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# International Maritime Organization

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## Extraordinary Session of the Council

C/ES 36

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Date: 18th & 19th March 2026

Location: IMO HQ London

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## SUMMARY MEETING REPORT

**HOST ORGANISATION:** International Maritime Organization  
**MEETING TITLE:** Extraordinary Session of the Council (C/ES 36)  
**LOCATION:** London, with virtual participation  
**DATE:** 19th March 2026  
**REPORT BY:** Capt. Simon Chaplin

### Participants / Attendees:

- Capt. Simon Chaplin, WNTI Principal Delegate to the IMO

### Purpose / Objectives of Meeting

Extraordinary Session of the Council to discuss the escalating crisis in the Persian Gulf, particularly the Strait of Hormuz.

### Key Takeaways / Points

The Council reaffirmed its commitment to UN Charter principles and international maritime conventions. Condemning the attacks on shipping, by the Islamic Republic of Iran, it called on all Member States to respect the rights and freedoms of innocent passage. The risk to innocent seafarers is emphasised, as well as the importance of ensuring seafarers' safety, welfare, and access to essential supplies.

### Summary of Meeting

The session was requested by 8 members of the Council, to discuss the escalating crisis in the Persian Gulf, particularly the Strait of Hormuz.

[IMO - Circular Letter No.5148-Rev.1 - Requests To Convene An Extraordinary Session Of The Council \(Secretariat\)](#)

This required invoking Rule 58 of the Council procedures that allowed waving the 1 month minimum notice period for convening the meeting. During the opening statements, the Russian Federation and Islamic Republic of Iran both expressed opposition to waving the usual 1 month notice period.

[IMO - C-ES.36-1-1 - Breaches of the IMO Convention 1948 and Council Rules of Procedure in respect of convening C/ES 36 \(Russian Federation\)](#)

[IMO - C-ES.36-1-2 - Observance of the IMO Convention and Council Rules of Procedure in relation to the convening C/ES 36 \(Islamic Republic of Iran\)](#)

China welcomed the organisation taking action, including convening sessions, but noted that from a procedural perspective the Council needed to act in accordance with the IMO convention and rules of procedure. China questioned if convening this session was not in accordance with the overriding authority of the IMO Convention.

Beyond the objections, there was an overwhelming majority of Member States in favour of convening this Extraordinary Session.

[IMO - C-ES.36-WP.1 - Draft Summary Of Decisions \(Secretariat\)](#)

**Agenda item 3** - Impacts on shipping and seafarers of the situation in the Arabian Sea, Sea of Oman, and the Gulf Region, particularly in and around the Strait of Hormuz.

Documents discussed:

[IMO - C-ES.36-3 - Considering the impact in the Arabian Sea, Sea of Oman and the Gulf Region, particularly i... \(Albania, Antigua and Barb...\)](#)

Following an announcement by an official in Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps that the Strait of Hormuz is closed and threatening any vessel trying to pass through the Strait, the co-sponsors strongly condemn these threats and the attacks being made by the Islamic Republic of Iran against ships and the territories of neighbouring states. Demanding that these attacks should stop and that freedom of navigation be restored.

[IMO - C-ES.36-INF.2 - Update on actions initiated by the IMO Secretariat \(Secretariat\)](#)

This document provides a brief update on the work of the Secretariat to facilitate accurate information sharing amongst Member States, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to support seafarers impacted by the current situation and to enhance the safety and security of shipping in the region.

[IMO - C-ES.36-3-4 - Proposal to establish a framework to allow the safe evacuation of seafarers and ships stranded in the Gulf](#)

Proposal to establish a framework to allow the safe evacuation of seafarers and ships stranded in the Gulf.

[IMO - C-ES.36-3-3 - Concerns and issues for shipping industry](#)

The conflict in the Gulf region and the Gulf of Oman is impacting seafarers' safety, security and welfare. The co-sponsors have identified a series of concerns and developed pragmatic and practical solutions to the issues faced by seafarers in this conflict.

[IMO - C-ES.36-3-2 - Consideration on the Impact on Global Shipping](#)

The Co-sponsors call on Member States to ensure continuous supply of provisions, fresh water, and fuel to vessels and crew stranded in the Gulf, and to facilitate crew repatriations where required. It also calls for an Extraordinary Session of the IMO Assembly be convened, as soon as possible, to further address the issues faced in the Gulf and in particular the Strait of Hormuz.

[IMO - C-ES.36-3-1 - Impacts on maritime safety, navigation and seafarers in the Persian Gulf region resulting from the unlawful use of force against... \(Islamic Republic of Iran\)](#)

Submitted by Iran, this document offers information from the Iranian viewpoint.

These documents were extensively discussed during the Extraordinary Council Session resulting in the drafting of working paper 2.

[IMO - C-ES.36-WP.2 - Draft decision of the Council \(agenda item 3\) \(Chair\)](#)

This document outlines the discussions and decisions made regarding the impacts on shipping and seafarers in the Arabian Sea, Sea of Oman, and Gulf region, particularly around the Strait of Hormuz. Key points include:

#### General Principles

- Reaffirmed commitment to UN Charter principles and international maritime conventions.
- Recalled relevant UN Security Council resolutions condemning attacks and threats by the Islamic Republic of Iran, including interference with navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.
- Emphasized the importance of maritime security, energy supply chains, and environmental protection.
- Condemned attacks and threats by Iran against Gulf region territories and vessels, demanding immediate cessation of such actions.
- Called for respect of navigational rights and freedoms under international law.
- Requested a coordinated international approach to maritime security.

#### Protection, Safety, and Welfare of Seafarers

- Urged an immediate halt to attacks on ships affecting civilian seafarers.
- Highlighted the importance of ensuring seafarers' safety, welfare, and access to essential supplies.
- Encouraged crew change operations and communication with families.
- Called for measures to address risks such as fatigue, navigation challenges, and GPS disruptions.

#### Actions for IMO Organs and Secretariat

- Urged IMO Committees to support affected seafarers and vessels and report back to the Council.
- Requested the Secretariat to keep Member States informed about the situation.
- Directed the Chair and Secretary-General to monitor the situation and communicate decisions to Member States and the public.

#### Further Decisions

1. Safe Maritime Corridor: Encouraged the establishment of a provisional framework for the safe evacuation of stranded merchant ships in high-risk areas, focusing on protecting seafarers and ensuring safe navigation. The Secretary-General was tasked with initiating this framework and reporting progress to the Council.

The entire C/ES 36 session can be viewed through the International Maritime Organization YouTube channel, in all 6 official languages of the IMO - [IMO HQ - YouTube](#)

<b>Follow Up Action Items</b>	<b>Owner</b>
N/A	