

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

Review of maritime transport, 1981



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ABBREVIATIONS

c.i.f.	cost, insurance, freight
dwt	deadweight tons
EEC	European Economic Community
f.o.b.	free on board
GDP	gross domestic product
grt	gross registered tons
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LNG	liquefied natural gas
LPG	liquefied petroleum gas
OBO	ore/bulk/oil
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ro/ro	roll-on/roll-off
TEU	twenty foot equivalent unit
ULCC	ultra large crude carrier
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VLCC	very large crude carrier

EXPLANATORY NOTES

References to dollars (\$) are to United States dollars, unless otherwise specified.

References to tons are to metric tons, unless otherwise specified.

A hyphen between years, e.g. 1980–1983, signifies the full period involved, including the first and last years.

An oblique stroke between two years, e.g. 1980/81, signifies a financial year.

In tables:

Two dots (..) signify that data are not available or are not separately reported.

A dash (—) signifies that the amount is nil or less than half the unit used.

Figures do not necessarily add up to totals, owing to rounding.

n.e.s. indicates that data are not elsewhere specified.

* * *

The classification of countries and territories used in the *Review* is intended for statistical convenience and does not necessarily imply any judgement regarding the stage of development of any particular country.

INTRODUCTION

The *Review of Maritime Transport* is an annual publication prepared by the secretariat of UNCTAD in accordance with section V of the programme of work of the Committee on Shipping.¹ The purpose of the *Review* is to outline and analyse the main developments in world maritime transport in the past year and to assess expected future short-term developments. Emphasis is given to developments in developing countries, in particular to the development of their merchant marines, and how they compare with developments in other groups of countries.

¹ See the report of the Committee on its fourth session (*Official Records of the Trade and Development Board, Tenth Session, Supplement No. 5*) (TD/B/301), annex III.

SUMMARY OF MAIN DEVELOPMENTS IN 1981

(i) World seaborne trade declined by 2.8 per cent in 1980, but the world fleet continued to expand slightly (by 0.9 per cent from mid-1980 to mid-1981), thus accentuating the world surplus of tonnage.

(ii) The developing countries' share of the world deadweight tonnage rose from 10 to 12.5 per cent, but 1.7 per cent of this increase was attributable to the reclassification of Singapore (previously an open-registry country, now classified as a developing country), and the balance was mainly attributable to increases in three individual fleets. Ownership remains concentrated among a few countries, with 11 countries owning 74 per cent of the total deadweight tonnage owned by developing countries. The developed market-economy and open-registry countries accounted for 79.7 per cent of the world deadweight tonnage, and the socialist countries for 7.4 per cent.

(iii) According to 1979 figures (the latest available), the developing countries generated 40.3 per cent of world cargoes, the developed market-economy and open-registry countries 53.6 per cent, and the socialist countries 6.1 per cent.

(iv) The world surplus of shipping has resulted in low freight levels in the bulk trades. In the liner trades, the general rate increases appear to have been lower in 1981 than in the previous year, but data are lacking on rates applicable to specific commodities and on the effects of various surcharges.

(v) As in previous years, developing countries have suffered much more from the costs of transport than have other countries: in 1980, 10.94 per cent of the c.i.f. value of their imports was composed of freight charges, as distinct from 5.42 per cent in the case of developed market-economy countries.

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