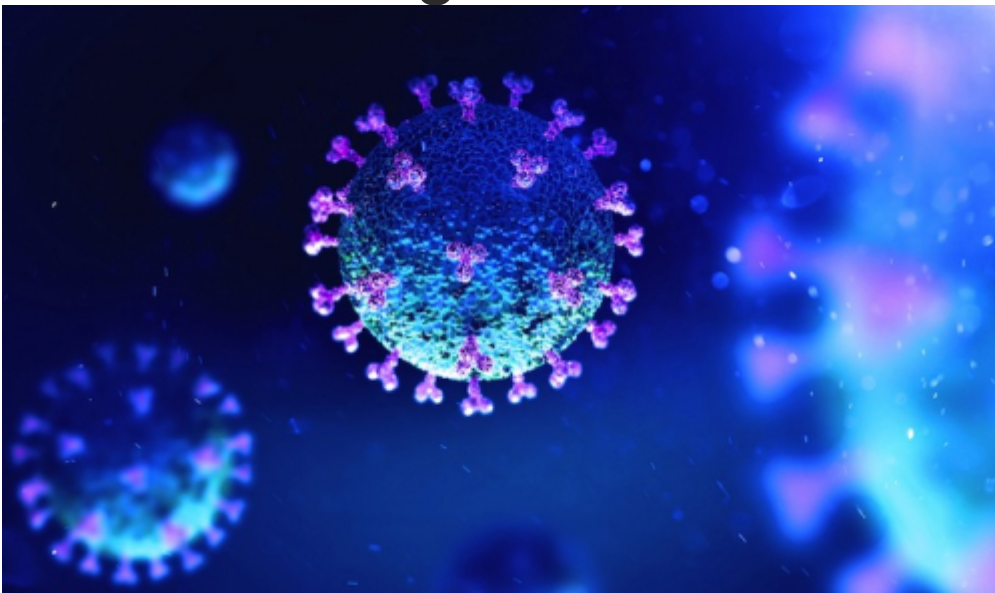


Thursday, 02 April 2020

IMO urges UN to support 'key worker' designation of seafarers



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The IMO's secretary general Kitack Lim has asked the United Nations to support its request to governments to declare seafarers, port personnel and other crucial maritime workers as key personnel.

Lim made the plea on Wednesday during a virtual meeting with other UN chiefs and the UN secretary general António Guterres.

The meeting addressed the impact of COVID-19 on the global flow of food supplies, pharmaceuticals and medical equipment.

During the meeting, Lim highlighted the importance of the welfare and well-being of maritime personnel and the significance of crew changes to support the global supply chain.

He also highlighted the major restrictions to crew changes due to travel bans and restrictions that are being increasingly imposed by governments due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Earlier in the week, the IMO sent an open letter calling on the world's governments to recognise and designate professional seafarers and marine personnel as 'key workers who provide an essential service'.

Referring to crew changes, it argued that professional seafarers and marine personnel should be granted “any necessary and appropriate exemptions from national travel or movement restrictions to allow them to join or leave ships – and that governments should permit professional seafarers and marine personnel to disembark ships in port and transit through their territory (i.e. to an airport) to allow crews to be changed and seafarers to be repatriated”.

The letter also asked governments to develop COVID-19 policies and measures that remove obstacles to ship and port operations, and seafarers and marine personnel.

You can read the full IMO letter at: <https://bit.ly/2UCi2fi>

Further advice, recommendations, and information can be found on the IMO coronavirus page at: <http://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>