

Canada's Transport Minister Benoit Bouchard also expressed satisfaction that this prestigious organization has recognized the distinguished career of Mr. O'Neil in the Canadian public service. "I am pleased that his competence and dedication will now be devoted to the international maritime community", said Mr. Bouchard.

Mr. O'Neil is a native of Ottawa and has had more than forty years experience in maritime affairs. A former head of the Canadian Coast Guard, he is currently President of the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority. Mr. O'Neil enjoys a solid international reputation, having served as Chairman of the IMO Council for the last ten years, and as a governor of the World Maritime University in Malmo, Sweden.

Canada attaches great importance to the work of the IMO, which has as its main objective the facilitation of cooperation among governments on technical matters affecting international shipping, in order to achieve the highest practicable standards of maritime safety and efficiency in navigation. Canada was the first charter member of the IMO (1948) and, since its inception, has participated fully and constructively in all of its executive bodies.