

CONFERENCE MINISTERIELLE SUR LA COOPERATION  
HALIEUTIQUE ENTRE LES ETATS AFRICAINS RIVERAINS  
DE L'OCEAN ATLANTIQUE



COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON FISHERIES  
COOPERATION AMONG AFRICAN STATES BORDERING  
THE ATLANTIC OCEAN

## REPORT

### Workshop

*What protection for fishing seafarers through the promotion of  
maritime medicine?*



**27-29 July 2021, Tangier (Morocco)**

## Preamble

The marine fishery activity exposes fishermen to many risks to their health. '*In the fishing industry, many people face extraordinary and unpredictable dangers, often working long hours in extreme conditions to supply our market stalls*'<sup>[1]</sup>.

Although the actual levels and risks for health and safety at work vary according to the type of fishing, the activity is inherently dangerous, and requires special attention, particularly with regard to the protection of Fishermen.

In addition, the health crisis which continues to prevail has revealed, if necessary, a high degree of exposure of this category of workers to the risks of contamination and other dangers which threaten their health. Indeed, facing the pandemic of COVID- 19 and the low socio-economic resilience, offshore fishermen remained in the forefront and confronted, in addition to risks associated with offshore activities, new threats to this health crisis.

The promotion of maritime medicine is an essential component for the preservation of the health of the fishermen and of his capacity for work, by providing services capable of promoting and maintaining the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of fishermen and prevent damage to their health, caused by their particular working conditions.

The Maritime Medicine Manual reports that over the past three decades, several factors have significantly influenced the health of seafarers. The breadth of these influences is reflected in the recognition that maritime health involves a range of actors, each with specific but overlapping interests. So:

- The International Health Regulations of 2005 (IHR, 2005) of the World Health Organization (WHO) applies to maritime transport and aim to allow an effective response to acute public health risks that can spread through country.
- The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping for Seafarers, (STCW 78) set up by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) oversees the protection of health and safety on board ships, specifying minimum training requirements for first aid and medical care.
- - The Maritime Labor Convention of International Labor Bureau of the International Labor Organization (ILO) in 2006 (MLC, 2006) establishes the responsibilities for social security protection for seafarers.
- The International Shipping Federation (ISF), representing the interests of maritime employers, promotes best practices to comply with regulations established by WHO, IMO and ILO.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Juan Somavia, *Director General of the International Labor Organization*

## I. CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION

The organization of this meeting follows the series organized by ATLAFCO on this theme. Indeed, since the inclusion of a **Maritime Safety and Security** axis in its 2019 strategic plan, ATLAFCO has organized various activities in favor of the promotion of decent work for seafarers, of which maritime medicine constitutes a fundamental component. given its role in improving working conditions on board.

These actions express the clear desire to contribute to the socio-professional promotion of fishermen. They constitute a fundamental component of the process of their accompaniment and a pillar of sustainable development of the maritime fisheries sector in the Member States of ATLAFCO.

On the occasion of the last meeting held August 13, 2020, participants who had recognized that the health of seafarers is essential for food safety and nutrition in their respective countries have stressed, unanimously, that decent work is essential for the sustainable development of the fisheries sector and the eradication of poverty.

Among the potential levers for better protection of fishermen, the participants identified access to health care for fishermen through the promotion of marine medicine. They recommended in particular the establishment of infrastructures. appropriate public services with adequate social services.

- What social protection and what marine medicine for fishermen in the countries of the ATLAFCO Region?
- What do the relevant international legal instruments provide for the social protection requirements of fishermen?
- What effective practices at the international level in terms of social protection and medical monitoring of fishermen?
- Can we transpose certain successful maritime medicine experiences in favor of fishermen in certain countries of the region?

These are in substance the main questions to which the experts will try to answer during the workshop organized by ATLAFCO, on July 27-29, 2021 under the theme of ' ' **What protection for seafarers through the promotion of maritime medicine?**  ' '

## II. WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

**General objective:** Contribute to the improvement of marine medicine for a better taking into account of the working conditions of fishermen

**Specific objectives:**

- Assess the current state of implementation of maritime medicine in ATLAFCO Member States and meet the challenges to its development;
- Provide a comprehensive overview of the challenges of maritime medicine in times of the COVID 19 pandemic and its role in improving the working conditions of seafarers;

- Combine knowledge and approaches on good practices and successful experiences in the maritime medicine in Africa;
- Propose recommendations aimed at improving maritime medicine in ATLAFCO Member States.

### **III. EXPECTED RESULTS**

The expected results of this meeting are:

- The best experiences and good practices in maritime medicine are known, capitalized and shared;
- Relevant proposals are produced to promote maritime medicine in public fisheries policies;
- The international legal instruments governing the social protection of seafarers are better known and proposals for their effective implementation are proposed.

### **IV. WORKSHOP ORGANIZATION**

- The workshop will take place in plenary sessions in the form of presentations and discussions which will revolve around the following axes:
  - Promotion of maritime medicine to improve the working conditions of seafarers;
  - Sharing international experiences in social protection and medical monitoring of seafarers;
  - Highlighting the good practices in maritime medicine in ATLAFCO member states.
- The presentations and animation of the workshops will be made by experts.
- Breaks are planned between sessions and during lunch hours.
- A field visit is planned for all participants on the last day of the seminar.

### **V. WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS**

The workshop is intended for staff of the administration and civil society involved in the socio-professional promotion of seafarers in fishing and occupational medicine in the 22 member states of ATLAFCO.

