

**Opening Statement by the
International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)
To the 64th Annual Meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC)**

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is an international trade union federation of transport workers' unions that, among other things, works for the interests of fishers worldwide. The ITF strongly supports the concept of responsible and sustainable use of all living marine resources and endorses an ecosystems-based approach to fisheries management whereby the interrelations of marine ecosystems are to be considered before making decisions that have an impact on the balance of the environment and its resources, including along the food chain. We have many times emphasised that our aim is to preserve the fishing industry by effective enforcement of international regulations.

The ITF position is fully consistent with applicable international instruments and the principles of sustainable development. We believe that the unqualified protection of all whales and other marine resources is contrary to the modern concepts of sustainable resource management. A sustainable fishing industry should be considered as one which not only manages the fishing resources but takes into account safety and social aspects of fisheries and provides fishers with safe work places and decent work. In our opinion a sustainable utilisation of all living marine resources creates a stable basis for the employment of fishers on decent terms and conditions, as well as making a valuable contribution to the world food supply.

In this regard the ITF and its fisheries affiliates have supported the IWC's mandate to manage the sustainable utilisation of whale stocks. We consider that the culturally different approaches to whales, whether they be a resource for harvest and symbol of national identity, or a creature of beauty and as such a tourist attraction and national treasure, are best mediated through the auspices of the IWC.

We express our general support in setting up a quota for those species which are sufficiently abundant to permit sustainable harvesting. We are hoping that the IWC can fulfill its core mandate and purpose and adopt a mutually acceptable agreement including setting up commercial quotas with due account of the whale stocks in line with ecosystem approach to fisheries management.

We would like to remind participants of the resolution on safety at sea they adopted in 2011 to condone any acts of violence endangering safety of life at sea. We also hope that adequate procedures be taken and maintained to avoid certain NGO protests to endanger the safety of life at sea. We believe that the safety and security of our fishers members is of paramount importance and no cause might justify potential fatalities or injuries of those at sea or pollution of the marine environment.

The ITF strongly condemns violence and requests the IWC contracting Governments to take appropriate measures to avoid such incidents in the future. We believe that much more should be done by the flag State, the various port States and international community.

Thank you!