

The Voice of Transport Workers  
Across the World:  
**An Introduction  
to the ITF**

**Mr. Paddy Crumlin**  
ITF President



**Who We Are**

*(Introduction/Overview)*

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is a democratic, affiliate-led federation of nearly 670 trade unions in 154 countries. We are the voice for 18 million men and women in the road, rail, maritime, and aviation sectors, and we fight passionately to improve their working lives.

Our headquarters is located in London, with regional offices in Amman, Brussels, Nairobi, New Delhi, Ouagadougou, Rio de Janeiro, Singapore, Sydney, and Tokyo.

**What We Do**

*(Influencing Global Policy; Organising Workers; Practical Solidarity)*

The ITF is widely recognised as the world's leading voice for transport workers. We wield substantial bargaining and lobbying powers internationally, enabling us to coordinate campaigns against multinationals and governments that have real impact. Everything we do, from policies to protests, is driven by our firm belief that trade union rights are human rights, and these should be respected universally. We provide our affiliates with the resources they need to organise and protect workers, and we connect unions that would otherwise be isolated, helping their members to secure rights, equality, and access to justice. International, practical solidarity is at the

heart of what we do and is what gives the ITF its strength as a campaigning organisation.

**ITF Maritime**

The ITF plays a major role in the wider maritime industry, representing transport workers on ships and in ports, from fisheries to inland navigation. Our "Flags of Convenience Campaign" has been one of the ITF's most significant and effective campaigns, achieving decent wages and conditions on board nearly 12,988 Flag of Convenience (FOC) ships since it was launched in 1948. The shipping industry is well known for using the FOC loophole to exploit the sparsely regulated labour markets of certain countries and the light taxation policies of others; combined, these create a very unhappy situation for the many thousands of

seafarers working in dangerous conditions for outrageously low wages. A vital component of the campaign has been to strengthen the link between the flag country and the ship owner, but this has been challenging because of the fragmented structure of international shipping. This political campaign operates alongside an industrial campaign designed to ensure that seafarers who serve on FOC ships, whatever their nationality, have enforceable wages and working and living conditions and are protected from exploitation by ship owners. Over the years, the ITF's maritime affiliates have developed a set of policies that seeks to establish minimum acceptable standards for seafarers working on FOC vessels. These standards form the basis of the ITF's Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), which sets the wages and



ITF Maritime



working conditions for crews on FOC vessels irrespective of nationality. Compliance with ITF agreements is monitored by a network of over 140 ITF inspectors and contacts in more than 125 ports throughout the world.

## COVID-19

*(Impact and Response—Crew Change Crisis)*

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on industries and individual lives across the world. Transport workers have been on the front lines, risking their lives to keep supply chains and other key workers moving. The ITF’s immediate response was to set out the major, urgent priorities for transport workers in every sector, in every corner of the world, in the form of five global demands. We made occupational health and safety the cornerstone of this initiative and we lobbied governments to grant transport workers the “key worker” status they deserve. Seafarers were especially hard hit by the pandemic, with the crew change crisis leaving many seafarers stranded aboard ship for months on end and, in some cases, for more than a year beyond their initial contracts. Seafarers have also seen their rights under threat from restrictions impacting shore leave and access to medical treatment, and pressure on their long-held rights and conditions on board vessels. Late last year the ITF’s Maritime Safety Committee authored a report, *Beyond the Limit*, showing how there is a risk of COVID-era exemptions becoming permanent, to the detriment of seafarers’ health



and safety. This report drew on the links WMU research has found between fatigue, mental and physical health, and adequate manning levels.

The fight for seafarers continues as we expand our efforts to ensure that seafarers and other transport workers are prioritised for vaccination. Transport workers are critical to the distribution of such vaccines.

## The ITF & WMU

*(Sustainable Transport & Future of Work)*

The ITF has a relationship with WMU spanning more than 30 years, beginning in 1987 when the ITF provided three fellowships to support students from developing countries to attend WMU’s Master of Science (MSc.) degree programme.



