****

**Press release**

24 January 2012

**CEOs targeted by anti-piracy campaign**

[www.SaveOurSeafarers.com](http://www.SaveOurSeafarers.com) (SOS), the international anti-piracy initiative backed by 30 of the world’s largest maritime organisations, is to lobby support from business leaders to increase international pressure on Governments to take firmer action against Somali piracy.

The worsening violence and hostage-taking is costing the world economy an estimated $12 billion a year.

SOS SaveOurSeafarers Campaign Chair Giles Heimann, said:

“These criminal gangs are holding the world economy to ransom. Hundreds of seafarers have been held hostage and the physical and mental ill-treatment they are forced to suffer makes horrifying reading. Sixty-five seafarers have died as a direct result of Somali piracy in the past five years, through torture, murder, suicide, malnutrition and disease. The potential economic impact of the crisis is hugely disturbing given the knife edge on which the global economy is currently perched.

“Any business or organisation that conducts trade though the Suez Canal and across the Indian Ocean to the Indian sub-continent and Asia and Australasia is at risk. That’s about one-fifth of global trade. We feel that businesses which rely on these routes remaining safe will be keen to offer their support. They rely on the movement of manufactured goods, raw materials, food and fuel to operate.

“We need help from the world’s business leaders who have the foresight to understand the future impact of this progressively escalating problem. In business parlance, the pirate gangs have discovered the meaning of scalability - their criminal ‘business model’ now extends across an area of ocean twice the size of Europe.

“If this situation continues, there is a real risk that the Gulf of Aden, the Arabian Sea and the entire Indian Ocean could become restricted zones for shipping; that seafarers could simply refuse to sail into war-like attacks, captivity and the nightmare of suffering that follows; or that ship owners will not put ships and crews at risk. Using alternative routes will play havoc with costs and there is no alternative to sailing through the area for over 40% of all seaborne oil which originates from the Arabian Gulf region.”

The campaign will be contacting such corporate luminaries as JCB’s Alan Blake, Phil Clarke of Tesco, Ian Tyler of Balfour Beatty and UK Vodaphone chief, Guy Laurence.

“Part of the role of business leaders is to seek opportunities and identify threats, “says Heimann. “Shipping industry representatives are in a position to make direct contact with world business leaders. We see it as our duty to warn them of the threat to their businesses posed by severe restrictions to one fifth of the world’s major sea trade routes.

“We hope that in turn, they will bring pressure upon their respective governments to eliminate the piracy threat.”

Since its launch in March the campaign has gained support from the UK, Philippine and Georgian governments. The website has attracted visits from 184 countries worldwide, leading to more than 26,000 individual letters from members of the public to the heads of state of more than 100 countries around the world.

See [www.saveourseafarers.com](http://www.saveourseafarers.com)

**ENDS**

**About SaveOurSeafarers**

* SOS SaveOurSeafarers is the biggest ever grouping of the international maritime industry with 30 organisations joined together to raise awareness of the human and economic cost of piracy using approaches to politicians and industrial leaders at the highest level.
* SOS started operation in March 2011.
* SOS’s main aims are to resolve the piracy problem off Somalia; to see piracy deterred, defeated and eradicated; to stop seafarers being tortured and murdered.
* SOS is calling for unified action to raise awareness of the human and economic cost of piracy.
* Piracy costs the global economy up to$12bn a year
* 90% of the world's food, fuel, raw materials and manufactured goods are delivered by sea
* Our campaign has gained support across 187 countries worldwide.
* Supporters include [**ASF**](http://asianshipowners.org/) (Asian Shipowners’ Forum), [**BIMCO**](https://www.bimco.org/),  [**CEFOR**](http://www.cefor.no/) (Nordic Association of Marine Insurers), [**DNK**](https://www.warrisk.no/) (Den Norske Krigsforsikring for Skib), [**GSF**](http://www.shippersvoice.com/) (Global Shippers’ Forum), **IFSMA** (International Federation of Shipmasters' Associations) [**IMEC**](http://www.imec.org.uk/) (Int’l Maritime Employers' Committee), [**ICS/ISF**](http://www.marisec.org/) (International Chamber of Shipping/International Shipping Federation) [**IMB**](http://www.icc-ccs.org/) (International Maritime Bureau), [**IMO**](http://www.imo.org) (International Maritime Organization), [**Intercargo**](http://www.intercargo.org/) (International Assoc’n of Dry Cargo Shipowners), [**INTERTANKO**](http://www.intertanko.com/) (Int’l Association of Independent Tanker Owners),  [**InterManager**](http://www.intermanager.org/) (International Ship Managers’ Association), [**IG**](http://www.igpandi.org/) (International Group of P&I Clubs), [**IPTA**](http://www.ipta.org.uk/) (International Parcel Tanker Association), [**ITF**](http://www.itfglobal.org/) (International Transport Workers’ Federation), [**IUMI**](http://www.iumi.com/) (International Union of Marine Insurance), [**LMA**](http://www.lmalloyds.com/) (Lloyd’s Market Association), **Nautical Institute**, [**SIGTTO**](http://sigtto.re-invent.net/DNN/) (Society of International Gas Tanker and Terminal Operators), **UGS** (Union of Greek Shipowners), [**UK Chamber of Shipping**](http://www.british-shipping.org/), [**WISTA**](http://www.wista.net/)UK (Women's International Shipping & Trading Association), [**UK P&I Club**](http://www.ukpandi.com/), [**WSC**](http://www.worldshipping.org/) (World Shipping Council, [**GARD**](http://www.gard.no/) (P&I insurance), [**North of England P&I Club**](http://www.nepia.com/home/), [**London P&I Club**](http://www.londonpandi.com), [**Standard Club** (P&I Club)](http://www.standard-club.com/), [**Britannia P&I Club**](http://www.britanniapandi.com/)**E**nergy Maritime)
* Interviews with SOS spokespeople and hostages available on request.

For further information, interviews and photography contact:

**John Walding**

john@rmspr.co.uk

**Rachael Richards**

rachael@rmspr.co.uk

**0161 927 3131**