

**Consultation Meeting on Improved Security
of Seafarers' Identification**Geneva
9-10 May 2002

Report

The Consultation Meeting on Improved Security of Seafarers' Identification met in Geneva from 9 to 10 May 2002. It elected its Officers as follows:

Chairperson: Mr. Georg T. Smefjell (Government, Norway)

Vice-Chairpersons and spokespersons: Mr. Joe Cox (Shipowners, United States)
Mr. Brian Orrell (Seafarers, United Kingdom)
Captain Douglas Bell (Government, Bahamas)

A list of participants is to be found in Appendix 1.

Opening remarks were made by Mrs. Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry, Secretary-General of the Meeting. She recalled that the decision to hold this Consultation Meeting on Improved Security of Seafarers' Identification was taken by the Governing Body at its March 2002 session, following discussions at the Intersessional Working Group of the Maritime Safety Committee of the IMO (ISWG) and an exchange of letters between the Secretary-General of the IMO and the Director-General of the ILO. She noted that all of those present at the Meeting were aware of the terrible circumstances requiring the urgent re-examination by the United Nations and its specialized agencies of all security-related questions, one of which concerned the facilities that receiving States granted to seafarers and the appropriate forms of documentation so that these facilities remained compatible with national security requirements. Ms. Doumbia-Henry also pointed out that there was a need to reach a balance between facilitating trade and ensuring security, so that the economic and social foundations of our individual and collective well-being were not irreparably undermined. She then introduced the briefing paper prepared for the Meeting by the Office.¹

The Government expert of the United States presented his country's position on the issue contained in a paper (Appendix 2) which had been submitted to the IMO for consideration.² He pointed out that the United States desired a satisfactory outcome at the ILO and that the submission to the IMO should not be regarded as a desire on the part of the United States for the issue to be addressed outside of the ILO. He explained the meaning of some of the terms used in this paper, namely "positive and verifiable

¹ ILO: Briefing paper, Consultation Meeting on Improved Security of Seafarers' Identification, Geneva, 9-10 May 2002 (doc. CMISSI/2002/BR).

² IMO: Prevention and Suppression of Acts of Terrorism against Shipping, Maritime Safety Committee, 75th Session, London, 2002.

identification” and “biometric template”. “Positive” meant that the document holder was the person to whom it was issued. “Verifiable” implied that the authenticity of the document could be verified to a source. A “biometric template” was the digital representation of a biometric record such as a fingerprint or a photograph that could not be reverse-engineered back to the initial biometric representation record.

The Government experts expressed various opinions on the issues under discussion. In general they agreed that the document should: be issued by the seafarers’ country of nationality (subject to addressing concerns about refugees); be forgery- and tamper-proof; and only be used for identification and for facilitating the movement of seafarers for shore leave, transfer to and from ships, and for welfare purposes. Some Government experts suggested that a port stamp on the document might prove useful in case of abandonment. In addition, many experts indicated that the document should not cover health qualifications and education.

A number of Government experts suggested that the document should not be a substitute for a passport document, but that it should be used without the need for a visa. However, one country noted that it should be independent from any other form of identification. Regarding visas, one expert pointed out that it would be good for the Government experts to ask their immigration departments what they would require to allow the identity document to permit entry without requiring a visa.

Some Government experts raised the case of the Schengen agreement and noted that the impact of such regional agreements should be taken into account. Some experts noted that the document should improve on the current identification documents and seamen’s books. Others stressed that the adoption of new provisions relating to seafarers’ identification should not be at the cost of a dilution of the aims of ILO Convention No. 108. One expert was concerned that the new Convention should clearly differentiate between seafarers who worked on ocean-going vessels and those who worked within territorial waters of the State.

There was an initial exchange of views among the Government experts as to the format and contents of the new proposed document. It was hinted that a baseline of information in a machine-readable document was necessary, but the document itself could be an electronic card or a visually readable document. The document, they noted, should not be tied to a particular technology so as to permit changes in the system.

The Government experts also indicated the need to consider national regulations on privacy rights. Some experts had expressed reservations regarding biometric templates, in particular regarding compatibility with their national legislation. However, others considered that the use of some biometrics was acceptable. The experts made clear that there was a need for understanding and trust, and in particular there was a need to understand other States’ systems to promote confidence. Many experts noted the requirement for some sort of oversight system. Regarding oversight, some experts suggested that practices like the IMO White List, the ICAO audit system, or other current methods should be considered. In addition, one expert said that there should be an information exchange system parallel to a monitoring system, and that the exchange of information for verification should be done on a timely basis.