### **VI. DURATION, DATE AND PLACE OF THE WORKSHOP**

The workshop will run over **three (03)** days, from July 27 to 29, 2021 in Tangier, Morocco.

## I- INTRODUCTION

ATLAFCO organized from 27 to 29 July 2021, in Tangier (Morocco) a workshop in hybrid mode, on the theme ' ' *What Protection of Fishermen through the Promotion of Maritime Medicine?* ' '

1- More than 61 participants took part in this meeting representing:

**Member States:** Angola, Benin, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Nigeria, DRC, Sao Tome and Principe;

**Non-Member State:** Mali

**Regional organizations:** COREP, FCWC.

**Civil Society:** MOSFA, ILO, WADAF, ECOFISH and REFMA

The list of participants is attached in **Annex I**.

## II- OPENING CEREMONY

- 2- In his opening speech (Annex III), read by **Mr. Diomandé Baba Maxime**, head of the Fisheries Surveillance Center in Côte d'Ivoire, his Excellency **Mr. Sidi Tiémoko TOURE**, Minister of Animal and Fishery Resources of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and current President of ATLAFCO, recalled that the promotion of maritime medicine is an essential component for the preservation of the health of the seafarer and his working capacity.
- 3- Similarly, he added, maritime health finds its foundations in a set of regulations and conventions that we owe to bodies such as the WHO, the ILO and the IMO.
- 4- His Excellency welcomed the fact that ATLAFCO placed the promotion of working conditions at sea among the priorities of its action plan and invited the experts and participants to make a real contribution to the work of this reflection to make constructive recommendations and to improve the working conditions of seafarers.
- 5- The Minister also praised the state of mind of ATLAFCO and the initiatives it undertakes, and thanked the participants, the financial and technical partners as well as the Moroccan authorities before declaring the work of the workshop open.
- 6- Taking the floor, the president of REFMA and Director of ARSTM, **Mr. Karim COULIBALY**, recalled that this is a major subject that is addressed by this workshop given the dangerousness that characterizes this sector of activity.
- 7- He also mentioned the most important international regulations, in particular those of the ILO and the IMO, and expressed the wish that this workshop could take stock of the situation and propose solutions.
- 8- He concluded by proposing to the participants to adopt an integrated approach, including awareness raising, training and the application of regulations throughout the ATLAFCO region.
- 9- The Executive Secretary of ATLAFCO **Mr. Abdelouahed BENABBOU** started his speech by welcoming the assistance and thanked all those who responded favorably to the invitation to participate in this workshop.

- 10- In addition, he pointed out that despite the difficult working conditions of fishermen during the Covid19 period, this activity continued to contribute to food security throughout the ATLAFCO region.
- 11- He also recalled that during previous meetings, it was mentioned the need to protect the lives of fishing workers and that decent work is essential for sustainable development and the eradication of poverty.
- 12- However, he added, it is important that this protection must be lasting, in all circumstances, but not only linked to a temporary situation.
- 13- Before concluding, the Executive Secretary asked some questions to which the workshop should provide answers:
- How to envisage social protection within the ATLAFCO region?
  - How to transpose international regulations into national legislation?
  - How to draw inspiration from the experiences of third countries?
- 14- Finally, he thanked the Moroccan authorities and the partners of ATLAFCO, especially OFCF.

### III- CONDUCT OF WORK

15. **The Executive Secretary and Mrs. Dienaba Beye TRAORE** ensured the moderation of the workshop.
- 16- The final videoconference agenda was adopted (Appendix II).
- 17- Interpreting was provided in French and English.

#### **Section 1: The right to health for seafarers**

- 18- **Presentation:** *For a better harmonization of the standards governing the medical examinations of seafarers and fishermen through the directives of the ILO, Mr. Wagner BRADNT (ILO)*

Mr. BRANDT started by emphasizing the importance of the application of ILO standards control system, particularly those of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations.

He then rose when a state ratifies a Convention; it is required to make the ILO to account for the way it's applied, to provide copies of the laws, regulations and other relevant documents, and to complete a special form, approved by the Governing Body of the ILO.

He then reminded that during its history, the ILO has adopted several conventions and recommendations that included provisions concerning medical examination of seafarers and fishermen:

- The Maritime Labor Convention, 2006, as amended
- The Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188)
- The Work in Fishing Recommendation, 2007 (No. 199)

The 2006 Maritime Labor Convention brought together in a single instrument almost all of the previous ILO conventions relating to seafarers. The Convention is considered to be one of the pillars of international maritime regulation. It includes provisions on flag state responsibilities, port state control responsibilities and labor supply state responsibilities.

In the MLC (Maritime Labor Convention) guidelines on medical certificates, it is foreseen that the competent authorities and others concerned with the conduct of medical examinations, should follow the guidelines of the ILO / WHO on this subject (which had adopted in 1997), or " any other applicable directive adopted by the ILO and the World Health Organization ».

Again, when a state ratifies the MLC, 2006, it is expected to follow the regulation and standard and give due consideration to the guiding principles of the ILO. This guarantees a certain harmonization.

Following the adoption of the MLC, 2006, as well as the update of the IMO STCW Convention, it was decided that the old ILO / WHO guidelines on medical examinations of seafarers should be updated. This led to the convening of joint ILO / IMO meetings to prepare the "ILO / IMO Guidelines for the Medical Examinations of Seafarers", which were published in 2013.

