

## **Agreed Minutes**

In accordance with the Agreement on Maritime Transport between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, signed on March 15, 2007, maritime officials from both countries held their first consultative meeting in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam on July 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Maritime Administrator Sean T. Connaughton headed the U.S. delegation and Mr. Vuong Dinh Lam, Chairman of the Viet Nam Maritime Administration, headed the delegation of Vietnam. The list of delegates is attached.

The discussion proceeded in a highly positive and productive atmosphere. The delegations exchanged views on significant policy issues of mutual concern and identified matters for further cooperation.

Both sides agreed on the critical role that shipping plays in international trade and economic growth. They reviewed organizational and policy approaches to optimize the efficient movement of freight through sea ports and transportation networks that connect inland points. After considering the government roles in port planning in the United States and Vietnam, both delegations saw parallel challenges in financing infrastructure development in partnership with private sector companies.

The consultative meeting also underscored the importance of training qualified seafarers. Continuing growth in world trade is creating a critical shortage of skilled mariners. The delegations compared educational systems for seagoing personnel and the different relations between public educational institutions and the shipping industry. After hearing concerns from the Vietnam delegation about difficulties created by the short term validity of U.S. visas for seafarers calling on U.S. ports, both delegations agreed to bring the matter to the attention of their respective foreign ministries. The delegations will recommend extending the validity of U.S. and Vietnamese visas for crewmembers on a reciprocal basis.

The consultative meeting also provided representatives from U.S. and Vietnamese shipowners and port operators an opportunity to present their perspectives.

Under Article 10 of the Agreement, both countries committed to cooperate in promoting maritime commerce and education. In this connection, the delegations reviewed earlier cooperative activities in port development, maritime security and logistics. The delegations identified areas for future cooperation, including vessel tracking through the on-board Automated Identification System (AIS); assistance on multimodal and logistics planning; exchange of experience, seafarers, teaching staff and providing training material for port and vessel security personnel.

In addition, the delegations considered common challenges in environmental protection, maritime safety, economic development and technology standards where they can work together in different international organizations such as the International Maritime Organization and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

The United States and Vietnam saw great value in the first consultative meeting and discussed arrangement for further meetings on a regular basis, as contemplated in the Agreement.

This Agreed Minutes is done in Ho Chi Minh City on July 29, 2008.

FOR THE VIET NAM MARITIME  
ADMINISTRATION

FOR THE U.S. MARITIME  
ADMINISTRATION

*Signed*