



# APAY NEWS

Monthly e-Newsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs

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We have 'closed' the Appeal for Cyclone Nargis Rehabilitation Work in Myanmar, and Sichuan Earthquake Rehabilitation Work in Chengdu, China. We thank the following for their contributions sent to the Secretariat, and other YMCAs that responded directly to the two movements.

► For Myanmar ~ YMCAs of Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chiang Mai -Thailand, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Manila Downtown YMCA-Philippines, New Zealand, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, and USA – World Service. [Total USD 46,831]

► For Chengdu, China ~ YMCAs of Canada, Hong Kong, Japan, Macau, Malaysia, Manila Downtown YMCA - Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, USA – World Service. [Total USD 42,615]

► The YMCA of Hong Kong gave in direct response to the need, RMB 174,790 for the Rehabilitation of the Chengdu YMCA School, RMB 265,270 for the Orphanage, and, RMB100,000 for relief work, amounting to a total of RMB 540,060.

## 1. Empowering Women for Mission, 25-29 September, Chiang Mai, Thailand

Following the response to the Pre-assembly Forum on Gender Equity and recommendations for more efforts towards fostering equality within the YMCA, a regional training workshop on Empowering Women for Mission and Development will be organised on 25-29 September in Chiang Mai, Thailand. It aims to gather YMCA key leaders/staff (men and women) to bridge conceptual understanding and develop appropriate practical actions to address gender relations and issues in a more holistic and integrated approach. Focus will be on responsive strategic interventions/tools, skills development for effective implementation to bridge the gaps between policy and practice.

*Details have been sent to National Movements and posted on our website.*

## 2. Forum on Global Citizenship, 16-19 October, Tokyo, Japan

In response to our commitment to promoting Global Citizenship, a Forum on Global Citizenship will be held from 16-19 October 2008 in Tokyo, Japan. The forum for the YMCAs within and outside the region is intended to deepen understanding and increase responses on Global Citizenship. It will help forge a practical curriculum framework for response as socially responsible change agents. It will also seek to develop a resource team for furthering actions at various levels.

*Details will be communicated to the National movements soon.*

### 3. UPDATES ~ Youth Participation and Development Programmes

*With this APAY Quadrennial emphasis, YMCA youth in the region will have the opportunity to experience the spirit of interconnectedness as they engage responsibly to build a better future. We are happy to announce the participation and engagement of YMCA youth in the following international programmes:*

- ▶ **ON NOW! 1st Asia & Pacific University YMCAs Regional Conference, 2-8 August in Hong Kong.** Ninety university students/volunteers will engage in deliberations for a better world, for equality in local communities. Thirty-four are from the YMCAs of Cambodia (1), Japan (6), Korea (7), Macau (1), Philippines (2), Singapore (14), and Taiwan (4). Fifty-seven, including volunteer leaders are from the Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong, the hosts.
- ▶ **THIS WEEK! 3<sup>rd</sup> International YMCA Timor Leste Youth Peace Camp, 5-13 August, Dili, East Timor.** Fifteen youth and staff of the YMCAs of Hong Kong (1), Japan (7), Korea (5) and Metro YMCA of Singapore (1) and Kenya YMCA of Africa one (1) will 'search' for the meaning of 'peace' and 'reconciliation' as they interact with the community in one of the world's poorest countries that had experienced much suffering/violence.
- ▶ **4<sup>th</sup> Asian Students and Youth Gathering (ASYG), 25-31 August, Seoul, Korea.** This is an EASY Net quadrennial ecumenical gathering of students/youth. They will define for themselves 'the culture of peace'. YMCAs of Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea and Philippines will be participating.
- ▶ **3<sup>rd</sup> Nias Love and Affection Camp, 25 August - 2 September, Indonesia.** The Kumamoto YMCA/NCY Japan, Metro YMCA of Singapore, will join the Medan YMCA to interact with children/youth traumatised by the 2004 tsunami and 2005 earthquakes in Sirombu, Nias Island.

