

# Media Update

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## ILO

PRESS RELEASE

### Pakistan Takes another Step Towards Sustainable Ship Recycling with support from new IMO-ILO-Norway Partnership

***The new project offers Pakistan a unique opportunity to ensure compliance with the international standards in the ship recycling and establish itself as a responsible global actor.***

KARACHI, Pakistan (ILO News) – At the launch of the new project on Decent Work in Pakistan's ship recycling sector, stakeholders emphasized that the initiative will not only improve the lives of workers in the sector but also strengthen the industry's contribution to Pakistan's sustainable development goals.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) and International Maritime Organization (IMO), with funding support from the Government of Norway, joined forces to launch a new initiative aimed at transforming Pakistan's ship recycling sector. The project, titled "SENSREC-DW," is designed to enhance compliance with international labour, safety and environmental standards, ensuring that the sector becomes greener, safer and more sustainable. The launch event, hosted by the IMO and the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, saw participation from government representatives, employer and worker organizations, academia, member states, and UN agencies.

The ship recycling industry plays a vital role in global sustainability by enabling the responsible disposal of decommissioned ships. However, it is also an

industry that faces significant challenges, particularly in occupational safety and health (OSH). Workers are often exposed to hazardous materials and unsafe working conditions. The ILO in Pakistan aims to change this narrative by elevating Pakistan's shipbreaking industry to international standards—ensuring that it operates in a way that prioritizes the safety, dignity, and well-being of its workers.

The new project will complement the Government of Pakistan's efforts to implement the Hong Kong Convention (HKC) for safe ship recycling, which Pakistan ratified in December 2023, and pave the way for ratification of two updated ILO Conventions on Occupational Safety and Health in 2025. Workers' safety and well-being are central to both the HKC and ILO OSH Conventions.

Geir Tonstol, the ILO Country Director for Pakistan said “Through social dialogue, the IMO-ILO SENSREC DW project will foster cooperation and strengthen our ability to tackle the challenges that lie ahead. This project is designed to enhance policy responses and institutional capacities, both at the sectoral and yard levels, to address challenges and opportunities in the shipbreaking sector. Achieving compliance with international standards will require a collective, coordinated approach.”

Representing the Embassy of Norway in Pakistan, Anja Benedicte Myrtveit, Head of Development said, “Norway is committed to supporting Pakistan's effort towards compliance with the Hong Kong Convention, and with the SENSREC-DW project, Norway is committing 18 million NOK over the next two and half years, to ensure safe and sound recycling of ships in Pakistan.”

“We are highly impressed by the broad participation in the workshop, representing numerous government departments, academia, NGOs, workers and the private sector. This level of commitment of stakeholders showcases a strong support to this initiative and for the future of a sustainable ship recycling industry in Pakistan,” said John Alonso, Project Coordinator IMO.

Alia Shahid, Director General Ports and Shipping, Ministry of Maritime Affairs stated, “Today is a defining moment for all the stakeholders of ship recycling

sector. Our efforts have culminated in a structured programme with technical support of IMO and ILO.”

The ILO-IMO project SENSREC-DW will be a breakthrough for ship breaking sector in helping improving compliance with the Hongkong convention and ILO conventions ratified by Pakistan but also Occupational Safety and Health compliance through training at yard level and promoting social dialogue to ensure workers and employers together form strategies to address environmental and social safety guards.

**For further information please contact:**

**Muhammad Numan**

**Communication Officer**

Email: [numan@ilo.org](mailto:numan@ilo.org)

Mobile: +92 303 5000041