He concluded by recalling that the time of the development of the MLC, 2006, it was decided to exclude fishing vessels from the application of this Convention. In other words, the MLC would concern commercial and passenger vessels and not fishing vessels. The ILO then embarked on the development of another set of standards that specifically concerned work on fishing vessels and consolidated the old ILO fishing standards. This led to the adoption of the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188) and the Work in Fishing Recommendation, 2007 (No. 199). The Work in Fishing Convention is structured differently from the Maritime Labor Convention, but the mandatory medical examination requirements - contained in Articles 10, 11 and 12 - are similar.

**19- Presentation 2: The social protection requirements for seafarers provided for by the STCW78 and CTM 2006 Conventions, Ms. Diénaba Bève TRAORE (Senegal)**

In her presentation Ms. **TRAORE** has given a detailed overview of international instruments of social protection including:

- Convention n ° 188 (ILO) on work in fishing and in particular the rights to rest, medical care, a decent working environment, etc. This convention has been ratified by 5 member states of ATLAFCO.
- The STCW 78 Convention on seafarer training standards (for emergency procedures, prevention of pollution and work accidents, etc.), the issuance of certificates and monitoring. This Convention has been ratified by all MS of ATLAFCO.
- The 2006 MLC Convention, which mainly concerns the conditions of service on board, the right to information on the dangers on board and the maximum duration of boarding. This Convention has been ratified by 10 MS of ATLAFCO.

**20- Presentation 3: *International instruments relating to the medical care of seafarers* , Mr Abdennaji LAAMRICH (ATLAFCO)**

In his presentation, **Mr. LAAMRICH** began by mentioning that a seafarer sick or injured at sea does not have easy access to professional health care and that ships which do not carry a doctor are required to have on board at least one seafarer who is responsible for medical care and drug administration as part of his regular duties. Persons responsible for medical care on board who are not doctors must have successfully completed medical care training.

He stressed that therefore, there must be a person trained, medical equipment available to use it and easy access to information on the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of a disease. Normally this comes in the form of a manual and this is supported by international agreements for access to medical advice by radio anywhere in the world.

**Mr. LAAMRICH** then mentioned that conventions Maritime Labor 188 and MLC 2007, require that all vessels carry a medical kit, while the STCW Convention of the IMO, deals with medical skills to seafarers on board. The aim is to ensure that in an emergency, medical care on board ships is similar to that provided on land.

In addition, the 1978 STCW Convention regulates periodic medical examinations of seafarers as well as standards for emergency medical training requirements for different groups of personnel on board.

Another very important issue for the STCW Convention is training in medical emergency procedures and care.

Regarding medical equipment, the 2006 ILO Maritime Labor Convention stipulates that all vessels must carry a medical box, medical equipment and a medical guide.

He concluded that ships, in general, must have adequate medical supplies, which are inspected periodically and maintained in good repair and ready for use whenever needed. The quantities will depend on the duration and destination of the voyage, the number of crew members and the nature of the cargo.

**21- Presentation 4: *Guaranteeing seafarers' access to medical care through the recommendations of the IMO* , Mr. Mohamed MARZAGUI , (Morocco)**

**Mr. MERZAGUI** basically focused on action by IMO to fight Covid19 pandemic, referring to the 2006 Convention adopted an ILO and the Convention on seafarers training standards, namely the STCW adopted by the IMO.

He added that the crews are among the most internationalized workers in the world and therefore cross borders and are made up of several nationalities.

Thus, the IMO has set up a crisis management team for seafarers and recognized them as “key workers”.

He then recalled that the IMO invited the port and coastal States to respect their obligations under international regulations, particularly with regard to access to healthcare, vaccines and the right to be repatriated.

Finally, **Mr. MERZAGUI** expressed his concern about the use of vaccine passports which are not recognized in all countries.

**22- Presentation 5: Comparative study between the maritime fishing labor convention C188 and the maritime labor convention MLC 2006, Pr. Kaoutar MERBOUH (Morocco)**

**Pr. Merbouh** has made a comparative study of the C-188 regarding fishing and MLC Convention which deals with labor Maritime.

First of all, she finds that the two texts present the same architecture and the same content. The similarities mainly concern the discretion of the captain and the skipper, the application of the two conventions, the minimum working standards and the requirement of the medical certificate.

For the differences, the Professor notes a more structured text in the MLC and more latitude for the States in C-188 with a gradual implementation of the provisions. The C-188 also allows a minimum age of up to 15 years under certain conditions.

Finally, by way of conclusion, the Professor noted that fishermen need more protection and particularly for boats of less than 24 meters.

**23- Presentation 6: Promote public health measures as part of the response to COVID19 on fishing vessels, Mr. LAAMRICH (ATLAFCO)**

**Mr. LAAMRICH** began this subject by stressing that seafarers are constantly faced with the risk of being infected with COVID-19 and the measures implemented by certain countries to prevent the spread of this pandemic have serious operational consequences for ships and crews. One of the many challenges facing the international maritime sector during the COVID-19 pandemic has been organizing seafarers' access to medical care ashore.

He then recalled that the fast and effective landing of seafarers to receive medical care is essential for their protection and public health is vital for the maintenance of global supply chains.

He concluded that the international community reacted through the many specialized international organizations (IMO, WHO, ILO, etc.) by publishing circulars, manuals and guides aimed at providing port and coastal States with relevant information and recommendations. These publications include the IMO Circular Letter No. 4204 / Add.35 / of 20 May 2021, relating to the designation of seafarers as **key workers**.