We thank all Movements that have been supporting and promoting youth participation in meaningful international experiences to become more action-responsive global citizens in their communities,

**Contact your National General Secretary /or visit [www.asiapacificymca.org](http://www.asiapacificymca.org)**

### 4. YMCA Cambodia Community Volunteer Leaders Training

In a continued effort to strengthen the young Cambodian YMCA, a second capacity building workshop will be conducted for youth volunteer leaders there. The focus will be on developing Community Volunteers/Workers to lead community activities or sessions for children/youth/adults in particular focus area(s). Participants would learn and practice skills, and basic methods to prepare effective implementation plans to fit their activities' needs.

**Movements are invited to send youth leaders to be part of the training experience, for sharing/learning through interaction with the Cambodian YMCA youth leaders.**

**It will strengthen our solidarity with this 'youthful' emerging YMCA as they develop their leadership capacity for their mission in the community.**

*Please contact Cristina Dalope ~ [cristina@aspacificymca.org](mailto:cristina@aspacificymca.org) for more information.*

## 5. KB-Korean YMCA Global Citizenship Project in 7 Movements

As featured in the March APAY e-News, the Korean YMCA in partnership with the Kook Min Bank (KB) will through the MAP initiative foster Global Citizenship for Sustainable Communities focussing on livelihood/development/peace-building. Following field surveys, 10 sites in 7 movements, Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam – were identified for the project. After intensive training 50 Korean youth of the “Raon Atti” (*Together with Good Friends*) Volunteers Corps will be engaged in local communities for 5 months starting on August 20, 2008.

## 6. Seeking Fresh Contextual Mission Action As Global Citizens

The 25-29 June Regional Roundtable on *YMCA as Global Citizens in Mission 21* in Manila, Philippines, inaugurated by our President Dr. Park Jai Chang, brought together 57 leaders from 13 movements of the region. It provided space for participants to raise issues as global citizens amidst the emerging challenges of a globalised world. They reflected on realities experienced and in exposures in different sectors of the Philippine communities. Case stories by YMCAs and local NGOs were testimonies to responses to these concerns of life.

Key inputs on the *YMCA's Mission in Peace and Justice*<sup>1</sup>, *Sustainability for Life*<sup>2</sup> and *YMCA's Social Responsibilities as Global Citizens*<sup>3</sup> formed the conceptual backbone of the participatory interactions. Participants actively critiqued issues and our current responses; and worked on fresh ideas and initiatives.

The *Manila Commitment*, renewed commitment to the vision and a contemporary mission of the YMCA, to pursue imperatives and guidelines for contextual action as Global Citizens through communities of practice focusing on building social responsibility, promoting peace with justice and fostering sustainability for life.

We thank the National Board and National Staff led by Mr. Ramon Cardenas, President and Ms. Elsie Borreo, NGS of YMCA Philippines; and YMCAs of Cebu, Makati, Manila, Manila Downtown for their support. [See [www.asiapacificymca.org](http://www.asiapacificymca.org) for pictures in photo gallery]

## 7. Triangular Deliberation on Y-s Partnership in Mission

The Regional Roundtable also had space for strengthening YMCA–YWCA–Y's Men partnership in mission. Leaders and participants who were also members of these organizations shared their experiences of partnership between these movements and affirmed the need to strengthen existing partnership for community action. The Asia Area and South Pacific Area Y's Men, the Philippine/World YWCA and the Interfaith Cooperation Forum, a joint APAY-CCA partnership, shared their initiatives in response to community needs.

## 8. Applications for 26th Advanced Studies Programme Closed

Application for participation in the 26<sup>th</sup> Advanced Studies Programme from 26 October–29 November 2008 in Hong Kong have closed with more than the maximum intake of 14.

**Successful applicants will be informed through their National Movements by 15 August.**

<sup>1</sup> Dr. J.B. Banawiratma, Professor, Duta Wacana Christian University, Jogjakarta, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> Ms. Carla Santos, Director, Movement Strengthening and Rural Development, Philippines Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Movement, Manila

<sup>3</sup> Rev. Dr. David Selvaraj, Executive Director, Visthar, Bangalore, India)

## 9. Youth Challenged to Respond in Community as Global Citizens

*Jane So, Youth Representative in the Council of YMCAs of Hong Kong, reports .....*

*On 7– 11 July 2008, the YMCA of Japan hosted us at the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs regional youth roundtable in Tozanso, Japan. Twenty-nine youth from 9 movements participated in this event to discuss the impacts of globalization on youth in society and youth response as global citizens.*

### **Maximum Youth Hiroba.....**

The Roundtable was a unique experience for us as it was mainly in *Hiroba* sessions – a Japanese concept of a meeting in a common space for sharing and interaction among friends.