Although the Government experts did not think that they should bear the cost of the new identity documents, they noted that the matter should be decided upon between the social partners. Some experts likened the costs of the seafarers’ identity card with the cost of a passport. One expert pointed out that as a passport must be paid for, an identity document should also be paid for. It was recognized that the cost of collection fees might be more than the expected income.

The full position of the Shipowners' group was submitted in a written submission (see Appendix 3).

The Shipowners supported the development of a new instrument updating the provisions of Convention No. 108 which would address concerns about maritime security, by providing positive and verifiable identification of seafarers, whilst facilitating the movement of international trade.

However, the Shipowners emphasized that it was important not to lose sight of the principal purpose of seafarers' identity documents as embodied in Article 6 of Convention No. 108. This concerned the provision of a means by which seafarers could avoid the need to apply for visas when entering the territory of a member State, whether for the purpose of temporary shore leave or when passing in transit in order to join a ship or to be repatriated. In the interests of international commerce, and the welfare of seafarers – who often spent long periods of time confined on board ships at sea – the Shipowners believed it would be important to ensure that the new instrument retained this important principle and continued to acknowledge the special nature of seafarers' employment.

The Shipowners stated that in the absence of any required identity document, member States should still have discretion to permit entry to seafarers on the basis of passports alone. They also stressed that any new instrument should clearly state that the absence of a seafarer's identity document should not be grounds for port State control detention.

The Shipowners also presented at length the various points contained in their submission, which responded in detail to the specific questions raised by the Office briefing paper.³

The Seafarers experts presented their views in a statement submitted by their spokesperson (Appendix 4) and in a group response to the questions contained in the Office briefing paper (Appendix 5). Concerning the advantages of an international seafarers' identity document, the Seafarers experts noted that they thought it would be useful to have an internationally standardized national identity card for seafarers issued by national authorities, rather than an internationally issued one. They said that it would be an advantage if this card acted as a global visa for seafarers and facilitated their travel and shore leave, their passing in transit in order to join a ship, or in being repatriated. They also suggested that it should apply to the port area and that their movements should not be unduly constrained. They added that with the document, a visa should only be required under exceptional circumstances. In addition, they reported that this card should not be used for training/certification, medical or other purposes. They stressed that the cost of these documents should not be borne by the seafarer.

When discussing the information that should be contained in the document, the Seafarers experts emphasized that this should be the same information as that stipulated in Convention No. 108. This information provided for: the seafarer's full name; date and place of birth; nationality; physical characteristics; photograph; signature or, if unable to sign, a thumbprint. The Seafarers experts noted their high level of concern regarding data protection, rights to privacy and human rights, and insisted that they must be safeguarded. They urged that the document should be a machine-readable paper document and they strongly opposed any form of hidden information in the form of magnetic strips or microchips. They were very concerned about the possible inclusion of biometric data, but needed further explanation as to what was being discussed. Furthermore, the Seafarers

³ op. cit.

experts urged that consideration should be given to forms of security such as lamination, colour design, and ultraviolet marks, amongst others.

Regarding verification, the Seafarers experts expressed the view that there should be a national database for checking individual documents and possibly a procedure via the Internet. It was essential that data protection, human rights and the right to privacy were built into such databases and should also be supplemented by a national contact person for verification purposes. They also agreed that details of fraudulent documents could be published. They said that the country of nationality should designate a national focal point which would permit port States or States of transit to rapidly secure additional information by way of verification of documents issued. They reported that they would agree to the establishment of a “White List” equivalent to the system of the IMO STCW, and the auditing systems built into the revised Convention. They could also agree to the ILO setting up an oversight system comparable to the ICAO system, in addition to the regular supervisory mechanisms of the ILO.

The representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in a statement, noted that for refugees, the identification document should contain what was foreseen in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, and should mention the status of the refugee. She also drew attention to the status of asylum seekers and stateless persons and expressed the opinion that the State which was granting shelter should be the country issuing the identity card and noted as the seafarer’s country. The UNHCR representative further pointed out that the 1951 Convention had contained a provision concerning refugee seamen (Article 11) and that this had been introduced at the suggestion of the ILO.

