Distinguished ladies and gentelman, dear colegues,

It is my pleasure and priviladge to adress this Conference on the behalfe of the Croatian shipowners Assotiation Mare Nostrum.

You are going to discussed here many important issues on the IMO agenda. MSC has been and is very bussy developing new safety standards for passanger ships, goald based new ships construction standards, security, anti piracy and armed robery measures, but also issues of the implementatio of STCW Manila Convention and other issues covered by sintagma: human element.

It is important to ensure that voices of those who are actually living and working with the standards develop at Albert' Embankment are spelled out. Both the industry and Unions.

Without going into the details of the provisions you are going to elaborate later, I would like to point out on issue of concirn.

In last decade we are facing a growing over production of different regulations on different levels often confronting one another. This is not just a serious burdon to shipping and thus a world economy but it becomes a threath to safety. Rules that were created to raise standards of safety become its opstical. Our sefarers, particulary our captains are exposed to such a enourmouse paperwork so many formulars, so many reportings to be filled so they don't spend sufficient time to prepare for vayage and to concentrate on a real safety threaths on their journy. So called human factor remains the highes factor in the couses of marine casuality. We should ask ourselfs to what degree this is the resullt of shifting the time from the real safety to administrative issues.

And we have the same situation in the officese which were designed to provide a support to ships, but they are offten turn to support of different administrations, authorities, inspections.

And the costs- each and every new requirement costs. New equipment, new procedure, new technology, new verification, new training, new survey, new certificate. Everythng costs. Income, on the other side, due to different reasons does not rais. The freight rates are still on a very low level. We are (at lease we in Croatia) are facing a severe fight for surviving where all costs needs to be reduced significienty. And even in such a circumstances we are not reducing the level of safety nor the level of working and living conditions on board our ships. In that context we do expect understanding of our social partners when discussing the standards that are well above the minimum prescriebed.

Environmental protection- we all know, there has been many and many studies published showing that shipping is one of (if not the most) enviromentaly friendly mode of transport. It does not mean that we should not use the benefits of new tehnologies to further improve our performance. But we just pladge for reasonable and timely approach, for global rather than regional approach, for fair share of burden between differnt players and different industries.

At the same time when we are proclaming and not just proclaming but honestly devoting to quality shipping this balance is apsoluty needed.

We as a social partners maight in many issues dissagree, but I belive that we could agree in advocating uncomprmise but reasonable and knowladgeble approache to safety, security and environment protection and at the same time reis our voice of concirn in respect of growing administrative burden to shipping. Let's try to inbreath the spirit of real, traditional shipping and mariner values into this HItec world for a benefit of safety and for benefit of people.

With this I wish you a fruitfull work and pleasent stay in this perl city of Dubrovnik.

Thank you