The first morning *Hiroba* session took place on 8 July, focusing on “*Youth Realities, Trends and Challenges*”. Participants shared their experiences and situations relative to their own local communities.

Common issues raised were classified into three categories – social, economic and political issues. Social issues included social withdrawal/isolation, discrimination of minority groups, indigenous people and recent arrivals, lack of self-confidence, addiction to the internet and online games, and easy access to internet pornography. Environmental destruction/impacts were raised. Inappropriate purposes of education were also discussed – the purpose of education no longer to develop society, but a means to commercial profit. As for economic issues, poverty, youth unemployment and concerns regarding migrant workers were named. Lastly, the freedom of expression and religion was touched upon as a political issue.

The last *Hiroba* Session was the prioritising of issues highlighted for action-response. These were summarised in the ‘*Tozanso Hiroba Consensus*’ shared and adopted for our follow-up.

We were able to experience some of these *Hiroba*-raised concerns during the Exposures to the community.

The evening *Hiroba* Sessions bonded us closer as a community seeking a common vision for a better world. After initial community building activities, we celebrated our lives and actions together in the *Youth Expo-Show! (YES!)*. Power-oint presentations and exhibits showcased the diverse youth actions and responses to issues in different YMCAs. We thoroughly enjoyed learning about our different cultures and customs during the cultural exchange, interacting with each other as we celebrated the elements that make each culture unique.

The final Evening *Hiroba* was an exciting community forum. Debate motions included “*Social isolation is a result of globalization*”, “*There is no purpose to education in today’s world*” and “*Only Youth Can Bring a Better Future as Citizens in a Globalised World*”. We were challenged to think critically about the motions. Everyone confidently expressed their views on the issues, and we were our own critics and adjudicators.

### **and .....only Limited Adult Inputs!**

Unlike other forums, though limited, the inputs enhanced our understanding of the impacts of globalisation and global citizenship on youth in society. After each input, we were able to freely express our opinions and understanding of the issues in our *hirobas*.

Mr. Chan Beng Seng, *Executive Director, Documentation for Action Groups in Asia (DAGA)* shared with us “*The Good, the Bad and Ugly of Globalisation and its Impacts*”. He shared his insights on the positive and negative impacts of globalisation, and how we could act responsibly to counter the negatives and build on positives as global citizens.

Before our action-response prioritising, Mr. Yip Kok Choong, *APAY General Secretary*, spoke on “*Engaging Youth in Global Citizenship and Social Responsibility*”. He highlighted

the need for youth as global citizens to bridge existing gaps between concepts, concerns, realities, experiences/learning, and to act as focussed, thinking, responsive youth.

### Exposures to Realities

The exposures provided us with opportunities to explore realities in our world today. We were able to explore our relationship with nature and to experience the wonders of God's creation on a hike up the slope of Mount Fuji in the exposure on "*Sustainability for Life*". Some of us felt a sense of a close belonging to nature. We were reminded of the importance of preserving the environment.

On the exposure to experience "*Social Responsibility as Global Citizens*", we visited a shrine, a temple and a hospital for Hansen Disease [leprosy] patients. Those who visited the shrine or temple learnt of the integration and influence of religion in their lives. The visit with the leprosy patient gave participants a closer glimpse of the lives and feelings of those afflicted with leprosy, enabling them to learn more about social discrimination.

After the visits to the relative locations, we visited with traditional Japanese families for an experience of Japanese life and culture. We discovered more about Japanese customs and were able to appreciate the similarities and values of our diverse cultures.

### Our Challenge and Response

The regional youth roundtable gave us a 'free-space' to reflect on our social responsibilities as global citizens, active agents of change in our communities and within our own YMCAs, as we face the impacts of globalisation. We were engaged in a learning process throughout the programme and were given the opportunities to critically reflect on issues affecting us and to develop a common framework of action responses, the '*Tozanso Hiroba Consensus*'.

