# SEATRADE MIDDLE EAST MARITIME TECHNOLOGY FORUM 27 OCTOBER 2010 at 14h

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**&**
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**'Check against delivery'**



Dear Ladies and Gentlemen

We are gathered here today for the Opening of the Technology Forum. I am thankful for the invitation to give a Welcome speech to the Forum as it provides me the opportunity to make a few remarks and let all of us gather our thoughts.

Slide 1 – THE HUMAN ELEMENT: natural tools vs artificial tools (Homo Technicus)

Mankind is technical by nature. Technology is not an addition to mankind but, in fact, one of the ways in which mankind distinguishes itself from animals. In the ambit of Western culture, but I am sure similar relevance is to be found in the Middle Eastern culture, according to the myth of Prometheus, animals are provided with *natural tools* in order to survive but the human person is born devoid of these as he or she alone has the capacity of producing *artificial tools*. In the Garden of Eden Adam was also made to work in order to reap its fruits. This shows the 'unfinished condition of mankind' which means that human beings are forced to interact with the material cosmos in order to produce technology. This defines: 'HOMO TECHNICUS'[1].

Today there are constantly rapid advances in science and technology. This not only changes society, reshaping the relationship between human beings, technology and the environment, in this case the oceans and seas, but also creates new challenges to be faced under the spotlight of public debate.

[1] On Technoethics – José M. Galvan

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The environmental challenge is an emerging opportunity and a good business case: the greening of technology and environmentally conscious innovation is and will drive the shipbuilding agenda.

We in EMEC recognize this environmental challenge to be a main driver in the research and development ahead. Indeed, alongside very interesting thoughts on advanced technological developments which we will hear from my colleagues in the industry, we will also today hear about terms like 'more efficient operations', which in our view is another way of saying more environmental friendly operations. There should be no conflict here!

Therefore my speech today will have some of its focus on this theme.

Slide 2 – THE ENVIRONMENT: Ocean and Seas of few vs. of all

If something belongs to everyone – we have to find a way to use it for the benefit of all. Science and Technology has a key role in order to promote reconciliation between economic growth in maritime activities and conservation of the marine environment.

Drastic change in climate, resulting in for instance the melting of ice at the poles, and better and more sophisticated technologies, for instance take the move from sailing ships to the age of steam ships in the maritime context; have resulted in new opportunities and challenges being taken advantage of. Ocean and seas are and will be increasingly exploited, opening the debate on their governance; we need to find a balance between sustainable exploitation and rational and beneficial use of the marine resources.

The industry and technology providers together with policy makers and civil society should start a wide-ranging reflection on how, and to what extent, the industry can contribute to the integrated approach to maritime governance. What here are the areas from which priorities can be identified and targeted, e.g. how to prioritize the use of the available ocean space for windmills, aquaculture and fishing, or for off-shore platforms?



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SLIDE 3 – Conciliation of economy, ecology, technology and human element is possible

Today, technology is deeply embedded in most societies and its applications are bringing about major transformations in the way we live.
As a result of globalization the world seems to become a smaller place where needs and concerns must increasingly be shared. At the same time there must be a balance with local communities and countries, where local challenges are important as ever and require local solutions. It is now though generally accepted and taken into consideration that local actions in one country can have global implications on a scale not earlier foreseen.

The sharing of information at international level, universal access to and acceptance of, technologies is indeed an essential element of our modern society.

SLIDE 4 – Marine equipment as technology providers.

Therefore, and allow me this last but not least remark. If already existing technology could be integrated in today's ships then these ships could become 15-20% greener and cleaner. Pending further demonstration of newly researched and developed technology we see that an eco-friendliness of more than 33% could be achieved, ultimately leading to the zero emissions ship in the not too distant future[2]. During this Technology Forum we will see new ideas and new technologies from my esteemed colleagues in the marine equipment industry.

The main driver for development in the equipment sector is often how to achieve more efficiency. There should be no contradiction between efficiency and eco-friendliness, as the term efficiency also includes less pollution because of the usage of less fuel and more efficient engines, efficient cleaning of ballast-tanks to avoid transporting dangerous organisms, smarter

[2] For more information please consult EMEC's 'Green Ship Technology Book'. It can be downloaded at: www.emec.eu/green



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sailing-routes to avoid expensive waiting in line to be loaded and off-loaded etc. All these items, in addition to giving the operator better economy will also benefit the environment.

I am very optimistic! Advanced Marine Technology is being researched on and being put into use faster than ever. Driven by a combination of financial investments, eco-awareness, and human ingenuity, combined with the enormous demand for world trade, the future of marine equipment is indeed bright.

SLIDE 5 – Thank you ladies and gentlemen!

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