The objective of this declaration is to draw the attention of the Member States to the question of the designation of these professionals as key workers, by referring in particular to the provisions of:

- Resolution MSC.473 (ES.2) - Recommended action to facilitate ship crew change, access to medical care and movement of seafarers during the COVID-19 pandemic, adopted by MSC on September 21, 2020;
- Resolution A / 75 / L.37 - International cooperation to address the challenges seafarers face as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to support global supply chains, adopted by the General Assembly of United Nations on December 1, 2020;
- Resolution GB.340 / Resolution (Rev.2) - Resolution concerning maritime labor issues and the COVID-19 pandemic, adopted by the Governing Council of the International Labor Office on December 8, 2020.

**Section 2: Round table: maritime medicine in the fisheries sector around the world - International experiences in social protection and medical monitoring of seafarers:**

**24- Presentation 6: The experience of Spain, Dr Luisa CANALS (Spain)**

**Dr. Luisa CANALS** recalled that Spain is a country surrounded by the sea and fishing is highly developed with high seas fishing vessels operating throughout the globe.

She underlined that Spain has networks of researchers, doctors and educators, hospital boats like "*l'Esperansa del Mar*", a medical radio center and that the country has a state maritime health program despite the non-ratification of Convention C-188.

However, there is a health inspection and it is the doctor who follows the seafarers himself and carries out the checks.

She mentioned that medical certificates are computerized to prevent falsification and that aptitude exams and medical follow-up are listed throughout the life of the fisherman.

She concluded that Spain has also set up assistance centers for seafarers abroad (in Mauritania and Senegal).

**25- Presentation 7: The experience of France: Dr Thierry SAUVAGE (France)**

**Dr Thierry SAUVAGE** began his presentation by searching on the importance of the health of fishermen. To this end, he stressed that 40 million fishermen around the world exercise a very dangerous activity and deserve to be protected because they ensure food security at the global level.

He then mentioned that the international instruments for the protection of fishermen in France are C-188, C-113, C070 and the guidelines for the medical examinations of fishermen.

He finally mentioned that preventive actions in the workplace are often in the form of training, preventive visits. Investigations at the workplace and that maritime medical training is compulsory in France.

**26- Presentation 8: The experience of Morocco, Dr Tarik GHAILAN (Morocco)**

Dr. Ghailan was initially reported that 140 000 seafarers 120 000 are fishermen and that e the regulations which the governing in 1919.

He added that recently an agreement between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Fisheries allowed the creation of medical antennas in the fishing ports which made it possible to launch preventive medicine and aptitude for fishermen.

He said that Morocco currently has 21 medical antennas in the various ports and that several actions concerning hygiene on board; first aid training and health education are carried out by doctors.

He then mentioned that among the actions undertaken by the Moroccan authorities, the Covid19 screening campaign launched for the benefit of fishermen as well as the programs developed concerning in particular the fight against chronic diseases, work accidents and communicable diseases.

Finally, **Dr GHAILAN** emphasized the limits which lie mainly in the insufficient number of doctors and the partial application of international standards in maritime medicine, hoping for the soon introduction of Telemedicine, of a hospital ship for fishermen and the unification of maritime medicine.

**27- Presentation 09: The experience of Latin America, Dr Maria Rodriguez DA SILVA (Venezuela)**

**Dr Maria Da Silva** noted that an artisanal fishery in Venezuela is an ancestral activity and that industrial fishing was introduced in 1950 to Venezuela by the Italians. She indicated that in 1994 the fishermen numbered 18,000 workers for 16,000 artisanal fishing vessels.

She also recalled that according to an ILO study in 1998 the most frequent health problems are asthma, hearing loss, skin diseases and others.

She also spoke about primary health care for fishermen and their families through local health centers.

Just as fishermen operating far from their region of origin have also benefited from health care since the centers were developed.

**28- Presentation 10: The international experience, Dr Ilona ENISENKO (Russian Federation)**

**Dr DENISENKO** began by indicating that fishing activity is considered the most dangerous in the world. For the 38 million fishermen identified worldwide, it is Convention C-188 which regulates their work.

She also mentioned the IMHA (International Maritime Health Association) proposal to create a working group between agencies, associations and member countries.

She raised that no seafarer should embark or fish without a certificate of aptitude. In addition, some countries such as Norway and Spain do not differentiate between a medical certificate issued to a merchant seaman and that issued to a fisherman.

Finally, she insisted on the need to harmonize international rules whatever the level of training and whatever the type of fishing, and that research should be undertaken in the field of fishermen's health as such.

### **Section 3: The right to medical assistance for seafarers and emergency medicine in the maritime context.**

#### **29- Presentation 11: *Support for fire victims* , Dr. Ibtissam ABID (Morocco)**

After having described fires at sea as the most feared, and identifying the risks of their outbreak, **DR ABID** has defined all types of skin burns.

She also reviewed the classification of burns and the phases of protection to prevent their aggravation.

Finally, she enumerated the dangers caused by fires other than burns, namely the fall of oxygen in the atmosphere, inhalation of soot, pulmonary lesions, irritating or asphyxiating gases as well as transport disorders. oxygen by hemoglobin in the blood.

#### **30- Presentation 12: *The introduction of telemedicine to improve health care on board ships*, Mr. LAAMRICH (ATLAFCO)**

Mr. LAAMRICH began by mentioning that stranded on board, sometimes hundreds of kilometers from the nearest rescue point, rapid assistance in the event of a medical emergency can be a matter of life or death. In these tense times, the line between a transient illness and a life-threatening affliction can easily be blurred. Without expert advice, captains often have no choice but to divert the ship.