Since 1994, the ITF has provided fellowships for 123 students, 118 graduates, and five current students through the ITF Seafarers Trust. It has also funded an ITF Professorial Chair for over a decade—a contribution that has played a key role in enabling WMU to develop its current expertise on the legal framework for the maritime and ocean industry, including labour rights.

As part of the partnership, the ITF has made financial contributions to the WMU Endowment Fund, which was established to provide the university with long-term sustainability and increased capacity to provide education in the maritime sector.

The ITF also commissioned research that resulted in the landmark study “Transport 2040: Automation, Technology, Employment—The Future of Work”, which was published in 2019. This report provides important overarching insights on automation in global transport and impacts on workers. The ITF and WMU are currently working together on a follow up to the report with the aim to identify skills and education that seafarers will need in the short, medium, and long term.

At the Seafarers’ Section Conference conducted during the ITF 2018 Congress held in Singapore, Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry and Jens-Uwe Schröder-Hinrichs from WMU gave a presentation on the findings of the above-

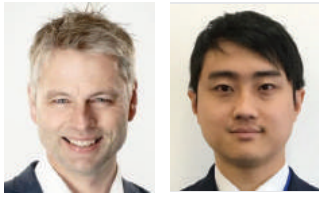


mentioned report. Their excellent presentation was both reassuring and realistic in its analysis: while an imminent, wholesale takeover by automation is highly unlikely, shipping is one of the sectors most exposed to innovation and technology; however, these developments could open up more opportunities for seafarers—especially women—but for that to be the case, early engagement with governments and higher levels of education and training are crucial. The conclusions of WMU’s research supported a theme that ran throughout our Congress: a well organised, well-resourced labour force stands to benefit from the so-called “digital revolution”; it is not inevitable that workers only become victims of technological progress. The ITF has always been involved in the evolution of transport and will continue to be so.

Throughout the years, the ITF Seafarers’ Section Coordinator has been a member of the WMU Board of Governors, and in 2021 the IMO Secretary-General, Kitack Lim, appointed the ITF Maritime Coordinator as a member of the WMU Executive Board. WMU is an important partner to the ITF, not only because of their contributions to improving the maritime industry, but also because many WMU students return to their respective countries and take on crucial roles within their national maritime and transport administration, which helps the ITF and our affiliates expand our networks.



# Offshore Wind Energy: A Key to Global Decarbonisation



Mr. Arne Eik and Mr. Tomoya Ogino  
Equinor



Figure 1: Picture of Hywind Scotland, the first commercial floating offshore wind farm in the world

Global greenhouse gas emissions must come down rapidly, and offshore wind energy could play a key part in this.

The High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy (Ocean Panel) has found that ocean-based solutions could contribute to around 21% of the total emission reductions needed by 2050 in order to reach the 1.5°C global warming target set by the Paris Agreement.

The ocean can provide us with energy in various forms, such as the waves or tide, but the most economical of these as of today is the wind, which blows over seas at a much faster and stable rate than over land.

The Ocean Panel states that offshore wind energy can deliver nearly half of the identified decarbonisation potential. It also calculated that investment in offshore wind energy yields an average benefit-cost ratio of 12:1,1 providing increased economic, environmental, and health benefits as technology and integration costs continue to fall.

In response to the Ocean Panel, the Ocean Renewable Energy Action Coalition has announced its vision to have 1,400 GW of offshore wind energy generating capacity installed worldwide by 2050, up from the approx. 30 GW generating capacity available today. Oceans would then supply around 10% of the world's electricity and by doing so, countries would replace fossil-fuel generation and enable wide-scale electrification of heating, cooling, industry, hydrogen production, and transport.

A significant number of offshore wind farms has already been built in Europe, and offshore wind has successfully evolved into a large industry there. European countries such as the UK and Germany have implemented several subsidy-free offshore wind projects recently, proving that offshore wind can be highly cost-competitive with conventional power plants.

However, it is important to note that the current success of offshore wind in Europe has in part been supported by favorable natural conditions.

In addition to high wind speeds, the North Sea has large shallow water areas which are suitable for mass-installation of what are called "bottom-fixed" offshore wind turbines, for which the turbine foundation is fixed to the seabed.

