



BRICS Seafarers

Gente do Mar dos BRICS

Моряки БРИКС

ब्रिक्स नाविक

金砖国家海员

Salvador Declaration of BRICS Seafarers

Declaration for Decent Work at Sea and in Defense of Peace

Salvador, August 8, 2025

Preamble

We, the representatives of seafarers' trade unions from BRICS countries, gathered in Salvador, Brazil, at the First BRICS Seafarers Forum in its foundation meeting, hereby adopt the **Salvador Declaration**, with the following commitments:

1. Decent Work at Sea

1.1 Seafarers are strategic workers, key for the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of global, regional, and national maritime transport.

Protecting the rights, safety, and fair working conditions of seafarers is essential to building a just, inclusive, and sustainable maritime sector.

1.2 Decent work at sea must be guaranteed through fair wages; shore leave that is adequate for social and family life and funded by shipowners; safe and healthy working conditions onboard; full respect for trade union rights; access to social protection; quality training opportunities; and the meaningful participation of women and young workers. Career development for seafarers must be actively promoted and secured through collective bargaining agreements (CBAs).

1.3 The fight against unfair working conditions in maritime labour, including long periods at sea without compatible and meaningful shore leave paid by the shipowner, the use of flags of convenience and substandard ships, the criminalization and abandonment of seafarers, and any attempts to deregulate national cabotage must be treated as priorities by seafarers' unions in our engagement with governments, shipowners, and international institutions.

1.4 Addressing the climate crisis must go hand in hand with promoting a just transition, one that upholds the right to sustainable development, ensures an energy transition grounded in national sovereignty, and guarantees decent work, social protection, and full rights for all seafarers, including young and female workers in maritime labour.

1.5 A just transition also requires substantial investment in the education and training of seafarers, alongside inclusive social dialogue on a tripartite basis involving governments, employers, and trade unions. We recognize the urgent need to **strengthen financing mechanisms for developing countries to address the impacts of climate change in the maritime sector**. In this context, we support efforts to achieve meaningful progress in this debate at COP 30, to be held in November 2025.

1.6 We urge BRICS countries that have not ratified the ILO Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) to make all efforts to ratify the convention and implement it as a minimum standard, to be further improved through national legislation and collective bargaining.

2. Maritime Sovereignty and Cabotage Protection

2.1 We stand united in the defense of national cabotage policies that:

2.1.1 Guarantee the use of vessels that are nationally flagged, owned, and crewed in domestic maritime operations;

2.1.2 Support local shipbuilding, invest in the national merchant marine, and ensure adequate funding for the development of the sector;

2.1.3 Ensure that seafarers are protected from external pressures that erode national control over their maritime sectors;

2.1.4 Invest in training and capacity development of the national maritime workforce.

3. Peace, Cooperation, and Solidarity

3.1 As seafarers, we know from history that in times of war, we are often among the first workers to suffer severe consequences. Therefore, we stand in support of peace and firmly oppose war, terrorism, and any form of armed attack against commercial and civilian ships and their crews.

3.2 We express deep concern over the growing impact of international sanctions, trade and tax wars on seafarers' rights and livelihoods.

3.3 We denounce the politicization of maritime labor mobility, the criminalization of crews, and the abandonment of ships and workers in foreign ports.

3.4 We affirm that seafarers are workers, not enemies. Citizens of their respective countries, not instruments of geopolitical conflict.

3.5 We understand that peace, multilateralism, and cooperation among peoples must prevail over confrontation and exclusion.

3.6 In alignment with the broader goals of the international labor movement, we ratify the positions expressed by national trade unions in the final declaration of the 14th BRICS Trade Union Forum, held in Brasília in April 2025. In particular, we support the positions on the following general priority themes:

3.6.1 Defense of social justice, peace, and democracy through universal access to education, healthcare, and decent work;

3.6.2 Promotion of a just transition toward sustainable development;

3.6.3 Regulation of artificial intelligence and app-based platform work to protect labor rights; and

3.6.4 Strengthening of inclusive and equitable multilateralism as a foundation for global governance.

4. BRICS Seafarers Working Plan

4.1 We approve the **foundation of the BRICS Seafarers Forum** and the establishment of a **Correspondence Working Group**, along with the thematic priorities identified for joint analysis and coordination among seafarers' unions, including:

4.1.1 Crew abandonment;

4.1.2 Maritime energy just transition for seafarers;

4.1.3 Equality, inclusion, and anti-xenophobia policies;

4.1.4 Regulation of autonomous and remotely operated ships;

4.1.5 Increase of minimum manning standards for decent work;

4.1.6 Women's participation in the maritime sector;

4.1.7 Protection of cabotage and domestic jobs;

4.1.8 Fair treatment of seafarers in cases of criminalization;

4.1.9 Participation in international forums and collective action;

4.1.10 Additional themes approved by consensus within the Coordination Committee.

5. Final Commitment

5.1 We, the undersigned, commit to building a strong, united, and strategic voice for BRICS seafarers, anchored in the principles of sovereignty, social justice, the dignity and rights of maritime workers, and the defense of peace among nations.

Adopted by consensus in Salvador, on August 8, 2025.