Although not binding, some conclusions could be drawn from the Meeting. The Government, Shipowners and Seafarers experts agreed to the concept of improved seafarers’ identification that would permit the seafarers’ professional movement and meet security needs. They also agreed that there could be a machine-readable internationally standardized national identity document issued by the seafarers’ country of nationality that would provide for the seafarer special immigration status. Furthermore, there was consensus for some sort of oversight by the ILO – however, they were open to the form it should take. From the discussions, there was also a mutual concern for ensuring data protection, human rights and the right to privacy. Although these were some of the common themes addressed, there was still a need for further dialogue and an analysis of the Office questionnaire that would be sent to member States in the near future.

Appendix 1

This appendix will be distributed at a later date.

Appendix 2

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION



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MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE
75th session
Agenda item 17

MSC 75/17/34
12 April 2002
Original: ENGLISH

PREVENTION AND SUPPRESSION OF ACTS OF TERRORISM AGAINST SHIPPING

Seafarer identification

Submitted by the United States

SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	This document provides the United States proposal for seafarer identification to improve maritime security
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 6
<i>Related documents:</i>	MSC 75/17/1

Introduction

1 The intersessional meeting of the MSC Working Group on Maritime Security (ISWG), which met from 11-15 February 2002, considered a comprehensive set of proposals to improve maritime security submitted by the United States. One of these proposals was to include in SOLAS a requirement for seafarer identification verification.

2 The ISWG agreed that there was a need for an updated seafarer identification document, and that action would be sought through the revision of the International Labor Organization Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (ILO), 1958 (No.108). Based on this agreement, the ISWG requested the Secretary General to write to the Director-General of the ILO requesting early action on this matter (Plan A). However, the ISWG agreed that it should have a Plan B which would incorporate text for Seafarer Identification Documents into Chapter XI of SOLAS, in case Plan A failed.

3 The United States understands that the ILO Governing Body at its meeting in March agreed to take on the important issue on an expedited basis. The U.S. reaffirms its desire to see tighter regulations and requirements for seafarers identity document, as an important part of the overall improvement in maritime security practices. The U.S. believes that the seafarer identity document requirements must accomplish the following goals:

- .1 Positive and Verifiable identification – “Positive” means the document holder is the person whom the document was issued to. “Verifiable” means the validation of the authenticity of the document by a source.
- .2 Uniformity – The development of a universal standard to ensure consistent application.
- .3 Acceptability – The development of a standard that is convenient, user-friendly, cost effective and does not impair commerce.
- .4 Reliability – The development of a standard that works consistently in a practical environment.

For reasons of economy, this document is printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly asked to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

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- .5 Security – The development of a standard that ensures that the system is resistant to compromise.
 - .6 Interoperability – The development of a standard that allows for the exchange of information among Member States to allow for verification and validation.

4 Furthermore, the United States believes that to accomplish the goals outlined in paragraph 3, the seafarers identity document must have the following elements contained in the document or in the system supporting the document:

- .1 digital photograph;
- .2 holder's signature;
- .3 issuing authority;
- .4 proof of nationality;
- .5 positive identification of the mariner's qualifications;
- .6 permission to enter other countries; and
- .7 biometric templates.

5 In addition, the United States also believes the seafarer's identification system must have the capability to gather and exchange information among Member States to assure entry and exit of seafarers is only allowed to those with valid and properly issued documents. In order to facilitate rapid verification of seafarers and their documents on a 24-hour basis, the system must be capable of immediate data access. This data would only contain a limited number of elements in consideration of privacy and system performance issues. It is suggested that the biometric template, developed under the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), could be used in conjunction with elements such as a reference number, seafarer name, card number, and issuing authority. The system should also have the ability to search on this data and prevent duplicate claimed credential information, provide the ability to screen data to identify threats and flag these entries as well as enable off-line card verification.

Actions requested of the Committee

6 The Committee is invited to consider these proposals when considering seafarer identification.

Appendix 3

Consultation Meeting on Improved Security of Seafarers' Identification International Labour Office (Geneva, 6-8 May 2002)

Submission by the International Shipping Federation (ISF)

ISF acknowledges the possibility that a ship could present a terrorist threat, and can therefore support the concept of developing a new ILO instrument, to update the provisions of the existing Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention, 1958 (No. 108), thereby both addressing current concerns about maritime security, and facilitating the movement of legitimate international trade.

However, it is important not to lose sight of the principal purpose of seafarers' identity documents as embodied in Article 6 of Convention No. 108. This concerns the provision of a means by which seafarers can avoid the need to apply for visas when entering the territory of a member State, whether for the purpose of temporary shore leave or when passing in transit in order to join a ship or to be repatriated. In the interests of international commerce, and the welfare of seafarers, who often spend long periods of time confined on board ships at sea, it will be important to ensure that any new instrument retains this important principle and continues to acknowledge the special nature of seafarers' employment.

