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18 May 2023

## **Press Statement**

### **Sub: - International Day for Women in Maritime 2023**

The Maldives State Shipping Company (MSS) is proud to celebrate the annual International Maritime Organization (IMO) Women in Maritime Day on 18 May 2023. The day celebrates women in the industry and is intended to promote the recruitment, retention, and sustained employment of women in the maritime sector, raise the profile of women in maritime, strengthen our commitment towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 (gender equality) and support work to address the current gender imbalance in maritime. The theme for this year is “Mobilizing networks for gender equality”.

The maritime industry is traditionally male-dominated, and women's roles and achievements have often been overlooked or undervalued. According to Women's International Shipping & Trading Association (WISTA), women represent less than 2% of the world's seafaring workforce and are predominantly employed in the cruise sector. Looking at the distribution of the ranks that women work in, 39% of women within the surveyed companies by WISTA work in mid-management, 28% in technical roles, and 48% in administrative and support roles. In the Maldives, women have traditionally played a vital role in the maritime industry, particularly in fishing. Women have been involved in fishing activities such as processing and assisting with fishing operations. However, women's participation in other areas of the maritime industry, such as shipping and logistics, has been limited. In recent years, there have been efforts to increase women's participation and leadership in the maritime industry in the Maldives.

With the inception of MSS in 2020, a window of opportunities for knowledge and career development in the maritime industry has opened for Maldivians. At MSS, we strive to provide as many opportunities for gender equality and female empowerment as possible. By promoting education and training through our CSR initiative Kalaaseen Scholarship Program aimed to increase the pool of skilled local maritime personnel, raising awareness and visibility through panel discussions and participating in the various seminars and forums of the maritime sector, facilitating networking and mentorship for our employees, and advocating for policies that support gender diversity and inclusion such as ensuring pay equality for both genders at MSS, we have the vision to create a more inclusive and equitable maritime industry that benefits from the full participation and contributions of women.

Despite these positive developments, women still face challenges in accessing training and employment opportunities in the maritime industry. Addressing these challenges requires a collective effort from stakeholders in the maritime industry, including governments, industry associations, employers, and women's organizations. Initiatives that promote gender diversity, address gender-based barriers, and provide support and networking opportunities for women in maritime will help to increase women's participation and leadership in this sector. Hence, on the occasion of Women in Maritime day 2023, we have opened up special internship opportunities targeted at young women interested to develop their careers in the shipping industry as below:

<https://www.gazette.gov.mv/iulaan/241402>

<https://www.gazette.gov.mv/iulaan/241401>

<https://www.gazette.gov.mv/iulaan/241400>

Join us in celebrating IMO Women in Maritime Day and in advancing gender equality and empowerment in the maritime industry!