



Observations on the 2006 ILO Maritime Labour Convention as a System of Protection

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Abstract

The 2006 ILO Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) is considered as the 4th pillar of the global maritime regulatory system, complementing the IMO-supervised regimes established under the SOLAS, MARPOL and the STCW95 Conventions. MLC standards are envisioned to be enforced universally on all ships, a prospect boosted by the unanimous adoption of this treaty by ILO members.

The MLC, as a consolidation of existing ILO maritime labour conventions, achieves another feat that makes it an extraordinary achievement in global maritime regulation: it brings the ILO system of protection “closer to the seafarer”.

The paper examines the ways in which the MLC indeed brings the system of international labour protection closer to the seafarer himself. It will compare and contrast the new dispensation with the old one, which was, and still is, principally built on the system of protection built around ILO Convention 147. The critical role of Port State Control in both dispensations will be examined. Focus will also be given to the position of port-based seafarers' welfare organizations.

The paper concludes with an identification of the practical challenges for stakeholders - at global, regional, national, and local scales - towards the realization of a “culture of compliance” underpinning the MLC.