We want to act on our *Hiroba* commitment in the coming years. We call on our local and national movements to adopt the '*Consensus*' principles and to take action to address the issues of globalisation faced by youth, together with us as global citizens.

[See [www.asiapacificymca.org](http://www.asiapacificymca.org) for pictures in photo gallery]

## **10. Programme HEAL to Sustain YMCA Tsunami Response Programme in Nias**

The Nias YMCA Tsunami Response Programme (YTRP) Partners Coordinating Group (PCG) had its final meeting on 14-19 July as it officially concludes July 2008. Together with the YTRP team interacted with the "grassroots" again in 7 villages in south and west Nias. Listening to their achievements and hopes for the future. The site visits were enriching. We saw the impacts of the social transformative process that had brought changes for a better future for these communities. We were especially touched by the commitment and dedication of the local Niasan/Medan YMCA young leaders who had lived with and accompanied the village communities towards a "New Nias". The PCG team was composed of Darren O' Connor (Y Care International), Emile Stricker (HorYzon), Ayano Inami (NCY Japan), Cristina Dalope (APAY Related Executive), Yip Kok Choong (APAY General Secretary/Chairperson).

The PCG and YTRP team also deliberated on a follow-up, dubbed *Programme HEAL* (*Health, Education, Adult Illiteracy and Livelihood*) with the following components:

- Enhancement of livelihood development for Community Groups', e.g. in animal health, grafting, organic fertilisers/composting
- Enhancement of Youth Development to empower them through cooperatives and training for small business enterprise.

- Expansion of Women's Programmes to increase literacy, enhance alternative health and reproductive health care.
- Expansion of Children's Programmes to improve their quality of life through better pre-school education, nutrition and health care.
- Establishment of central village health posts for basic, emergency health care.
- Enhance Strategic Planning and Human Resources Development (HRD).

Together with the local communities, the Medan YMCA will continue to implement the *Programme HEAL* to sustain the transformative processes in place, building on the successes of YTRP. [*See [www.asiapacificymca.org](http://www.asiapacificymca.org) for pictures in photo gallery*]

**11. INTRODUCING GENDER EQUITY ACTIONS .....**

**Women and Economic Justice: Chiang Mai YMCA**

Since 1982, the YMCA of Chiang Mai has been assisting poor villagers in Northern Thailand by giving them a way to earn a living. A two-pronged method is used to accomplish this. First, villagers are taught by governmental and non-governmental organizations to make and market products. Some of these villagers are already highly skilled. Second, once the villagers become proficient, the YMCA helps to market the product locally and internationally.

As a first step, the YMCA provided vocational training to the villagers, depending upon the request of the villagers and the natural resources available. Where there was a market, the YMCA encouraged traditional crafts in danger of dying out, such as basket making or cotton weaving. In other cases, skills such as sewing, woodcarving or ceramics were initiated. The trainers were either YMCA staff from the Community Development Department or villagers who had attended special handicraft training courses. A network has been established in Northern Thailand to offer producers local sales opportunities and this has proven very successful.

The YMCA set up the Y Development Cooperation Company Ltd. to market products internationally, exporting handicrafts to Alternative Trade Organizations (ATOs) around the world through a mail-order business. Profits from exporting go to into YMCA rural development programmes. The dividends from some of the ATO customers are shared among the producers themselves to benefit their community.

The YMCA works with more than thirty producer groups in Northern Thailand which together employ more than five hundred people. The groups are primarily women who need to supplement their families' income.

***For more information - [yintercm@ymcachiangmai.org](mailto:yintercm@ymcachiangmai.org) /Visit [www.ymcachiangmai.org](http://www.ymcachiangmai.org)***

**YMCA Japan Action On Gender Equity**

*Ms. Toshiko Takeda, then Chairperson of the APAY Gender Equity Committee shared at the Pre-17<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Gender Equity Forum, 'Today, I am very happy to share how we implemented our plans after the APAY Gender Equity Training Workshop in November 2006. It was a great motivating experience for us and we decided to carry out our action plan as soon as possible. We made three major action programmes to promote gender equity and empower the women's leadership in Japan'.*

**Establishment of National Women's Committee**

The first Women's Committee of the National Council of YMCAs in Japan comprising both women and men was formed in November 2006 to promote gender sensitivity and to create more space and opportunities for women in the YMCA. We carried out a survey of the status

of gender balance within our YMCA. The result of the survey revealed great gender inequalities, especially in decision-making at each level of the YMCAs in Japan.