This is currently the dominant form of offshore wind energy generation, but it is said that bottom-fixed turbine can only be economically installed in water up to 50–60 m deep, while it is estimated that 80% of the world's wind resources are in deeper waters.

That is where "floating" offshore wind turbines come in handy. The foundation floats on the sea instead of being fixed to the seabed, and so floating turbines can be placed almost anywhere, even if the water is deeper than 60 meters.

Wind is usually stronger and more consistent the farther you move from shore, and so floating wind turbines have the potential to deliver higher energy production than bottom-fixed turbines with fewer restrictions on site selection. Moreover, removing the constraints related to water depth allows the geographical spread of the offshore wind installations to be widened, thus decreasing exposure to local weather patterns and achieving more stable generation profiles, which helps stabilize electrical grids.

From a socio-economic point of view, floating projects might generate higher value for local societies than bottom-fixed ones as the magnitude of the floaters may call for a more localized fabrication and assembly of components.

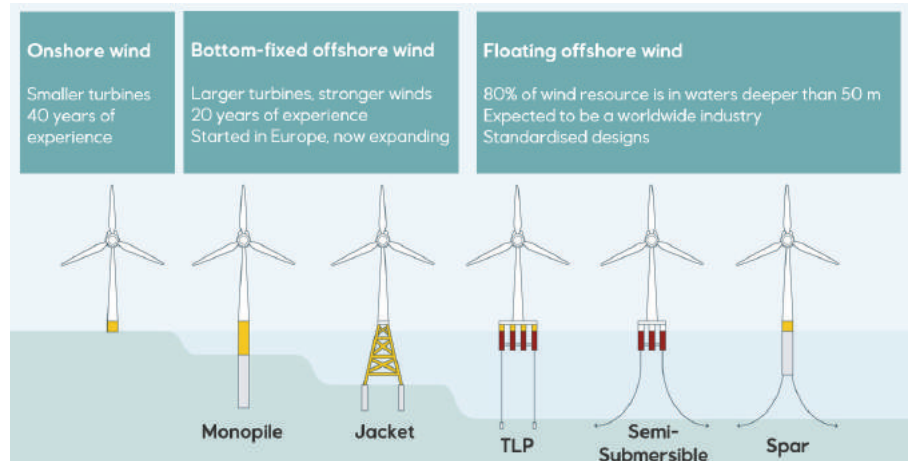
Even though the cost of floating offshore wind turbines is still higher than that of bottom-fixed offshore wind projects, the increasing number of large-scale floating projects being planned and implemented is a clear signal that the industry is gaining momentum and moving closer to

commercialization. Equinor's 88 MW Hywind Tampen project in Norway, which will come in production in 2022, is proving that significant cost reductions can be achieved through scale and experience. The CAPEX per MW for this project is 40% lower than that for the batch of pre-commercial projects which are slated to be commissioned in the coming year(s). Another strong sign of the bright future for floating offshore wind energy is policy makers' increased appetite for floating wind technology, with the UK, France, Japan, California, Norway, and South Korea all currently making preparations for leasing rounds or establishing bespoke regulatory frameworks for the development of commercial-scale floating offshore wind farms.

If we take Japan for example, due to the country's narrow continental shelf the potential for bottom-fixed turbines is limited and most of its wind resources lie outside of the 60 m depth range. The Japanese government recently announced its target of hosting up to 45 GW of offshore wind projects by 2040 and implied that a significant amount of floating offshore wind energy generation will be necessary for Japan to meet this target.

The technology is proven; now it is time to build large-scale (500 MW+) projects.

We believe that offshore wind energy generation is one of the most cost-competitive ways of generating clean energy on an industrial scale, and floating technology is the key to unlocking its full potential all over the world.



# A Dialogue with Professor Mejia: On Maritime Issues, Treaties, and Career

**Kentaro Furuya**  
(Japan, 2003)

**Prof. Max Mejia**  
WMU



Secretariat: We will now like to commence our first ever talk featuring WMU faculty. We highly look forward to learning more about them and their perspectives on the future of our oceans.

## Background

**Mr. Kentaro Furuya:** You were one of my professors when I was a student in the Class of 2002 at WMU. My first question to you is about your motivation for choosing this career. Will you please tell us how you decided on your field of work?