With telemedicine, captain feels much more confident if he has a tele-medical kit on board so that he can make informed decisions based on the opinions TMAS, either to divert the ship or to request medical evacuation.

He then spoke about digitization and new technologies that have allowed maritime telemedicine to evolve, thus helping seafarers to solve this equation.

He also recalled that telemedicine is one of the most important developments in the field of engineering sciences which integrates technology with medicine. And when it comes to the maritime sector, the incorporation of telemedicine technology is the best thing that can happen to the shipping industry and sea fishing lately.

**Mr LAAMRICH** concluded that telemedicine involves the use of equipment such as satellite and internet connectivity to provide medical assistance to people living in isolated areas and unable to obtain immediate physical medical assistance, something that is required encouragement in the countries of the ATLAFCO region.

#### **Section 4: Maritime medicine in the countries of the region.**

##### **31- Presentation 13: *Analysis of the sample survey in the form of a questionnaire sent to Member States by the ATLAFCO team***

ATLAFCO secretariat first presented the questionnaire that it designed with the aim of exploiting the data of the realities on the ground in the region in order to identify the shortcomings and propose the appropriate solutions and recommendations.

In this regard, the secretariat urged all Member States to systematically respond to the questionnaires that its team prepares in order to optimize the results of the surveys and the reliability of the conclusions.

It should also be noted that research was carried out at the level of previous seminars in order to complete the data collection.

##### **32- Presentation14: *The medicine of seafarers in Morocco, Mr Abdellah ELASRI (Morocco)***

After reviewing the health issues in the fishing industry, namely the need for prevention, the need for professional aptitude, and the dangerousness of the profession **Mr ELASRI** detailed the Convention which creates the Medical Antennas in force since January 1997;

- The missions in charge of ASGM (Seafarers' Health Unit) are as follows:
- Contribute to the control of hygiene on board;
- Evaluate the hygienic conditions in the fishing environment;
- Advising and assisting in the field of health;
- Set up the production of care by radio communication.

These Antennas he added, provide medical supervision in particular employability.

**Mr ELASRI** also indicated that the Ministry ensures the application of the health protocol for the preservation against the risk in the face of Covid19, in order to maintain the supply of the market, by developing health guides to fight against the epidemic and has organized awareness and screening campaigns.

##### **33- Presentation 15: *Progress made by Senegal in terms of social protection for seafarers, Ms. Diénaba BEYE TRAORE (Senegal)***

**Ms. TRAORE** first placed social protection in an international legal context (STCW78-95-2010, CTM 2006 and C-188) then in its regional context (AIM 2050 Strategy) and finally, in its national context (Law no. ° 2002-22, law 2004-283, Decree N ° 2016-933.)

She noted that no provision concerning social protection is provided for either by ECOWAS or by UEMOA.

Regarding the case of Senegal, she underlined that Law 2016-933 stipulates that the seafarers' service is headed by a civilian or military seafarer doctor; this doctor participates in ship health inspections, organizes training and provides medical follow-up.

She added that the same law also defines the conditions of aptitude for the profession of seafarers as well as the medical obligations on board (equipment, radio consultations, documents, etc.)

**34- Presentation 16: Medical education in maritime training for better application of general provisions relating to the health of seafarers , Dr Moussa FOFANA (Côte d'Ivoire)**

**Dr. FOFANA** has referred to the ancient period where hygiene on ships was already a problem. He then reviewed the difficulties of obtaining African data, the lack of specialization of doctors as well as the socio-economic context. He has also listed general provisions relating to the health of seafarers since 1889.

In addition, he presented the international regulations including STCW78 and the International Health Regulations (RSI).

Subsequently, **Dr FOFANA** described the training of seafarers' medicine within ARSTM (the Regional Academy of Marine Sciences and Techniques) intended for the countries of the Gulf of Guinea. Training is carried out at 3 levels: level 1 for seafarers, level 2 for seafarer in charge of health care and level 3 for commanders.

Finally, he recalled to the need for Member States to ratify and to implement the conventions for the protection of fishermen, and identify seafarers, maritime accidents and diseases.

**35- Presentation 17: The actions of the maritime medicine entity in Morocco, Dr Tarik GHAILAN (Morocco)**

**Dr. Ghailan** said that medical unfitness may be partial, total, temporary or permanent. It can also be mental or caused by worsening illnesses on board.

To determine the incapacity, the problem lies in the assessment of the doctor who takes into account all the risk factors.

He then mentioned that on the basis of the requirements of C-188, the STCW convention and the European Directive, the IMHA has issued a Directive which will allow the development of national standards for medical examinations for each country.

To this end, the doctor must be approved by the authority and must be specialized in occupational medicine or seafarer medicine.

Taking the example of Morocco, Dr GHAILIN underlined that 50% of the doctors assigned to the Medical Antennas are specialized in occupational medicine.

**36- Presentation 18 : *Immediate measures in the event of accidents and illnesses on board*, Dr Luisa CANALS (Spain)**

Dr CANALS notes that Spain was the first European country to ratify the Maritime Labor Convention in 2013, which deals in particular with medical care, treatment, medical guides and on-board inspection.

In addition, she indicated that there are very large hospital ships around the world in the United States, Russia and China.

In the Region, Dr CANALS underlined that the hospital ship “*Esperanza del Mar*” operates in the African coasts and when it is near the Canary Islands, it can use a helicopter and fast boats for evacuations.

She then recalled that the National Maritime Health Program includes prevention, medical care, as well as assistance, surveillance, inspection and other activities.