To achieve the purpose of the exercise, it will also be important for member States to acknowledge that any new instrument seeking to address the issue of identity documents in the context of maritime security will be unlikely to achieve its objective unless it is ratified by all of the major maritime nations, including those that have not ratified the current Convention No. 108.

Seafarers are employed from virtually every country in the world. In principle, ISF agrees that it would be desirable if every seafarer trading internationally were to hold an identity document complying with an agreed international format. However, it has to be recognized that some countries may elect not to become parties to any new instrument. In the absence of the required document, member States should still have discretion to permit entry on the basis of passports alone. Moreover, any new instrument should clearly state that the absence of a seafarers' identity document should not be grounds for port State control detention.

In order to facilitate discussion, ISF also wishes to comment on the questions raised under paragraph 13 of the briefing paper prepared by the ILO.

(a) *What are the advantages of an international seafarers' identity document?*

Passports or national identity documents do not always state the profession of the holder. An obvious advantage of a seafarers' identity document is that it provides proof that the holder is a seafarer.

As stated above, the major current advantage of holding a seafarers' identity document (at least with regard to those member States that follow the principle embodied in Article 6 of Convention No. 108) is that it removes the need for seafarers to apply for visas for the purpose of shore leave or transit to and from their ships.

The majority of ships follow an irregular trading pattern, and ports of call during a seafarer's tour of duty are often unknown when he or she joins a ship. Seafarers may visit a large number of countries, and it is often impractical to obtain visas in advance.

Seafarers' identity documents can also offer seafarers additional advantages with regard to helpful treatment at embassies and consulates, airports, customs and port authorities, as well as access to health care in foreign countries and access to seafarers' welfare services.

At present, however, the exact format of seafarers' identity documents is determined by the competent authorities in member States. An international document, which followed a uniform format regardless of the country of issue, would clearly assist recognition and acceptance of seafarers' identity documents by the relevant authorities around the world. It would also be of benefit to employers who commonly employ seafarers of many different nationalities.

(b) *What purposes would an international seafarers' identity document serve? Should the identity document be used for training/certification, medical or other purposes?*

If a new ILO instrument is developed, it would presumably have two main purposes:

- to identify the holder as a legitimate seafarer who should be exempt from normal visa requirements because of the nature of his or her employment; and
- to identify holders for security purposes, given that seafarers clearly need to have access to what may be regarded as security-sensitive areas such as ports and terminals.

It might be possible to use such documents to contain information concerning seafarers' qualifications and medical fitness, which are currently contained in certificates issued in accordance with the IMO STCW Convention and the ILO Convention No. 73, especially if any document were developed in a machine-readable format. However, ISF believes that this should only be an optional possibility in any new instrument. A large number of different national agencies might be involved, and the inclusion of such information on a mandatory basis could delay the introduction of identity documents that address immediate concerns about security and proof of identity. Moreover, information concerning qualifications may frequently need to be updated.

In the longer term, however, provided it were technologically and administratively feasible, there might be advantages in combining all the various information which seafarers are required to carry into a single document. It is therefore suggested that the technical specifications of any standardized machine-readable document that might be developed, and of the equipment used for checking it, should be such that additional information such as qualifications could be included if so desired by member States.

(c) *What information should be included in the identity document?*

With reference to the proposals that have been made by the United States to the 75th session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee, ISF could support the inclusion of the following information, provided that it is technologically and administratively feasible and acceptable to other member States:

- digital photograph;
- holders' signature;
- issuing authority; and
- statement of nationality.

With regard to the proposal to include positive identification of seafarers' qualifications, for the reasons stated above, this should only be an optional requirement. It should also be borne in mind that under the IMO STCW Convention administrations are not currently required to issue certificates of competence to non-watchkeeping ratings or personnel such as hotel and catering staff on passenger ships, and they are not required to maintain records of the qualifications held by such personnel.

With regard to the proposal that data concerning "permission to enter other countries" should be included, ISF would be grateful for clarification of what this would involve. However, if it

simply involves confirmation that the seafarer is permitted to visit foreign nations and is entitled to leave his or her home country, this could be supported.

In principle, ISF has no objection to the inclusion of biometric templates that may assist the positive verification of the holder's identity. However, it will be important to take account of any concerns that member States may have with regard to human rights, data protection laws and difficulties concerning practical implementation. This is of particular concern to shipping companies that could be penalized in the event that the inclusion of particular biometric data made it impossible for certain member States to ratify any new instrument.

