

On a multinational level, politics have produced many bilateral agreements and regional cooperative endeavours in the interest of promoting local political and economic aims. On a broader front, particularly within the UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) the establishment and expansion of national merchant fleets of the developing world have been set as a priority. The United Nation's Convention for a Code of conduct for Liner Conferences was the product of an international review of the conferences, including difficulties of negotiating with conferences and ensuring participation of national lines. The Code became the first internationally recognized instrument to endorse a role for national lines, which may entail cargo sharing arrangements.

Within the UNCTAD there have been several other initiatives designed to promote the growth of merchant marines in the developing world. Recent efforts sponsored by the developing world focussed on the control of shipping by multi-national corporations, the movement of hydro-carbons, and the phasing out of flags-of-convenience. Such initiatives to transfer control and ownership of merchant fleets to the developing world are in line with the premise that countries that generate trade have a right to transport it.

In this volatile environment, ownership of the world fleet has been redistributed with the developing countries making substantial gains. From slightly over 6 percent in 1985, the developing world's fleet rose to 17.1 percent in 1985. Those countries are well on their way towards their target of 20 percent by 1990.

MERCHANT FLEETS OF THE DEVELOPING WORLD Growing and Not About to Leave the World Stage

