

IAME İZMİR 2004 CONFERENCE, June 30th
Opening Session

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Dear guests, the honorable members of such outstanding maritime family gathering, welcome to the Annual Conference 2004 of the International Association of Maritime Economists.

It is indeed great honor and pleasure for me to address this distinguished audience. For holding such an invaluable occasion, I owe many thanks, first of all, to Prof. Dr. Emin ALICI, the president of Dokuz Eylül University, who I believe, has always placed the maritime issues in the primary items of the overall university agenda. Another person to whom my sincere thanks extend is Prof. Dr. GülDEM CERİT, the director of School of Maritime Business and Management. The greatest part of my thanks, of course, is to our dear guests who have gathered from various parts of the world.

It is well known by every distinguished member of this audience that the overall importance given to maritime trade has been held in a steady increase. The rapid developments in technology, the challenges to follow improvements in communication resulting in a rise in globalization and many other similar facts have raised the movements of goods and services among various parts of the world. Not all parts of the world have so far benefited from this accelerated flow, of course. Thus, one of the aims of such conferences, I believe, should be to discuss the means of spreading the benefits of world maritime trade and shipping throughout the world on a reasonable basis of share. I would like to underline the term “cooperation” in this particular respect, and I would like to use this term in a broad sense, rather than limiting it within one aspect of cooperation, such as financial support. It could be utilized in sharing many such things as knowledge, ideas, education, technology, projects, etc.

While globalization has lately increased both the importance and scope of maritime trade and shipping, it has at the same time loaded certain responsibilities on the shoulders of the maritime industry. The liabilities undertaken, I think, could be successfully met much more easily through a well arranged cooperation. A decent cooperation among the governments of the maritime countries would raise various mutual benefits. Turkish maritime industry, for example, has started enjoying such benefits. I am proud of stating here that we recently have gained certain considerable advancement in the figures representing detentions through port state controls. This favorable result, I believe, is partly due to the cooperation in technical as well as legitimate issues. Another good news I would like to share with you is about the recent considerable rise in Turkish marine tourism and cruising industry. The basic cause lying under this increase is, I think, the recent legislative changes the Turkish government has adopted concerning the taxes received from the tourists visiting Turkey. This movement is also a means of cooperation. Still another piece of improvement Turkish maritime industry has started enjoying is related with the increased quality service, and thus increased movement, in containerization and the increasing number of renewed tankers.

I hope this distinguished conference will provide us all with an appropriate platform enabling us to discuss the means of overcoming the problems being encountered and promoting maritime transport to further more efficient and effective steps.

Thank you all for your kind attention and good luck in your discussions.