**(d) *What information should be mandatory?
What information should be optional?***

As stated above, the inclusion of information concerning seafarers' qualifications and medical certificates should be optional.

(e) *In what circumstances should it be possible for a visa to be required in addition to an identity document meeting the abovementioned criteria, as a condition for entry for a purpose mentioned in point (b) above?*

In principle, for the reasons outlined above, if a new instrument is adopted and seafarers hold documents meeting internationally agreed criteria, a visa should not be required for the purposes currently mentioned in Article 6 of Convention No. 108. This principle should be clearly stated in any new instrument.

However, in the event that the issue of visas to seafarers is insisted on, the new ILO instrument should clearly determine the manner in which this should be done by any member State that has ratified the instrument.

It is suggested that upon presentation of (or transmission of data contained on) a seafarers' identity document, any such visas must be issued immediately, either on or shortly before arrival.

One possibility is that a visa, i.e. permission to enter a member State, is issued electronically and recorded on the identity document itself. Alternatively, it might be produced electronically using data contained on the identity document. Crew list visas, whereby permission to enter a member State is granted to an entire ship's crew following transmission of a single document to the immigration authorities, is also a possibility.

However, it is important that the issue of such visas should not involve any financial cost to the seafarer or the shipping company. In view of the basic principle that seafarers should not normally be required to be issued with visas, and the vital role that shipping plays in world trade, any compromise of this principle should be for security reasons only and should not be permitted to be used as a revenue-making opportunity.

(f) *Should the issuing authority be an international authority or a national authority?*

ISF believes that the issuing authority must be the relevant national authority in the seafarer's country of residence, which will normally be the same as the country that issues the seafarer's passport (often this will be different from the flag State of the ship on which the seafarer is serving).

The national authorities in the labour supply country will clearly be in the best position to establish and verify the holder's identity and nationality, whether through passport and national identity document records, social security and medical records, electoral roles or registrations of births. Moreover, the authorities concerned should already have procedures in place for doing this. Given that a number of different agencies might be involved, the competent authority in the labour supply state will be in the best position to coordinate this process.

Apart from the financial and political implications, ISF can foresee formidable administrative problems in the event that an intergovernmental agency had responsibility for issuing identity

documents since it would be dependent on national authorities to verify the identity documents in excess of a million seafarers. However, it would be advantageous if the documents follow a standard international format agreed by a body such as the ILO. The ILO could also have a useful role in helping to ensure that member States issue identity documents in accordance with criteria and procedures agreed internationally.

(g) What types of positive and verifiable information should be included in the document?

See our comments under question (c).

(h) What format should the identity document take? Regardless of the issuing authority, should the format meet international standards? If so which?

ISF is open-minded as to the exact format that the documents should take. Much will clearly depend on the technological solutions available. But it will be important to ensure that it will be relatively easy for member States to implement the requirements, both with regard to the production of identity documents and installation of the equipment needed to read and verify the information contained on them. Proper account must also be taken of issues such as durability.

As already stated, it will be desirable if all identity documents conform to an internationally agreed standard which should be referred to in the new ILO instrument, though perhaps developed separately. Apart from addressing security concerns, it must be possible to read the information contained on the documents at ports and airports around the world.

At the time of preparing this paper, ISF has insufficient information to comment on existing international standards for identity documents such as those developed (or under development) by bodies such as ISO and ICAO. However, since one of the purposes of seafarers' identity documents is to facilitate easy movement through airports, it would seem logical to consider any standards developed by ICAO for identifying airline staff.

(i) What monitoring mechanism should be introduced to ensure the credibility of the system?

If any new instrument is to succeed in addressing concerns about security, some form of external evaluation of the procedures established by member States to issue identity documents, would seem to be necessary.

Such a monitoring system, whether coordinated by the ILO or otherwise, would necessitate the involvement of experts in data security and immigration procedures, and might have to overcome sensitivities amongst member States with regard to issues of national sovereignty.

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ISF hopes that the above comments are helpful, and looks forward to participating in the Consultation Meeting.

Appendix 4

Intervention by the spokesperson of the Seafarers' group, Mr. Brian Orrell

1. On the question of whether the document should be a passport we have noted the information provided by the Office in respect of the General Survey of Convention No. 108 which states clearly that the seafarers' identity document is not a passport. We share that view.

We wish the identity document to be a global visa for the purposes of joining and leaving ship and especially for shore leave and welfare needs.