**Dr. Max Mejia:** My father had a career as an officer in the Philippine military, and growing up, I wanted to be like him, so I joined the Philippine Military Academy. As luck would have it, I was soon given the opportunity to represent my country at the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, where I studied for four years. At the time of my graduation from Annapolis, the Philippine Coast Guard was part of the Philippine Navy. I had no idea what Coast Guard work was all about originally. However, I eventually came to realize that it was all about preserving life at sea, which was a major contrast to my training of engaging in battle at sea. I very quickly warmed up to the idea of dedicating my life to keep ships afloat rather than sink ships.

Now how did I end up here at the WMU? Well, as a Coast Guard officer, they sent me here, just like you, Ken, to pursue the program to obtain an MSC. I also ended up being engaged to a local lass from Malmö after finishing the program. When I brought her back to the Philippines to resume my Coast Guard career, I didn't at all imagine that WMU would invite me back to Malmö to fill a teaching position. I was looking forward to this opportunity to give back to the world maritime community by teaching, so I said, "Yes." It's now been 23 years since I joined.

## Thoughts on Current Issues with Maritime Law

**Ken:** Now, seeing how we both share a background in international maritime law, I would like to ask you about that. What are some current issues in international maritime society, and what are your thoughts on overcoming them?

**Max:** Of course, there are dozens of issues out there like piracy, illegal migration, and the environment, but the most pressing ones that come to mind at the moment relate to COVID-19. For example, COVID-19 has exacerbated problems relating to the health and wellbeing of seafarers, who are our most important assets on board ships.

**Ken:** While I do think the pressure of piracy has significantly decreased, it still exists in the Gulf of Guinea, and armed robbery in Southeast Asia still persists. How do you see the situation?

**Max:** In addressing piracy and armed robbery against ships, we have regional cooperation frameworks such as ReCAAP, the Djibouti Code of Conduct, and the Yaoundé Code of Conduct. While I am pleased to observe that ReCAAP has been able demonstrate significant gains, the working arrangements in the other two Codes seem to be in need of further adjustments in order to prove their effectiveness.

**Ken:** Not only does ReCAAP have a foundation in terms of sharing information and capacity-building programs, it also reflects an international commitment to deal with piracy. Meanwhile, the Codes you mentioned earlier are not legally binding over all party states.



**Max:** Building trust indeed becomes very important when we're talking about sharing sensitive information between member states. A significant factor in ReCAAP's success is ensuring that the exchange of information is both regular and reliable. Also, when cooperation is optional, there is a bigger risk that other important policies will take priority, thus pushing counter-piracy issues to the back burner. The ReCAAP experience shows us an example of how institutionalizing national commitment in a regional agreement can deliver strong results in controlling piracy and armed robbery against ships.

I'd also like to mention MASS, autonomous vessels, around which we have seen a lot of activity especially in the two or three years before COVID. We always thought ships would have humans, which is why we have regulations such as STCW, COLREG, and the ISM Code. All of a sudden, we're upending the assumption that all ships have humans on board. Any related international maritime law needs to be solid on this, or as clear as we possibly can have it. MASS has been put in the back burner at IMO because of the COVID pandemic, but it will be interesting to see what comes out of the big meetings regarding this.

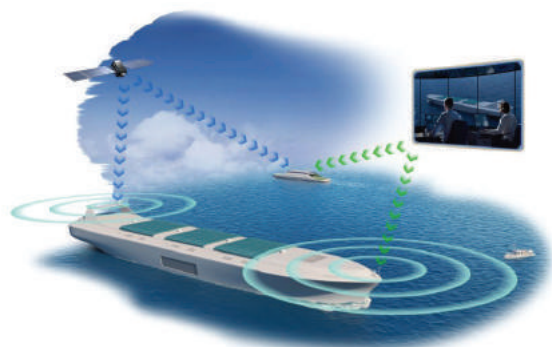


Image provided by The Nippon Foundation



**Ken:** It could have great impact on the question of who is responsible for what exactly, and also on criminal investigation and cyber security at sea. It may be necessary once more to reevaluate maritime issues and look into international legal reform.