Thus, Spain has many health centers and in particular, centers abroad, repatriation centers, radio-medical centers. All these centers are linked to a coordination center where there is a database. These Spanish health centers abroad are located in Nouadhibou, Dakar, Namibia and the Seychelles.

Finally, to conclude, she noted that the competence of the person in charge of health on board the boats remain the most important criterion.

**Section 5: Validation of the conclusions and recommendations of the Workshop**

37- At the end of the various presentations and the discussions that followed, the participants formulated a number of recommendations:

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- A. Recalling** the strategic importance of the fisheries sector in the ATLAFCO region through its strong contribution to food and nutritional security, job creation and national wealth;
- B. Working for the realization Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations** in the Horizon 2030, including:
  - **SDG 3**: “Empower people to live healthy lives and promote well-being at all ages”;
  - **SDG 8**: “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, as well as full and productive employment and decent work for al”;
  - **SDG 14**: “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development”
- C. Considering** the international legal standards and instruments, put in place by the competent United Nations organizations, for the social protection of seafarers, mainly:

- The Cape Town agreement on the implementation of the 1993 Protocol applying the 1977 Convention on the Safety of Fishing Vessels; (International Maritime Organization / IMO) ;
- The International Convention on Standards Training, certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarer (STCW, 78) (International Maritime Organization / IMO);
- The Maritime Labor Convention (MLC / 2006), of the International Labor Office (ILO);
- The Work in Fishing Convention No. 188, 2007 of the International Labor Office (ILO);
- The Voluntary Guidelines for Ensuring the Sustainability of Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (FAO Guidelines, 2014)

**D. Referring** to the African Integrated Strategy for Seas and Oceans - Horizon 2050 (AIM 2050 Strategy) of the African Union, which encourages all stakeholders to promote the well-being of seafarers;

**E. Recalling** the ATLAFCO strategy, which considers the safety, security and social development of seafarers as a priority and determining axis for establishing inclusive sustainable development of the fishing sector;

**F. Recognizing** seafarers as "**key workers**", in the context of the COVID19 pandemic, "**providing an essential service**", in order to lift restrictions on the travel or movement of seafarers, and thus facilitate the arrival or departure on board, in accordance with United Nations recommendations, through the IMO and the ILO;

**G. Convinced** that the promotion of maritime medicine is an essential component for the preservation of physical and mental health and the social well-being of seafarers and their capacity for work.

**The meeting participants made the following recommendations;**

**ACTIONS AT NATIONAL LEVEL:**

- 1. Guarantee** decent work on board fishing vessels with regard to the minimum conditions required for work on board, safety, accommodation, food, health and social security;
- 2. Adhere** to the relevant international instruments on work on board ships, the social protection of seafarers, and ensure their transposition into national legislation and their effective application in the fishing sector;
- 3. Provide** provisions for social protection for seafarers in artisanal fishing, through professional training for artisanal fishermen and the structuring of this sub-sector;
- 4. To benefit** the fishermen the same social security benefits and medical coverage for workers other;
- 5. Establish or strengthen** coordination between the structures concerned with the social protection of seafarers in the fishing sector (Fisheries, Labor and Health departments);

6. **Set up or develop** scientific research on the maritime health of seafarers and include in information systems data on work accidents and occupational diseases of seafarers' people;
7. **Strengthen** the resilience of fishermen and their communities in the face of pandemics and epidemics;
8. **Provide** ports and fishing sites with the structures and equipment necessary to facilitate the access of fishermen to adequate preventive and curative health care;
9. **Promote and develop** medical training for seafarers, including **telemedicine**;
10. **Urge** flag States, port States and coastal States to respect their obligations under international instruments, emanating from the competent international organizations, in particular the **WHO, ILO, IMO, and FAO**.

#### **ACTIONS AT REGIONAL LEVEL:**

1. **Promote** the adherence of member states to relevant international political and legal instruments and their transposition into national legislation;
2. **Strengthen** regional cooperation with competent governmental and non-state partners for the promotion of social protection and maritime medicine in the fisheries sector, through the sharing of experiences, the dissemination of good practices and capacity building;
3. **Promote** the harmonization of standards governing the medical examinations of seafarers through ILO directives;
4. **Support** the establishment, in the ATLAFCO area, of a **regional maritime medicine network**;
5. **Associate** the Network of African Maritime Training Establishments (**REFMA**), to provide training in maritime medicine for fishermen within the institutes that are members of the Network.

## **Annex I : List of participants**

No.	COUNTRY / ORGANIZATION	NAME	TITLE	E-MAIL
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## **Annex II: Agenda**

**DAY 01 : TUESDAY JULY 27, 2021**

<b>1- Opening / welcoming words</b>	
<b>2- Presentation of the participants</b>	All participants
<b>3- Adoption of the agenda and working documents Group photo</b>	All participants
<b>4- The right to health for fishermen</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introductory overview on the medical examination of seafarers and fishermen.</li></ul>	Mr. Wagner BRADNT (ILO)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The social protection requirements for seafarers provided for in the STCW 78 and CTM 2006 Conventions.</li></ul>	Mrs Diénaba Bèye TRAORE, Expert, Consultant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• International instruments relating to the medical care of seafarers</li></ul>	Mr. Abdennaji LAAMRICH ATLAFCO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Guaranteeing seafarers' access to medical care through the recommendations of the OM.</li></ul>	Mr. Mohamed MARZAGUI, Expert, Consultant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Comparative study between the maritime fishing labor convention C188 and the maritime labor convention MLC 2006</li></ul>	Dr Kaoutar MERBOUH, Professor of Law in Tangier, Abdelmalek ESSAADI University
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote public health measures as part of the response to COVID-19 on fishing vessels.</li></ul>	Mr. Abdennaji LAAMRICH ATLAFCO
<b>General discussion</b>	All participants
<b>5- International experiences in the field of social protection and medical monitoring of seafarers : Round table : maritime medicine in the fishing sector around the world</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spain's experience</li></ul>	Dr Luisa CANALS (Spain)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• France's experience</li></ul>	Dr Thierry SAUVAGE (France)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Morocco's experience</li></ul>	Dr Tarik GHAILAN (Morocco)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Latin America Experience</li></ul>	Dr María Rodriguez DA SILVA (Venezuela)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• International experience</li></ul>	Dr Iona DENISENKO (Russia)
<b>General discussion</b>	All participants

