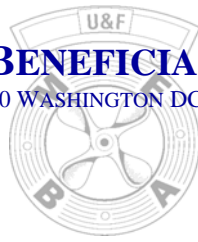


MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

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PRESIDENT



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STATEMENT OF THE MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF MASTERS, MATES & PILOTS AND THE SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL UNION ON THE MAERSK ALABAMA PIRACY INCIDENT

The Presidents of the three American maritime labor unions that represent the officers and crew working aboard the MAERSK ALABAMA have released the following statement following the successful return of Captain Richard Phillips:

“On behalf of all the officers and members of our three labor unions, we wish to express our deepest appreciation to all those involved in bringing about the safe return of Captain Richard Phillips and in bringing this act of piracy against a United States-flag cargo vessel to an end. We are especially grateful to President Barack Obama and his Administration for their deliberate and effective handling of this entire situation and, of course, to the Department of the Navy and the naval personnel who, despite the unique and difficult circumstances, did their job to end the hostage situation with great skill. They truly represent the best of America.

“We are also grateful to Maersk CEO John Reinhart along with Waterman Steamship Corporation/International Shipholding Corporation President Eric L. Johnson and their entire operations for the manner in which they communicated and worked with our Unions. They made every effort to ensure that we had the most up-to-date and accurate information available so that we in turn could provide comfort and assistance to the families of the officers and crew aboard the MAERSK ALABAMA.

“We are extremely proud of Captain Phillips and the entire American crew who were working aboard the MAERSK ALABAMA for their response when these pirates – these international criminals - attempted to seize control of an American ship. Their performance under great pressure when facing the ultimate threat to their own personal safety exemplifies the valor and devotion to duty that American merchant mariners have demonstrated throughout our nation’s history. The officers and crew of the MAERSK ALABAMA, led by Captain Phillips, had no hesitation in putting themselves at risk in order to secure the integrity of their United States-flag vessel and its cargo. Once again our nation is able to see firsthand that the civilian American merchant marine officers and crew who sail aboard American vessels will act quickly and decisively to protect the United States flag, and by extension, the United States, whenever and wherever attacked. “All too often the role that our organizations and United States merchant marine officers and crew play in protecting the economic security of our nation and supporting the

Department of Defense and our troops overseas is overlooked. Without a United States-flag merchant fleet and without the American-citizen licensed officers and crew who sail aboard these vessels, our armed forces overseas would be dependent on others for the supplies, equipment and other cargo they need to do their job in support of America's international interests. In the case at hand, this vessel and its crew were engaged in a mission of mercy, carrying food to some of the world's neediest people. The MAERSK ALABAMA was proudly flying the American flag to help demonstrate that we are a compassionate people and that American flag ships and their crews will put themselves at risk to make sure that the less fortunate of the world who need our aid will in fact receive our aid, and that those whose interests run counter to our nation's will be thwarted in their efforts.

"The training provided to American merchant marine officers and crew at the institutions jointly operated by America's labor unions and our contracted United States-flag shipping companies, including Maersk, are among the finest in the world. The quality of the training, the experience and expertise of the instructors, and the modern, state-of-the-art facilities and curricula ensure that American merchant marine officers and crew will have the best possible information and training available so that when a situation such as this arises, they can respond efficiently and effectively.

"Notwithstanding the end of the MAERSK ALABAMA incident and the safe return of Captain Phillips and his crew, it is important for all Americans to understand that international piracy is a fact of life for American mariners and for seafarers around the world. The men and women we represent and who sail aboard United States-flag merchant vessels are prepared to put themselves at risk so that America's economic, foreign policy and security interests are protected. We stand ready to work with President Obama and his Administration and with the international maritime community to stop the rise of piracy so that vessels operating on the world's searoutes no longer face this threat.

"We again wish to express our deep appreciation to all those involved in successfully ending this situation. We are pleased to welcome the officers and crew of the MAERSK ALABAMA home, and we look forward to greeting Captain Richard Phillips when he too returns home within the next few days."