The Women's Committee set a goal to increase the number of women in leadership at the decision-making level by 5%. The National Council adopted the recommendation. The results –

|                               |          |                                   |           |
|-------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>National Board Members</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>National Executive Members</b> | <b>23</b> |
| Female                        | 1(14 %)  | Female                            | 3(13 %)   |
| Youth                         | 0        | Youth                             | 1(4%)     |

|  |            |                                |              |
|--|------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Local Board &amp; Executive Committee Members</b> | <b>719</b> | <b>Local Committee Members</b> | <b>1677</b>  |
| Female   | 86 (12%)   | Female                         | 467 (27.8 %) |
| Youth  | 86 (12%)   | Youth                          | 226 (13.5 %) |

### Revised Staff Training Curriculum

The Women's Committee proposed to include *Gender Education* in the National Council's staff training programme, especially in the Step II Training to foster gender equity and develop greater partnerships between women and men. The Curriculum Committee adopted our recommendation to provide gender awareness study in the staff training in October 2007.

### Gender Awareness Workshop and Materials for Risk Management Manual

The Women's Committee conducted gender related training and workshops for the first time, during the National Council Meeting in 2007 in Tozanso, to promote and sustain the fostering of more partnerships between women and men. The Committee prepared materials and resource booklets for risk management on sexual or power harassment, using cases from past YMCA programmes. We had lively discussions and the leaders from about 120 YMCAs realized the importance of integrating the gender perspective in YMCA. The National Council decided to form a Risk Management Committee based on human rights, and to prepare manuals for prevention of sexual or power harassment.

The Women's Committee will continue to work for the YMCA to be a model of gender equity. To get rid of the boundaries and the traditional barriers to make women and men work in a cooperative way for the mission, as *Challenge 21* states, '*especially with those oppressed and discriminated against on the basis of gender*'.

## 12. FORTHCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

| DATES                    | EVENTS  | VENUE                |
|--------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 2-8 August               | 1 <sup>st</sup> Regional Uni-Y Conference           | Hong Kong            |
| 5-13 August              | 3 <sup>rd</sup> International Youth Peace Work Camp | Dili, East Timor     |
| 25-31 August             | EASY Net Asian Students and Youth Gathering         | Seoul, Korea         |
| 25 August – 2 September  | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Nias Love and Affection Camp        | Nias, Indonesia      |
| 5-7 September            | YMCA Cambodia Community Volunteer Leaders Training  | Phnom Penh, Cambodia |
| 16-19 September          | Global Staff Team – Resource Mobilisation           | Geneva, Switzerland  |
| 25-29 September          | Empowering Women for Mission and Development        | Chiang Mai, Thailand |
| 16-19 October            | Regional Forum on Global Citizenship                | Tokyo, Japan         |
| 19-21 October            | Third APAY Officers' Meeting                        | Tokyo, Japan         |
| 26 October – 29 November | 26th Advanced Studies Programme                     | Hong Kong            |

## 13. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS ~ Mission Focus .....Stepping Beyond The Obvious

Another awareness advertisement of the software solutions company, SAS that I had used in the last concluding remarks states, '*Chickens are hypnotized by drawing a line in the dirt over and over .....They find it hard to step past the obvious....But You Can...*'

In the recent two roundtables on *YMCA as Global Citizens in Mission 21* and *Globalisation and its Impacts on Youth and Social Responsibility*, we consciously tried to take ourselves over the line of what we perceived as the obvious. Participants focussed on identifying the realities impacting their lives and communities themselves, rather than listen to a scholarly input. They focussed on what they had seen, experienced, struggled with in their own lives, families, and communities. They interacted with 'real-life' people in affluent, and in struggling poverty stricken communities, impacted upon by inequalities caused by negative outcomes of globalisation. They shared and learnt from each other's real-life stories and experiences. As they struggled through the diversities of their realities and communities, they came to a common focus – it all lies in the community and social action together as a community.