**DAY 02 : WEDNESDAY JULY 28, 2021**

<b>6- The right to medical assistance for seafarers and emergency medicine in the maritime context</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The operational organization of medical aid at sea</li> </ul>	Will be treated in the presentation Medicine of seafarers in MOROCCO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caring for victims of fires at sea</li> </ul>	Dr Ibtissam ABID, emergency doctor at the Tangier SAMU, SMMM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The introducing telemedicine to improve health care on board ships</li> </ul>	Mr. Abdennaji LAAMRICH ATLAFCO
<b>General Discussions</b>	All participants
<b>7- Maritime medicine in the countries of the region</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion based on the questionnaire</li> </ul>	All Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The medicine of seafarers in MOROCCO</li> </ul>	Mr. Ahmed EI KOUHEN (DMF) Mr. Abdellah ELASRI (Dmf)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senegal's progress in the social protection of seafarers</li> </ul>	Mrs Diénaba Bèye TRAORE Expert Consultant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The medical education of maritime training for a better application of the general provisions relating to the health of seafarers,</li> </ul>	Dr Moussa FOFANA, Chief Physician of the Regional Academy of Marine Sciences and Techniques of Abidjan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The actions of the maritime medicine entity in Morocco</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual medical examinations of fishermen's fitness for work and their importance in improving the fishing activity</li> <li>- The on-board pharmacy and medical supplies for fishing vessels</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Dr Tarik GHAILAN, seafarer physician, SMMM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visits to fishing vessels and their role in the control of sanitary facilities, medical supplies and certain work stations</li> </ul>	- Covered in the presentation Medicine of seafarers in MOROCCO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate measures in the event of accident and illness on board</li> </ul>	Dr Luisa CANALS, seafarer doctor in Tarragona (Spain), SEMM (videoconference)
<b>8- Validation of the conclusions and recommendations of the Workshop</b>	All participants

**DAY 03 : THURSDAY JULY 29, 2021**

<b>9- Field visit (medical antenna located at the fishing village " Dahlia")</b>	All participants
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## Annex III: Speeches

### **ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY**

**Mr. Sidi Tiémoko TOURE, Minister of Animal and Fishery Resources, Côte d'Ivoire  
President of ATLAFCO**

Read by Monsieur **Diomandé Baba Maxime**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, Delegates of the member states;  
Ladies and Gentlemen, experts and consultants;  
Ladies and Gentlemen;  
Honorable assistance;**

It is for me a great pleasure and a privilege to address you this morning to wish you first of all welcome and to announce the opening of the work of our workshop on ' ' **WHAT PROTECTION SEAFARERS THROUGH THE PROMOTION OF MARITIME MEDICINE ? ' ' .**

This is a new meeting of experts in maritime medicine after the one organized online on 13 August 2020 and which confirms the manifest desire of our Organization to contribute to the socio-professional promotion of fishermen.

Indeed, since the inclusion of a **Maritime Safety and Security** axis in its 2019 strategic plan, ATLAFCO has organized various activities in favor of the promotion of decent work for seafarers, of which maritime medicine constitutes a fundamental component given its role in improving working conditions on board.

I take this opportunity to thank the Executive Secretariat of ATLAFCO for this initiative carried out in times of health crisis, our technical and financial partners for their constant support and the Authorities of the Kingdom of Morocco for their support and assistance in the organization of this workshop on this very important theme for improving the working conditions of seafarers in our region.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

The promotion of maritime medicine is an essential component for the preservation of the health of the fishing seafarer and of his capacity for work, by providing services capable of promoting and maintaining the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of fishermen, and to avoid any damage to their health caused by their particular working conditions.

Maritime health involves a range of actors and finds its foundations in a set of Regulations and Conventions issued by the competent international organizations, particular the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) which support the work of ATLAFCO and whom I thank very much.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Convinced of the need to work to consolidate the health system of seafarers in its member states particularly in the current context of the COVID 19 pandemic, ATLAFCO has made its contribution to the promotion of working conditions at sea at the forefront of the priorities of its action plan and a major social protection project.

The purpose of the workshop that brings us together today is therefore to deal with fundamental questions to which experts and speakers will try to provide answers.

Thus, you will be required to make your valuable contributions to the work of this workshop.

I know that I can count on your commitment and your constructive recommendations so that at the end of this meeting we can mark a decisive step in our common desire to promote maritime medicine in our member states and to share international experiences and practices in terms of social protection, improvement of the working conditions of seafarers and medical monitoring of seafarers.

I would like to take this opportunity to renew my sincere thanks to the various participants and to the experts for their remarkable support and to salute the participatory and consensual approach that characterizes ATLAFCO by expressing the wish for the continuation of this same state of mind.

