore only apply to operators of deep sea merchant ships that may call at a Nigerian port in the course of a normal international voyage.

1. Ships should normally operate as if the ship security plan level 2 was in effect. In the ports of Warri, Bonny, Onne and Port Harcourt, and the waterways and approaches

to these ports, including offshore, it might be appropriate to implement higher security measures.

2. If ships are in a liner service with regular port calls in the worst affected areas, detailed local advice about the security situation should be obtained and arrivals and departures timed to coincide with security patrols operated by Nigerian Government forces.
3. Shore leave should be restricted to the absolute minimum and in the less secure ports mentioned above, it should be prohibited altogether.
4. Normal crew changes should not be effected in Nigeria unless absolutely essential.
5. Regular liaison should be maintained with seafarers families to advise them of the security measures being adopted to safeguard ships crew.

### **IBF Action Plan**

It has been agreed that:

1. The IBF should write as a matter of urgency to the Nigerian authorities urging them to increase security in port areas and approaches.
2. The IBF should write to the authorities in the Philippines to seek clarification of the most recent Advisory Notice concerning deployments to ships in the liner trade
3. The security situation in Nigeria should be closely monitored and in the event of any deterioration that could affect seafarers serving on deep sea merchant ships these Guidelines should be reviewed and amended as necessary.