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IMO SECRETARY GENERAL OPENS PASSENGER SHIPS' SAFETY MEET IN MANILA

MANILA, Philippines – International Maritime Organization (IMO) Secretary General Koji Sekimizu leads the opening rites for the whole day today (April 24) 'Conference on the Enhancement of Safety of Ships Carrying Passengers Non-International Voyages' at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) with some 300 local and foreign delegates expected to attend. The conference starts at 9 a.m.

Sekimizu of Japan will meet Filipino maritime and shipping stakeholders to share information on causes of sea accidents in the domestic landscape, and lend ears to solutions as weapon of prevention offered by world experts.

One hanging issue in the air is the fact that, "the Philippines has the largest number of seafarers in the world, composed mostly of professional, world-class and competent marine deck and engine officers, and ratings, but in the domestic waters many maritime accidents continue to occur. The conference is seen to be a major venue to address this situation.

Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) Administrator Dr. Maximo Q. Mejia, Jr. (PhD) will deliver the welcome address, while Transportation and Communications Secretary Joseph Emilio 'Jun' Aguinaldo Abaya will keynote the conference, after which resource speakers take turn in presenting their respective pieces.

The resource speakers are Ms. Abigail Golden who will make an in-depth analysis of ferry fatalities between 2000 and 2014 (locations and causations); Prof. Dracos Vassalos, United Kingdom, Dr. Luis Guarin also of United Kingdom, and Prof. Jens-Uwe Schroder-Hinnichs of Japan and World Maritime University (WMU) who will talk on 'Identification of hazards to be addressed when regulating FSA HAZID as a tool-fact-finding and scoping study using the Philippines as an example; Mr. Akihiko Ikeda of Japan with office in Singapore, who will delve on the ASEAN-Japan transport

partnership projects for improvement and harmonization of safety and ship inspection for coastal ships.

Other passenger ships' safety speakers include Dr. Yoshitaka Ogawa, Japan; Mr. ThierryNervale, Pacific community; Dr. Tom Allan, IMO; Mr. Paul Sadler, IMO, Mr. Johan Roos INTERFERRY and, Mr. Mike Langley P & O Ferries, UK; and Mr. Christopher Pastrana of the Philippines.

A 30-minute press conference will be held shortly after the coffee break at 10 am, at Meeting Room No. 14, 3rd Floor PICC, with Mr. Eulogio 'Yul' Malicse, media relations officer of MARINA and lifetime member of the National Press Club, as moderator. From PICC Mr. Sekimizu will Filipino seafarers, members visit have a brief visit at the general headquarters of Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP) in Intramuros, Manila. Where he will meet Filipino seafarers, members of the union, the biggest of such kind in the world. The day following, April 25, delegates will be toured by MARINA teams to a state of the art port terminal in Manila.

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The Maritime Industry Authority is an attached agency of the Department of Transportation and Communications tasked to accelerate the integrated development of the maritime industry in the country. It has been implementing reforms and programs to transform the country's domestic shipping industry to global competitiveness and the MARINA into a premiere maritime administration in Southeast Asia. For more information, visit marina.gov.ph.



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