Before closing my speech, I wish the work of your workshop every success and I declare the work of this workshop open.

Thank you for your attention.

## **SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF REFMA**

**Mr. Representative of the current President of ATLAFCO;**

**Mr. Representative of the Government of Morocco;**

**Mr. Representative of Japan;**

**Mr. the Executive Secretary of ATLAFCO;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, representatives of ATLAFCO member states;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, Directors of REFMA member establishments;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, members of the Executive Secretariat of ATLAFCO**

It is an honor for me to address this honorable assembly of ATLAFCO member countries, those who are in the room and those who follow us from a distance, to address a major subject, which is the Protection of Marine Fishermen in through the Promotion of Maritime Medicine.

I have no doubt that your presence at this meeting is an eloquent sign of the importance you attach to this issue.

This workshop is understood as a contribution of the member states of ATLAFCO to the socio-professional promotion and the protection of fishermen.

Maritime medicine, or naval medicine, is the branch of medicine specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases that develop on board ships.

The promotion of maritime medicine is an essential component for preserving the health of seafarers and their working capacity, through the provision of services capable of promoting and maintaining good physical, mental and social health of the seafarers and fishermen in order to avoid any damage to their health caused by their particular working conditions.

Indeed, the sea fishing activity, which is one of the most dangerous, exposes fishermen to many risks, especially to their health.

In the fishing industry, many people face extraordinary and unforeseeable dangers, often working long hours in extreme conditions to supply the businesses and homes of our populations.

In order to ensure adequate protection for seafarers, legal instruments have been put in place, the most important of which are:

- The WHO International Health Regulations (IHR, 2005);
- The STCW set up by the IMO;
- The Maritime Labor Convention of the International Labor Office of the ILO of 2006
- The MLC, 2006.

The organization of this meeting which I would like to salute will allow in particular:

- ✓ First of all to take stock of the conditions for the application of maritime medicine through legal instruments in ATLAFCO member states ;

- ✓ Identify the positive aspects and the shortcomings with a view to finding adequate solutions ;
- ✓ Finally to propose recommendations with the main objective of better implementation of maritime medicine for better protection of the working conditions of our fishing seafarers.

It will be necessary to adopt an integrated approach which includes awareness raising, training, capacity building and the effective application of legal instruments by all actors acting in the regional space of ATLAFCO.

REFMA, a specialized body of ATLAFCO, responsible for promoting training in fisheries through collaboration between African maritime training establishments, intends to take its full place by sensitizing its members on the need to strengthen or integrate medical training in the curriculum of maritime training establishments.

I would like at this moment to thank ATLAFCO, its President represented here, its Executive Secretary as well as its entire staff for the organization of this workshop which comes at the right time.

I also thank the Japanese cooperation for its unwavering assistance in the implementation of our programs.

I would like to greet all the delegations here present.

Finally, our thanks go to the Moroccan authorities for the very useful and important support they continue to provide to ATLAFCO, thus allowing us to hold this meeting in this beautiful city of Tangier.

I wish our work every success.  
Thank you.

## INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF ATLAFCO

**The Representative of Côte d'Ivoire**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, representatives of the member states**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Dear colleagues, dear friends,**

As a bonus, I would like to welcome you on board to Tangier and thank you for having responded favorably to our invitation to participate in this workshop devoted to the promotion of maritime medicine in favor of fishermen.

The pandemic linked to Covid-19 has revealed, if necessary, the strategic role of this category of workers who, despite restrictive measures aimed at limiting the spread of the virus taken across the world, continued under conditions particularly difficult and at the risk of their health, to ensure their function of supplier of a commodity essential for food security, particularly in our countries.

We have already held meetings on this subject, particularly in August 2020, during which the participants, after having recognized the essential contribution of fishing to the food and nutritional security of populations, called for the need to protect the life of workers, their families and the populations around them, and to ensure the continuity of work and economic survival. They underlined, on this occasion that decent work is essential for the sustainable development of the fishing sector and the eradication of poverty.

The protection of seafarers is therefore not only cyclical. It must be insured at all times, taking into account the risks incurred by the exercise of this profession, even in ordinary times.

In fact, this category of workers, due to the particular conditions of their profession, which is carried out at sea and on a mobile surface, is exposed, in addition to the risk of accidents, to specific diseases.

Today's workshop follows on from the 2020 meeting; it will be devoted to the promotion of maritime medicine for the benefit of seafarers, as an essential component for their socio-professional promotion through the provision of services aimed at to ensure their well-being and the protection of their physical, mental and social integrity.

During our debates, we will be called upon to answer certain questions for the development and generalization of maritime medicine in our respective States.

- How do we envisage social protection and maritime medicine for fishermen in the countries of the ATLAFCO region?
- How the provisions of the relevant international legal instruments are transposed and implemented with regard to the social protection requirements of seafarers in fishing?

- Could we draw inspiration from effective practices at the international level in terms of social protection and medical monitoring of seafarers?
- To what extent can certain successful experiences of maritime medicine be transposed in favor of fishermen in certain countries of the region?

By hoping that this meeting can contribute to better protection of fishermen in our respective countries, and to be part of a new dynamic in the service of the shared objective of a sustainable exploitation of marine resources, I would first like to close my remarks by reiterating my thanks to the Moroccan authorities and to ATLAFCO's partners in particular to OFCF, without whom this meeting could not have been held, as well as to the resource persons who kindly responded to our invitation and lead this workshop

My thanks also go to all the representatives of the Member States present and online, for joining in this reflection.

Thank you for your attention.