### Effectiveness of Treaties

**Ken:** As you know, we have a number of international treaties that have emerged in the maritime field alone. How do you assess the effectiveness of those treaties?

**Max:** Obviously, nothing is 100% effective, but IMO treaties have played a very vital and beneficial role. Having global and universal standards is most important for predictability in carrying out international trade, and without those, the maritime industry will become extremely inefficient and much less safe.

**Ken:** I think one of the unique features of IMO conventions is adoption by tacit acceptance. That is a good way to catch up with newly developed technologies.

In addition, resolutions are not legally binding like treaties, but using an international standard gives them binding power, essentially. For example, when we adopted the guidelines related to PCASP (privately contracted armed security personnel): unless you comply, you cannot start global businesses and companies cannot be run. In other words, though it is not legally binding, I think it is an agreement that effectively has binding power.

**Max:** They may not have the explicit binding power of treaties, but soft law has a subdued way of promoting uniformity in implementation of standards internationally when adopted and put into practice.

### National Legislations and Capacity Building

**Ken:** Even if treaties are entered into force, if countries can't adapt national regulations to those treaties, then they may not be able to implement international standards. It becomes a problem of whether countries can secure the human resources to cope with this.

**Max:** Capacity-building in this context is an important issue that IMO addresses through the Technical Cooperation Committee and many different programs. It's also one of the reasons leading to WMU's establishment. Thankfully, we have many developed countries, like Japan, and grant-giving organizations such as the Nippon Foundation that are making important contributions to promote capacity building.

### Memories with the Maritime Industry Authority

**Ken:** You used to work as the Administrator of the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) in your home country, the Philippines. What are some memories from your time there?

**Max:** I had many, many challenges! Many good memories, as well. One unexpected challenge that I will always remember was one that was assigned to me when Super Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines. I was given the task of disentangling the paralyzing gridlock in a critical port area that was preventing relief goods from reaching about 4 million people on the most devastated islands. It demanded a lot of interpersonal communication skills, getting different actors to move in the same direction, but I'm happy to say that within three or four days, in a relatively short time, we were able to get the operations moving once more. This was because everybody joined hands to make things happen. I'm talking about not only colleagues in different government agencies, but even the private sector. So that's one of my best memories. On the other hand, I also faced challenges such as the country's STCW compliance, related to the education, training, and certification of seafarers.

My time in MARINA also allowed me to visit Japan about half a dozen



Aerial inspection of the disaster-struck area<sup>1</sup>

times, which were all enjoyable memories. In fact, I had on two occasions the privilege of a private audience with Dr. Yohei Sasakawa in his office. And, of course, I was welcomed by old friends like yourself, other WMU graduates, and Mr. Kudo.

### Challenges as an Educator

**Ken:** You came back to WMU as a professor after your assignment at MARINA. Are there still any challenges as an educator? I'm interested because I am in a similar position.

**Max:** It will always be a challenge to bridge theory and practice to effectively teach a set of students from different countries with diverse learning needs. As a teacher, you need to be many steps ahead, and though it's not an easy thing to do, it's very fulfilling work. I am particularly gratified that my experience in MARINA has enabled me to connect concepts and principles in the classroom to my real-life experience.

### A Message for WMU Graduates

**Ken:** Lastly, do you have any messages for all the WMU graduates?

**Max:** Yes. My message is to always cherish and nurture the fact that we are part of a unique community. I'm thankful for the role of the Nippon Foundation and Chairman Sasakawa for issuing this Newsletter, which performs a very important function in keeping this network together. Also, to keep in mind that when you're stuck, don't be afraid to reach out. You have a whole world of friends out there who share the same passion for the maritime industry. Our problems are not necessarily unique; there is always somebody out there who might have encountered a similar challenge who can lend a hand and offer advice. That is what it means to be from WMU.

**Ken:** That is a very, very special message for our graduates, including myself. Thank you very much.



<sup>1</sup> Dr. Mejia conducting an aerial inspection of the Port of Matnog where a maritime transport gridlock was impeding the delivery of essential relief goods to more than 4 million victims of Super Typhoon Haiyan. The right-hand side of the photo shows the kilometers-long queue of lorries and personal vehicles waiting to be accommodated on the extremely overstretched ferry services.