In Nias, Indonesia, a team of committed young people from Medan YMCA and Nias, with a common focus of rebuilding the community, immersed themselves in the realities of the people and scattered, far-flung villages, some reachable only on foot. They shared their struggles and hardships. They shared their hopes. But the common focus of the hope for a 'new Nias' rising from the destruction and a 'ruined' neglected island economy, has brought the people together to work as a 'community' for each other's good.

Very often we plan our work and determine our mission based on perceptions....that we perceive as reality-truth. Often like a chicken, not able to see the 'obvious', hypnotised by our perceptions, sometimes based on 'second-hand experiences' or what we read or told. Or we may well be influenced by the scramble for indicators, indexes and benchmarks to determine our targets or achievements. We become dependent on others' perception-driven orientation and culture. Numbers and figures do not depict the 'obvious' – the reality of impacts on lives and communities; but only the perception that the numbers provided with essentials to 'survive' a crisis or disaster, have life rebuilt. How misleading could this perception be...how far from the reality-truth of the greater hurts, struggles and unmet hopes.....

Of course, we all have perceptions - are they good, correct; are we convinced that they are real..... If we are, they become reality-truth. Thus, we need to be able to distinguish reality-truth from mere perception or appearance as we seek our mission focus, the 'reason for being in community'.

*May the Lord bless, keep and guide us as we seek the reality-truth in our mission focus in community.....*

**Yip Kok Choong**  
*General Secretary*

**Cristina A. Dalope, Jose Varghese,**  
*Executive Secretaries*

**8 September: International Literacy Day**

International Literacy day observed annually on 8 September, focuses attention on worldwide literacy needs. More than 780 million of the world's adults (nearly two-thirds of whom are women) do not know how to read or write, and between 94 and 115 million children lack access to education. The celebration's theme for 2008 is "*Literacy and Health*". This was also the thematic emphasis of the 2007-2008 biennium of the United Nations Literacy Decade. In particular, International Literacy Day 2008 has a strong emphasis on Literacy and Epidemics with a focus on communicable diseases such as HIV, Tuberculosis and Malaria, some of the world's most important public health concerns.

**15 September: International Day of Democracy**

In 2007 the UN declared 15 September the International Day of Democracy. The UN invites all Member States, organizations, non-governmental organizations and individuals to commemorate the International Day of Democracy in an appropriate manner that contributes to raising public awareness. The organization also invites member states to make sure, that parliamentarians and civil society organizations are given appropriate opportunity to be involved in, and contribute to, the celebration of the International Day of Democracy. The UN states "democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems, and their full participation in all aspects of life." And that "While democracies share common features, there is no single model of democracy and that democracy does not belong to any country or region."

**16 September: International Day for the Preservation of Ozone layer**

On 19 December 1994, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 16 September the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer, commemorating the date, in 1987, on which the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was signed. This commemoration around the world offers an opportunity to focus attention and action at the global, regional and national levels on the protection of the ozone layer. All Member States are invited to devote this special day to promotion, at the national level, of concrete activities in accordance with the objectives and goals of the Montreal Protocol and its Amendment.

**21 September: International Day of Peace**

The International Day of Peace is on 21 September of each year and calls for a full day of peace and ceasefire throughout the world. The International Day of Peace, established by a United Nations resolution in 1981 to coincide with the opening of the General Assembly, was first inaugurated on the third Tuesday of September 1982. Beginning on the 20th anniversary in 2002, the UN General Assembly set 21 September as the now permanent date for the International Day of Peace.

The International Day of Peace provides an opportunity for individuals, organizations and nations to create practical acts of Peace on a shared date. It is also provides a possibility to use the International Day of Peace annually to highlight the Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001 to 2010.

**Last week of September: World Maritime Day**

The exact date is left to individual Governments but is usually celebrated during the last week in September. The day is used to focus attention on the importance of shipping safety, maritime security and the marine environment and to emphasize a particular aspect of IMO's work. The theme for the day in 2008 will be: "IMO: 60 years in the service of shipping". This theme was chosen as an appropriate way in which to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the IMO Convention (1948) and the 50th anniversary of its entry into force (1958).