2. Any costs arising from the provision of the identity documents should not be borne by the seafarer. The identity document is not a personal travel document or the national seafarer book referred to in Article 4(a) of the Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers Convention, 1996 (No. 179).

The seafarers emphasized that another reason for ensuring the nationality authority issues of the document is that it would remove the ability of some flag States charging seafarers for such documents.

For there to be confidence in the system it will need to be specified that only one seafarer identity document is required to be carried and this be the one issued by the country of nationality.

3. We believe we should follow some of the positives experiences of the STCW. We need to ensure its verifiability, therefore we recommend having due regard to data protection, rights to privacy and human rights, and that the database should be based in the country of nationality and not be transferable. However, individual verifications should be permitted as well as there being a listing of any fraudulently issued documents.

In addition the country of nationality should designate a national focal point which would allow port States or states of transit to rapidly secure additional information by way of verification of documents issued.

We would agree to the establishment of a "White List" equivalent to the system of the IMO STCW, and the auditing systems built into the revised STCW.

Further, we could agree to the ILO being able to set up an oversight system comparable to the ICAO system.

4. The Seafarers believe that only the information required in the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention, 1958 (No. 108), is necessary within the document.

Concerns are held on the availability of high technology in some countries, and the resources available to use it in some countries where the technology is available.

As said earlier we believe that only information for positive verifiable identification should be used.

The Office should investigate, as part of its questionnaire, the issue of availability and feasibility of digital photography and fingerprinting, etc.

5. The Seafarers agree that the format of the identity document should be internationally formatted and believe that it should take the form of a machine-readable paper document, with no data contained in chips or magnetic strips. We agree that consideration should be given to forms of security such as lamination, colour design, ultraviolet marks, etc., and the use of this could be investigated through the questionnaire.

Appendix 5

Seafarers' group response to the points for discussion raised in the Office briefing paper

- (a) What are the advantages of an international seafarers' identity document? (As opposed to a national identity card or passport, in particular.)

None. We see advantages in an internationally standardized national identity card for seafarers which act generally as a global visa for seafarers and facilitating their travel and shore leave and passing in transit in order to join a ship in transit or being repatriated.

- (b) What purpose(s) would an international seafarers' identity document serve? (At present, Convention No. 108 recognizes: shore leave; joining/transferring to another ship; transit to join a ship in another country; transit for repatriation.) Should the identity document be used for training/certification, medical or other purposes?

None. No.

- (c) What information should be included in the identity document?

As stipulated in the ILO's Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention, 1958 (No. 108). The questionnaire the Office will issue should determine the technological resources available in member States. We remain open to consider biometric questions as we will have a presentation from the United States on what it means but we have grave concerns

- (d) What information should be mandatory? What information should be optional?

As stipulated in the ILO's Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention, 1958 (No. 108). None.

National database for checking individual documents available through the Internet without breaking national data protection and the right to privacy laws which take into account applicable human rights provisions, supplemented by a national contact person, etc., and the publication of fraudulent document details, etc.

- (e) In what circumstances (if any) should it be possible for a visa to be required, in addition to an identity document meeting the abovementioned criteria, as a condition for entry for a purpose mentioned under point (b) above?

Only in exceptional circumstances.

- (f) Should the issuing authority be an international authority or a national authority? What would be the advantages/disadvantages of either option?

National. There are no advantages to an international authority. National systems are generally in place already but confidence needs to be built on the latter and they need standardizing.

Await UNHCR presentation regarding stateless persons.

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- (g) What type of positive, verifiable identification should be included in the document? (For guidance, Convention No. 108 at present provides for: full name; date and place of birth; nationality; physical characteristics; photograph; signature or, if unable to sign, thumbprint.)

As per Convention No.108. Suffice to prove that the person is who they say they are.

Prepared to keep an open mind pending results of survey to reveal resources at the disposal of governments from the major labour-supplying and less developed countries.

- (h) What format should the identity document take (e.g., machine-readable paper document, "smart card", etc.)? Irrespective of the issuing authority, should the format meet international standards? If so, which?

Machine-readable paper document with no hidden information (i.e. bar codes and magnetic strips) issued by the country of nationality or in exceptional cases the state of residence and nationally issued.

- (i) What monitoring mechanism should be introduced to ensure the credibility of the system?

Keeping mind the regular ILO supervisory mechanisms, we should study the following examples of different approaches adopted by other UN specialized agencies:

- STCW type White List;
- STCW type audits;
- ICAO type audits.

Would be interested in receiving information as to what the ICAO identity document standards were.