# The Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme and the Pandemic

**Mohd Nazwan Hafeez Bin Hashim**  
(Malaysia, 2010)

I joined the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in November 2019 as a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) with the Sub-Division for Operational Safety and Human Element, Maritime Safety Division. The JPO Programme is a notable programme within the United Nations (UN) system. Its main objective is to provide maritime professionals with the opportunity to gain real “UN world” experience as secretariat staff in the field of multilateral international cooperation.

At IMO, my field of activity encompasses matters related to meetings of the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR), the Joint IMO/ITU Experts Group on Maritime Radiocommunication Matters, and the ICAO/IMO Joint Working Group on Harmonization of Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue. I have also provided support for activities associated with ships’ routing measures, LRIT,

revision of SOLAS Chapter IV, amendments to the IAMSAR Manual, and revisions of many other IMO resolutions and circulars.

Everything was smooth sailing before the merciless waves of COVID-19 crashed into IMO Headquarters in mid-March 2020. Since then, IMO’s business-as-usual operating style has turned into an uncommon way of operating that nobody had anticipated, i.e. IMO remote meetings. Not long before the pandemic struck, I read numerous times that people were mulling over the idea of banking without banks, universities without lecture halls, and work without offices.

This pandemic has really sped up the advancement of virtual and remote technologies. Although masses of people are being affected severely by this pandemic, on a positive note, I suppose what is transpiring now could be a turning point where we are being forced to adopt a different mentality—a mentality that



accepts that these virtual methods are our new lifestyle, or the “new normal”. It is undeniably a steep learning curve, not only for the IMO secretariat, but also for all member states’ representatives. Everyone across multiple time zones is compelled to adopt and adapt to virtual skills, abide by the new procedures of remote meetings, and most importantly, keep their fingers crossed for an uninterrupted internet connection!

I truly hope that this pandemic will be over soon and IMO can go back to its normal business practice of holding face-to-face meetings in London. Nevertheless, while we are looking forward to meeting with real human interaction, this pandemic has taught everyone at IMO and all maritime stakeholders that we should incorporate such unforeseen circumstances into our future work planning: a combination of involvement and detachment of physical attributes.

# The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Sasakawa Fellows in the Philippines

As I am writing this article, thinking about what the best topic would be to discuss, I am trying to avoid writing about the COVID-19 global pandemic as this is a broad subject. However, it needs to be mentioned, even just in passing.

During the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic last year, the seafaring industry was directly affected, particularly Filipino seafarers. Embarkation and disembarkation were temporarily suspended by the government to prevent contact with the virus.

To ensure the safety and protect the health and welfare of our seafarers, Atty. Arthur P. Tugade, Secretary of the Department of Transportation (DOTr) launched two programs:

1. Malasakit Help Desk (Concern/Assistance Help Desk)

2. Oplan Byaheng Ayos (Management of Good Travel)

Through Vice Admiral Robert A. Empedrad AFP (Ret), the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) Administrator, and other agencies of the department, the said programs were immediately implemented.

The Malasakit Help Desk is the key point to guiding seafarers, local manning agencies, shipping companies, and other stakeholders regarding what to do with respect to their concerns. In coordination with non-government and government agencies, it addresses the needs of seafarers who have been stranded in different ports/places, particularly in Metro Manila. Also, seafarers are provided with basic needs such as food, water, and other essential personal requirements.



**Roldolfo R. Diawa**  
(Philippines, 2006)

The concept of the Oplan Byaheng Ayos program is to provide seafarers with different modes of transportation—land, sea, or air—for free, without any expense on their part, when they wish to return to their respective hometowns/provinces. In addition to this free transportation, they are given priority by the department to undergo PCR swab tests upon their arrival at an airport/seaport.

These programs are ways to ensure that our seafarers are comfortable once they arrive in or leave the Philippines, even those in domestic trade, recognizing their role and uplifting their spiritual, moral, and physical health.

Sasakawa Fellows are involved in the crafting of these programs and directly participate in their implementation.

May all of us see the beauty of nature even during this global pandemic.





