KIMO

KOMMUNENES INTERNASJONALE MILJØORGANISASJON

KIMO RESOLUTION 3/10

Presented by KIMO UK

The use of nuclear power in the Maritime Sector

There are sectors of the international shipping community calling for the merchant navy, and in particular large cargo carrying ships, to be powered by nuclear reactors. Shipping companies are calling for the technology to be used as a green technology to reduce CO2 emissions from shipping activities and the classification societies appear happy to see the technology implemented in the future. Although nuclear powered vessels used by the military and by Arctic shipping companies have been around for some years KIMO has concerns about the wide use of this technology. In addition to this Russia is planning to build five floating nuclear power stations, with the first due to be launched in 2011, to provide power for oil exploration in the high Arctic. KIMO feels that this type of development presents an unacceptable risk to the marine environment.

Many commercial ports and harbours lie at the centre of large and vibrant communities, health and safety related issues are raised if nuclear powered vessels are allowed to enter, berth and carry out their unloading/loading operations in these areas. The lack of emergency planning in the event of a marine accident involving nuclear material and the question of liability and compensation in the event of a nuclear accident at sea raises many questions.

Piracy is common in some shipping areas and we regularly witness how easy it is for a small band of individuals to hijack large ships. Such actions highlight how those with terrorist intentions could hijack a ship powered with radioactive material or a floating nuclear power station.

The decommissioning of nuclear powered ships and floating power stations also raises big questions about the long-term disposal of waste radioactive material produced by power generation. Many countries have not yet identified a safe management and storage/disposal facilities and radioactive material is stored above ground with only short term management options in place thus there is no sensible way to process the waste generated by nuclear powered ships.

Any leaks of radioactive material from nuclear installations at sea may enter into the marine environment directly where containment and remediation is near impossible and even monitoring of the situation challenging. The planned floating nuclear power stations are to be operated in hostile Arctic waters where engineering will be tested to its limits and any response must also deal with very adverse conditions.

Recognising the enormous environmental and health risks of nuclear powered merchant navy vessels and floating nuclear power stations KIMO urges all European Governments to legislate to.

1) Work together with the IMO to implement a worldwide ban of nuclear propulsion in merchant vessels.

2) Continue to encourage the development of non-nuclear reduced emission propulsion techniques.

3) Ban the use of floating nuclear power station in EU waters.

4) Work together with the IMO to implement a worldwide ban on the use of floating nuclear power stations.

KIMO members:

Agree to submit this Resolution to all National Governments, the European Commission and other relevant organisations.

This resolution was unanimously agreed at the KIMO AGM in Palanga, Lithuania, on the 10th October 2010.