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Circular Letter No.4255/Add.3
14 December 2021

To: All IMO Members
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status

Subject: **Communication from the Kingdom of Belgium**

The Government of the Kingdom of Belgium has sent the attached communication, dated 7 December 2021, with the request that it be circulated by the Organization.



International Maritime Organisation
Attn. His Excellency Mr Kitack Lim, Secretary-General
Albert Embankment, 4
SE1 7SR London
United Kingdom

Contact person	Number of contact	Date
Gentiana Bilali seafarers@mobiliteit.fgov.be	+32 32 29 00 60	07/12/2021

Subject: Belgium's booster vaccination campaign for all seafarers

Dear Secretary-General,

I am honoured to announce the recently launched initiative by our government.

Following the successful COVID-19 vaccination campaign of Belgian seafarers of June 2nd, 2021, and the second campaign of vaccinating foreign seafarers of July 26th, 2021, Belgium is determined to continue its efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

So far, first indications show that the Belgian vaccination campaign has succeeded in reaching almost half of the ships calling in Belgium and in vaccinating a total of 10,000 Belgian and foreign seafarers.

As a further follow-up action and taking into account recent developments and research on the pandemic, the Vaccination Task Force has agreed to launch a booster vaccination campaign for both Belgian and foreign seafarers arriving in a Belgian port beginning on December 6th, 2021, at the request of our Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the North Sea, the Royal Belgian Shipowners' Association and the Directorate General Shipping. Belgian seafarers will be vaccinated in recognised medical centres in Antwerp and Zeebrugge. Foreign seafarers will continue to get vaccinated by roving teams who will board seagoing vessels in Belgian ports, which was a groundbreaking concept when it was first implemented in Belgium on July 26th, 2021.

Belgium continues thus to consider seafarers as key workers and take effective actions in order to implement this engagement: administrative facilitation for travelling seafarers is in place to avoid hindering their movements, seafarers are provided with immediate access to medical care and as detailed here above, we prioritise vaccination of all seafarers in our national COVID-19 vaccination programme.



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It would be greatly appreciated if this information is communicated by Circular Letter to all Member States and any interested parties.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Claeysens
Director-General.