# Working Towards the New Normal at WMU

Sue Jackson  
Registrar, WMU

It is now almost a year since I reported to the Friends of WMU, Japan Newsletter about the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the WMU community in Malmö. If we had known then that we would still be living with COVID-19 a full year later, it would have been very discouraging for us all.

From 16 March, 2020, the faculty delivered the classes taught in the Specialisation Term remotely, with students remaining safely in the Residence. The University was very much open for business, and the faculty and staff worked as normal, whether from home or from the office. The main building, including the library, has been open to any student who wants to use the facilities, and students are welcome to come in for dissertation supervision.



## A Hopeful Shift to Summer and Early Fall

As I think was the case in many places, the summer of 2020 saw a real improvement in the situation. WMU was able to open up for classroom teaching again, though on a small scale and with full precautions. Gradually, the programme of visits to the Residence by the President and senior faculty members drew to an end, as did the need for the Zumba classes held in the Residence courtyard. The summer months saw a surge in optimism among the WMU family in Malmö.

New students who were starting their first term in September 2020 arrived slowly, as travel restrictions in their country were lifted, and almost all were here by the end of the year. To start with, classes were delivered in a hybrid format, with the students in Sweden able to attend class in person while observing social distancing, and others following the classes online from home.

This worked well, and even the students unable to travel were able to make friends and create bonds with their classmates.

## New Restrictions, New Complications

However, as autumn came and the weather grew colder, the infection rate in Sweden climbed again, and to new heights. WMU reverted to teaching online and staff were asked to work from home whenever possible. From 27 October, the Swedish Government introduced new restrictions, limiting the number of people who could be together and imposing new restrictions on public transport, playing sports, and shopping. The limit on the number of people who could attend an event was 50, and the University therefore held the graduation ceremony in a different format. This was a blow to the students who had looked forward to a normal, splendid WMU graduation ceremony, but the four small ceremonies held on 31 October and 1 November were intimate, warm, and meaningful. We were able to arrange for a group of five members of the Royal Fire Brigade Band to perform a music programme from the balcony above the Sasakawa Auditorium. The national guidelines also made impossible the usual student festivities around graduation, and the University management was deeply impressed by the determination and resolution of the students, led by the Student Council, to adhere to the guidelines and avoid infections.

This was particularly important, as the next challenge was to arrange the journeys home of the Class of 2020, all of whom needed negative COVID tests to be able to travel. Some destination countries were still closed to all travellers, and in other cases restrictions made the standard travel routes impossible. Nevertheless, by the end of the year, only one member of the Class of 2020 was still marooned in Malmö—though I am delighted to report that she has now been able to start her long journey home.

## Recent Developments and the Future

The first peak of the winter wave of the pandemic in Sweden occurred at the end of December, but was followed rapidly by a second peak in March. The Government restricted all

meetings to a maximum of eight participants, and so teaching in the Specialisation Term has been online since the New Year. Recently, WMU has been able to introduce a new form of hybrid teaching: up to seven students at one time have been able to register to come into the University to follow an online class in person. The students attending in person have been rotated so that each student is given the chance to attend. Laura Sanchez (Sasakawa Fellow) organised a survey of the MSEA students' reactions to the hybrid classes, and found a very high level of satisfaction regarding the improved interaction with faculty, students' mental health, and class enjoyment. These benefits were shared by the students who had attended in person and those who had attended online. It was also possible to organise a field study visit for the OSGM students to the Kullaberg Marine Reserve. Again, this was a tremendous boost to morale for the whole student body. We will continue to endeavour to do everything we can to improve students' university experience.

The WMU Senior Crisis Management Team continues to meet regularly, and while maintaining the safety and well-being of the students as the first priority, will continue to do everything possible to enhance students' university experience. We are aware of the task before us: WMU graduates will play an essential role in efforts to "build back better" across the maritime and oceans industry. It is now time to look at the benefits of making a new start and adopting a new way of thinking about an ancient and essential field of activity.



# Life with the Pandemic and Welcoming a New Member of the Family

Sophal Laska (Cambodia, 2006)



Greetings from Phnom Penh, Cambodia! It has been 15 years since I graduated from World Maritime University. I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank the Nippon Foundation for providing scholarships for me and my colleagues who studied at WMU ahead of me.

