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UNIVERSAL PERIODIC INDIVIDUAL STAKEHODLER'S REPORT

I. Background

1. The Kiribati Women In Maritime Association (K-WIMA) was established on the 19th June 2018 through the assistance and support of technical team from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and the Pacific Women in Maritime Association (PacWIMA) in Fiji. K-WIMA is registered and recognized by the Government of Kiribati through the Ministry of Women, Youth, Sport & Social Affair (MWYSSA) on Friday 8th February 2019 and officially launched in March 2019.
2. The association has been fully supported by the Ministry of Information, Communication, Transport & Tourism Development (MICTTD) through its Marine Division but independently managed by its Executive Committee (EC) comprising of the President, Vice President, Public Relations Officer, Administrator, Secretary, Treasurer and one (1) Independent member. Membership is increasing to thirty seven (37) females as for June 2019 from different maritime organisations and few Ministries.

Purpose

3. To enable the visibility of women and girls in the maritime sector and connect, educate and inspire women and girls and promote female maritime professionals in Kiribati.

Aims

Advocacy for gender equality, capacity building and promoting cooperation and exchange of knowledge and information.

Objectives

- a) Create a national network for K-WIMA members and involved in other internationally recognized female Associations in the maritime sector.
- b) Improve levels of competency by focusing on education and knowledge by strengthening educational and training opportunities in the state, region and international maritime sector.
- c) Be recognized by PacWIMA with a view of creating mutual support and sustainability.
- d) Establish partnerships with international and regional organizations, such as IMO, SPC, WMU, IMO-IMLI and other government agencies, private companies and regional groups in the implementation of its purpose.

II. Methodology and process for preparing the report

4. In order to write this shadow report, personal meetings were scheduled and conducted between K-WIMA EC and the Marine Training Center (MTC), South Pacific Marine Services (SPMS), Kiribati National Shipping Line (KNSL), Ministry of Fisheries & Marine Resources Development (MFMRD),

Marine Division and Ministry of Employment & Human Resources (MEHR). In doing so, letters and emails were sent to these places as a method to collect data and other relevant information.

Existing reports available on some of the Ministries' website in Kiribati including reports from recognized international bodies were also used in the collection of data.

III. Issues & Recommendations

Lack of proper support facility to a female maritime worker

5. The lack of proper support facility to a female maritime worker on both local and overseas vessels is prevalent. According to the report from the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF), female maritime workers are vulnerable to act of bullying, harassment and other intimidated matters. An interview with a former female crew of the South Pacific Marine Services (SPMS) confirmed that despite being provided with own room and toilet, women seafarers from Kiribati were the main targets of bullying and sexual harassment mostly perpetrated by seamen counterparts so the best option for them was to make friends with foreign crews for safety reasons. In another interview with a former female crew from the Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL), it was mentioned that female crews have shared one room with other foreigners so the main issue is the lack of privacy and disturbances when roommates welcomed friends to have parties in the room or boyfriend to sleep with.
6. For the employment of women on local vessels, the report from the Marine Division identified that there are no women working on local vessels but many are working onshore in the offices. The majority of local vessels are owned by private sectors and few are owned by Islands including the Central Pacific Producers Limited (CPPL) and the Kiribati National Shipping Line (KNSL). All these local vessels may provide separate rooms for female crews but the toilet will remain shared. In an interview with the Chief Executive Officer of the Kiribati National Shipping Line, it is clarified that KNSL welcomes female candidates to work on its vessels but unfortunately none applied.

7. Recommendations

8. Call for the government, through the MEHR to enforce the Maritime Labour Convention on all shipping owners and recruiting agencies that employ women seafarers from Kiribati.
9. Call for the government, through the MEHR to revise the guidelines governing the employment of Kiribati seafarers on board ocean going vessels and engage women seafarers, K-WIMA and other stakeholders in the revision.
10. Call for the government, through the MEHR to include provisions on Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) and mandates all employers to provide for EEO in the 2015 Employment & Industrial Relations Acts subsection i) & ii) and national conditions of service.

11. Call for the government and private shipping owners to attract female candidates to work on local vessels as part of career path to become officers.
12. Call for the government through MEHR to adopt the system that the Ministry of Fisheries applies on female observers.

Unequal distribution of opportunity around gender equality

13. According to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the ITF, women seafarers account two percent of the world maritime workforce. In Kiribati, the situation is similar whereby the majority of maritime roles are occupied by men so it is a male dominant sector. Although women occupy some of senior maritime offshore positions, an Officer from the Marine Division confirmed that none of I-Kiribati female has worked on local or overseas vessels to become Officer, Sea Captain or other senior maritime technical roles. As reported, the Marine Division uses to offer a career talk to once a year to all secondary schools in Tarawa with the purpose of informing students the various skill gaps and training needs from the Maritime Sector in Kiribati.
14. However, K-WIMA noted that the maritime sector will continue to be a male dominant sector in Kiribati unless employment laws and conditions have been revised and enforced by the government and relevant stakeholders.
15. Despite UN SDG Goal on gender equality, K-WIMA noted that gender inequality in the maritime sector is still existed. In addition to that, Part 104 under Article 11 of the CEDAW State Report 2018 acknowledged that there is knowledge gap in regard to labour market trends including the absence of centralized database from the government so less is known on women activities, achievements, skill levels and wage rate. Further to that, K-WIMA noted that although Article 3 of CEDAW State Report 2018 provided that 48% of the workforce was female and 38% were men, the Article did not specify the number of women working in different sector where one is Maritime.

Recommendations

16. K-WIMA urged the government to consider designing and introducing a new centralized database which specify the number of workforce in different sector so retrieving data or information about maritime workforce is easier and accurate.
17. K-WIMA calls on the government to include Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) as part of the new clause in the national conditions of service.
18. K-WIMA also urged the government to support and offer appropriate assistance to female who are interesting to carry out their practical work experiences on local vessels in order to build up their career at sea so they can easily become marine engineers, officers etc.

19. K-WIMA strongly recommended the government to provide temporary special measures as specified in CEDAW Article 4 on the special quota for women scholarship in maritime courses at any maritime institutions.

Lack of women participation in Maritime Programs

20. The lack of women participation from Kiribati on attending maritime programs at the national and international level is evident. According to the report from the Marine Division, the government of Kiribati is normally invited to attend key maritime conferences and workshop trainings funded by the International Maritime Organisations and other overseas regional and international bodies but these have been attended mostly by males from Marine Training Center, the Marine Division itself and delegates from the Ministry of Information, Communication, Transport and Tourism Development (MICTTD).
21. An officer from the Ministry of Women, Youth, Sport & Social Affair (MWYSSA) also confirmed that they have been dealt with general women issues especially gender based violence so less is provided for women maritime issues.

Recommendations

22. K-WIMA calls on the government to reserve seats for women delegates from Kiribati Women In Maritime Association as part of capacity building programs.

The scarcity of resources to support women in Maritime

23. The lack of funding to support the operation and on-going activities of women in the maritime community in Kiribati is evident. K-WIMA is the first women maritime association to represent and voice up the issues and needs of I-Kiribati girls and women in the maritime industry but the problem is the lack of funding to fully support its commitment and activities from the government. MICTTD and its Marine Division are only offering funding sources but due to budget constraints, the funding amount is always limited.
24. As a newly formed Association, K-WIMA needs funding support of its new office, stationeries and the salary of its new Secretariat to deal with daily operation of the Association and deals with its financial and administrative matters.

Recommendation

25. K-WIMA calls on the government to provide full funding support on the rental payment of its new office, secretariat and stationary.

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