



Internazionale

United Press Release On the fire that broke out in the Ferry "NORMAN ATLANTIC"

Roma, 29/12/2014

Once again is being proven that the shipowners' chase of profit is incompatible with taking all necessary measures to protect human life at sea. As it has been revealed, behind the tragic shipwrecks, fires, etc. are serious omissions of seaworthiness of the vessels, with painful consequences for passengers and seamen.

With the fire that broke out at dawn of Sunday, December 28, 2014, in the garage of the ship «NORMAN ATLANTIC» -with Italian flag, owned by «VISEMAR DI NAVIGAZIONE SRL», which has been chartered by the Greek Company ANEK- were compromised the lives of the 478 passengers who were on board.

This has generated very serious questions to be answered accurately and to strictly check the compliance with the rules of safe navigation and protection of human life at sea.

Firstly, what are the real causes of the fire, if the extinguishing media operated, if there was the necessary impermeability of the ship and why was it not possible to deal with the fire from the beginning?

Secondly, given that any delay in case of fire poses huge risks to the lives of the persons on board, why though the fire broke out at approximately 4 pm of Sunday, December 28, were removed to lifeboats only 150 passengers and still remained on board a large number of passengers, even though they were in an area (off of Corfu) where despite the specific adverse weather conditions(without the exaggerations), could contribute to the timely rescue operation sail ships, warships, tugs and offshore helicopters weatherproof?

Thirdly, what is the background of the ship, if it is a retrofitted ferry, if it was justified the presence of such a large number of passengers and vehicles, if the organic composition of the ship could meet the needs, and if there were sufficient rescue instruments and whether they functioned?

Fourthly, what is the background of inspections of the ship, how the remarks made during

the inspection on 19 December 2014 by the Port Authority in Patras -which are available on the system "EQUASIS" (www.equasis.org)- were addressed, remarks that were very serious regarding the seaworthiness of «NORMAN ATLANTIC».

In each case the fire that broke out in the ship «NORMAN ATLANTIC», the risk to the lives of 478 persons on board and any omissions in compliance with safety rules, set in an urgent manner the immediate realization of systematic inspections on passenger ships to meet the standards of protection of life at sea.

The first priority is the use of all means and ways to rescue the persons on board in the passenger ferry «NORMAN ATLANTIC», without any further delay. The responsibilities are great.

Peiraus – Greek/ Roma – Italia Sunday 28th of December 2014

**National Union of Maritime Cooks-PEEMAGEN National Union of Maritime
Mechanichs-PEMEN**

**National Union of Maritime Machine Workers-Stefenson National Union of Crews
Towing – Lifeboats-PEPRN**

USB Lavoro Privato settore Trasporto Marittimo