This has been a challenging year for everyone and we have been very fortunate until recently in Cambodia with a very low number of COVID-19 infections. The government vaccination programme has been rolled out well, and we recently received two doses of COVID-19 vaccine. Life has been relatively normal except for several school closures over the past two years. We are now in our first lockdown, so I am alternating working from home and travelling

across a very quiet city to my office. The pandemic has prevented me from travelling abroad to meetings and conferences, but I have been able to spend more time with my wife and sons and I have even learned to cook some traditional Cambodian dishes in my spare time. Having our oldest son at home, too, while schools are closed here has been difficult at times, and we hope that schools will open again this year as he misses his friends. The biggest change this year for our family has been the birth of our younger son, Alexander Khemara, on 18 February. He's brought a lot of smiles and laughter to our home, and we look forward to taking him to England to meet the rest of his family when we can travel again.

## Capt. Sartoto Receives a Most Admired Leaders Award

Friends of WMU, Japan Secretariat

Capt. Mugen S. Sartoto (2007, Indonesia) was awarded a Most Admired Leaders Award 2021. This award is given to those who are recognized as the most admired innovative and visionary leader in categories such as institutional governance, parliament, business, education, and tourism.

Capt. Mugen has been presented with 3 awards thus far: for education in 2017 and for institutional governance in 2019 and this year. The award for education was presented to him while he was Head of West Sumatra Merchant Marine Polytechnic, and the awards for institutional governance during his appointment to the Banjarmasin Port Authority and Batam Port Authority.

Held on 9 April, 2021, the awards ceremony was hosted by 7Sky Media and IM Magazine Indonesia, both of which are nationally well-known in Indonesia as organizations specializing in news and broadcasting.

Capt. Mugen says, "The awards themselves are not the target. The reason I work so hard is to encourage my staff to perform at their best, and instill change in the organizational culture of the institution. This award serves as my motivation to always improve and inspire young leaders, especially young Indonesian maritime leaders, to do their best and serve better, for a better maritime world."



## A New Face Joins the Secretariat



**Kana Matsuda**

The Sasakawa Peace Foundation

Hello! My name is Kana Matsuda, and I am the newest member to join the Secretariat. Some of you might find me familiar, having already "met" me through our various email exchanges.

I was born and raised in the US, earning my B.S. in neuroscience at the College of William and Mary. Moving to Japan almost 5 years ago, I started off working in the field of English education in Shizuoka City, where I enjoyed stunning views of Mt. Fuji on a daily basis.

Now I find myself in the heart of Tokyo, and gazing at the iconic Tokyo Tower from the rooftop of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation building.

I am looking forward to working with the Sasakawa Fellows and supporting this vast and respected network together with Mr. Mizunari, Mr. Kudo, and all the amazing WMU staff. Here's hoping that our e-mail communications become face-to-face some day!

## Editor's note

The Japan Field Study Trip, Orientation, and many other events have been canceled or simplified one after another because of the pandemic. Consequently, we have been facing a hardship never experienced before: finding new topics for the Newsletter. Despite the circumstances, however, we were able to resolve this issue successfully thanks to the tremendous support of WMU and the capabilities of Facebook. I am grateful beyond words.

Speaking of support, the young workers at the office have been helping me keep up with internet society. Even so, I am probably lagging a couple laps behind the average world standard! It was about 6 years ago that the former head of the

WMU affairs division at the Foundation, Shin (Mr. Ichikawa), played a prank by installing Facebook on my smartphone and friending as many Fellows' names as we knew. I hadn't used it much at all, but now that I have more time on my hands, I am trying to remember to "like" posts here and there. I even managed to use Facebook to reach out to Mr. Nazwan, Mr. Laska and Mr. Mugen and ask them for articles for this issue of the Newsletter.

In this way, I hope that all Fellows can continue sharing through the Newsletter how they are leading fulfilling and active lives, both at work and home, no matter how chaotic the circumstances.



**Eisuke Kudo**  
(Advisor, SPF)

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