

The International Maritime Organization has selected “Empowering Women in the Maritime Community” as the World Maritime Day theme for 2019, and it serves to bring gender equality to the forefront of all discussions within the maritime sector. The discussions that we are having over the course of this workshop are no different.

The effects of climate change are being felt all over the globe as many of our speakers highlighted yesterday and the reduction of Greenhouse gas emissions is an imperative for all sectors, including maritime. If we are to mitigate the effects of climate change, then we must look at putting measures in place to protect the most vulnerable among us, which consists of women and girls. UN women states that they “bear the brunt of environmental, economic and social shocks.....are the last to eat or be rescued; face greater health and safety risks as water and sanitation systems become compromised and take on increased domestic and care work as resources dwindle.”

Women through their experience in a variety of roles, offer valuable insights and solutions into better managing the climate and its risks. Yet, their contribution is often overlooked in humanitarian and climate action and their practical needs forgotten. This is due to the fact, that while great strides have been made over the past several generations, there is still a distinct lack of women in certain sectors and in decision making positions. According to the UNCTAD Review of Maritime Transport (2017), The maritime sector is no exception to this rule, with women representing 1% of seafarers, and their presence in global onshore maritime employment strongly depends on the level of hierarchy. It also states that

“The share is largest in administrative positions (74 per cent of the provided data) and balanced in junior positions (55 per cent). The share decreases with regard to senior positions: Women occupy 37 per cent of professional-level positions and 17 per cent of manager-level positions. At the director level, 12 per cent of positions are filled by women, compared with 9 per cent at the executive level. Women were most likely to be found in corporate support roles such as in human resources and finance.). A similar trend can be seen in national shipowner associations. For example, the International Chamber of Shipping found that only 6 per cent of national board members were women, 30 per cent at director or policymaking level and 86 per cent at support level (Orsel and Vaughan, 2015).

Combined with other factors, the lack of women in senior positions translates into a gender pay gap. While no global data are available, in the United Kingdom, there is a national average gender pay gap of 19 per cent. In comparison, the difference between the mean hourly rate of men and women employees in the maritime sector is significantly higher and translates to 39 percent.

With looking at even these few statistics, it is evident, that women are more vulnerable, economically and socially and lack a substantial voice in the sector, due to a minimal presence in policy and decision-making roles. Other factors include barriers to entry level technical positions within the sector. Therefore, in order to effectively address climate action, on a global, regional and local scale, the gender agenda has to be included in policy making, in the development of legislation and in the implementation of action plans.

Regional bodies involved in climate action, such as the MTCC Caribbean and those involved in promoting gender equality in the maritime sector, such as the Women in Maritime Association Caribbean (WiMAC) are ideally placed to advocate for the inclusion of such gender considerations at the regional and national scales and they have done so over the last year. They were both present at the Senior Maritime Administrators meeting in Montego Bay Jamaica earlier this year. The workshop adopted the Jamaica SMA Resolution 201 and

developed a prioritized list of technical assistance needs in support of maritime safety and

marine environment protection activities for the Caribbean. The purpose of this information document being to bring this Resolution to the attention of the Technical Cooperation Committee during its discussions on the Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP) for 2020-2021 as well as on the financing of the Programme. In the resolution The Senior Maritime Administrators of Caribbean States present, committed themselves to make effective use of technical assistance and to utilize expertise, centres of excellence and institutions from within the Caribbean region to further advance technical cooperation for the development of maritime safety, security and the protection of the marine environment and invited Caribbean states to:

.10 support the establishment of the voluntary multi-donor trust fund for the reduction of GHG emissions from ships at MEPC 74;

.15 agree to include data on the status of women in the maritime sector in their reporting;

among others. They are also able to ensure that capable and qualified women are supported to enter managerial, director and executive level positions and that there is equality in representation in their structures. One excellent example is that of the MTCC Caribbean whose director is Mrs. Vivian Rambarath-Parasram and which is 37.5% female in its team composition and which has been lauded as the most successful MTCC's during this workshop thus far.

At the High Level Symposium on International Maritime Development in the Caribbean Region, also held in Montego Bay, Jamaica the Ministers responsible for maritime transport and other participants such as WiMAC and MTCC Caribbean recognised the

- need to strengthen national maritime administrations, develop and update the national maritime legislation, build capacity at a regional level through partnerships and to contribute to the achievements of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and the continued development of the Caribbean Sea;
- vulnerability of the Caribbean region to climate change, and recognizing the need of the region to implement modern maritime legislation to facilitate opportunities within the blue economy for sustainable development and the importance of ensuring women's full participation in the maritime sector and the work of the IMO-sponsored Women in Maritime Association Caribbean (WiMAC) to integrate gender equality and rights for the further growth and progress of the regional maritime and allied industries.

They therefore committed to enhancing the enabling environment for Non-party stakeholders to participate in maritime climate action and including maritime transport into National climate change policies and more specifically the Nationally Determined Contributions. They also agreed to promote gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive programming in ports, maritime administrations, maritime training institutes, and all other places of employment of women in the sea-going and shore-based sectors of Caribbean States, Dependent and Overseas Territories, and in this regard also support the activities of WiMAC in achieving these aims.

WiMAC, as the primary driver for gender mainstreaming in the maritime sector within the Caribbean, acknowledged in its 2nd Regional conference held in Belize in 2018, its unique position to “build understanding and advocacy for the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda consistent with the Association’s strategic focus, in particular in relation to SDG 5 "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls", SDG 14 "Life below water – Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development", as well as SDG 4 on Inclusive and quality education and lifelong learning, and SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth, which promotes inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment, and decent work” It also noted that there is a need “for continued and concerted action for evidence-based, competitive strategies to propel the regional maritime sector including through an enhanced maritime enabling environment, greater contribution of the maritime sector to economic and sustainable development in the region, the development of quality Caribbean human capital for the sector, the mainstreaming of women in the sector, and their equal participation in decent work and economic activity”.

They therefore resolved to

1. Enhance evidence-based decision-making, advocacy, knowledge management and gender mainstreaming in the sector, through strategic partnerships
2. Advocate for the ratification, implementation and enforcement of all relevant IMO Conventions especially those related to the IMO Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS), and relevant ILO Instruments, in particular those related to equal pay, occupational health and working conditions, and women's rights\
3. Explore a role for WiMAC in marine environmental protection and climate action initiatives, bearing in mind the offer of collaboration with industry partners for the establishment of a Caribbean Environment Protection Association (CARIBMEPA)
4. 4. Strengthen strategic partnerships with institutional and individual partners, including male allies, to enhance mutual understanding and value for the work of WiMAC and
5. Advocate for the integration of the issues of women in the maritime sector in national gender policies

WiMAC is also open to collaborating with the MTCC Caribbean for the inclusion of gender equality considerations and actions in regional climate action initiatives.

These commitments made at the Ministerial, Maritime Administration and regional association levels indicate multiple positive steps in the direction of attaining funding for further climate action initiatives, including the maritime sector in climate action policies and plans and for obtaining the data required to inform decision making, include women in decision making and promote gender mainstreaming in the maritime sector and climate action initiatives with the Caribbean Maritime sector.

What is now needed is urgent action and genuine inclusion of women in not only the gender policies of our Caribbean states, but also in maritime and climate action policies, coupled with strong partnerships to allow effective implementation of robust and inclusive action plans which also meet and support our international obligations.

As my colleagues have stated over the course of our proceedings thus far, the time for action is now!