

Press release 14, May 7th, 2013

Dansk:

Endelig et velkendt ansigt...

Direktør Claus Bech fra Shipcraft har nu besøgt de seks sømænd fra M/V Leopard, der blev løsladt 30. april. De er i bedre helbredsmæssig tilstand end ventet, glæder sig til at blive genforenet med familie og venner og var glade for endelig at se nogle velkendte ansigter.

I weekenden rejste direktør Claus Bech fra Shipcraft af sted sammen med besætningsansvarlige repræsentanter fra Nordane Svendborg for at møde de seks sømænd fra M/V Leopard. Det første møde var præget af følelser og gensynsglæde.

”Jeg tror først og fremmest Eddy, Søren og vores fire filippinske kolleger var glade for endelig at se nogle velkendte ansigter. Det var første gang i næsten 2½ år at de mødte nogle mennesker de kender. Gennem den sidste uge har de været omgivet af dygtige professionelle, men de var tydeligvis meget glade for at få en god snak om forløbet med nogle, de har en relation til”, siger Claus Bech.

”Ligesom min første telefonsamtale med sømændene, så var det første møde præget af følelser og glæde og foregik i en meget positiv stemning. Det var tydeligt for mig, at mødet med os var en slags endegyldigt bevis for besætningen på, at deres lange mareridt nu er overstået, og at rejsen mod et normalt liv endelig kan begynde. Der blev krammet og også grædt en smule”, siger en glad Claus Bech.

Ved det godt otte timer lange møde, der foregik et hemmeligt og sikkert sted i Europa, fortalte søfolkene bl.a. om selve kapringen af M/V Leopard, det frygtelige og opslidende fangenskab og begivenhederne omkring frigivelsen. Claus Bech fortalte om Shipcrafts bestræbelser på at nå til enighed om en løsesum med de somaliske kidnappere og få løsladt de seks søfolk.

”Vores besætning har udvist en usædvanlig styrke gennem det lange fangenskab og har formået at holde sammen og støtte hinanden. Jeg er stolt over, at de er kommet igennem det hele og håber af hele mit hjerte, at vi kan hjælpe dem til at komme sig fuldstændig fysisk og psykisk og få et normalt familie- og arbejdsliv igen. Og vi håber at se dem tilbage på vores skibe”, siger Claus Bech.

En del af tiden, som Claus Bech og Nordane-repræsentanterne brugte sammen med besætningen, blev brugt på at give dem et overblik over deres økonomiske situation. Afhængigt af overenskomster, kontrakter og andre aftaler har de opsparet løn, ferie og fridage. Desuden blev muligheder for at søge erstatning opridset.

De seks søfolk har endnu ikke taget endelig stilling til hvornår de er parat til at blive genforenet med deres familier, men det kunne ske allerede i indeværende uge. Det er endnu ikke afklaret hvornår og i hvilket omfang sømændene ønsker at blive interviewet af medierne. Shipcraft beder dog igen på forhånd medierne om at have forståelse for, at sømændene har brug for ro og samvær med deres familier.

”Vi vil løbende holde medierne orienteret om nyt i sagen, men det er helt op til de enkelte

søfolk at tage stilling til om de ønsker at lade sig interviewe. Jeg forventer bestemt at de på et eller andet tidspunkt ønsker at fortælle deres historie, men det er vores håb, at medierne vil respektere, at vores kollegaer i denne tid først og fremmest har brug for fred og ro sammen med deres familier”, siger Claus Bech.

Henvendelser fra pressen kan rettes til Shipcrafts direktør Claus Bech via kommunikationsrådgiver Mads Lindberg på mail: press@shipcraft.dk eller telefon: 2981 0290.

English:

Finally a familiar face...

Managing Director Claus Bech of Shipcraft has now visited the six seamen from M/V Leopard, that were released on April 30. Their health is better than anticipated, they are looking forward to being reunited with their families and were happy to finally see some familiar faces.

This weekend Managing Director Claus Bech of Shipcraft travelled together with representatives of the crew management company Nordane, to visit the six seamen of M/V Leopard. This first meeting was characterized by emotions and reunion joy.

“First and foremost I believe that Eddy. Søren and our four Philippine colleagues were happy to finally see some familiar faces. It was the first time in close to 2½ years they have met some people they actually know. Throughout the past week they have been surrounded by skilled professionals, but they were obviously happy to be able to talk about their ordeals with somebody they know”, says Claus Bech.

“As in my initial telephone conversation with our colleagues, it was a meeting characterized by emotion and joy and conducted in a very positive atmosphere. It was clear to me, that the meeting with us was a final proof to the crew, that this terrible ordeal is now over and the journey towards a normal life can begin. There were hugs and also a bit of tears”, says a happy Claus Bech.

Through the eight hour long meeting conducted at a secret and secure location somewhere in Europe, the seamen among other things told about the actual hijacking of M/V Leopard, the terrible and fatiguing captivity and the events surrounding their release. Claus Bech told about the efforts to reach an agreement on the ransom with the Somali kidnappers and secure the release of the six seamen.

“Our crew has demonstrated an unusual strength throughout their captivity and has managed to stick together and support each other. I’m proud that they have made it through the ordeal and I sincerely hope that we can help them to fully recover physically and mentally and resume a normal family- and work life. And we hope to see them back on our vessels”, says Claus Bech.

A part of the time that Claus Bech and the Nordane-representatives spent with the crew was devoted to providing an overview of their individual economic situation. Depending on collective agreements, contracts and other agreements, they have accumulated salary,

vacation and days off. In addition the possibilities for applying for compensation were described briefly.

The six seamen have yet to decide when they feel ready to be reunited with their families, but it could happen already this week. It is still undetermined whether and to what extent the seamen wish to be interviewed by the media. However Shipcraft ask the media to accept that the seamen will need peace and privacy with their families.

One of the things that will be established is whether the seamen wish to make themselves available to the media.

"We will keep the media informed about any news, but it's entirely up to the individual seaman to decide whether or not he wants to be interviewed. I expect that they will wish to tell their story at some point, but we hope that the media will respect that right now our colleagues first and foremost need peace and privacy with their families", informs Claus Bech.

Inquiries from the press can be directed to Managing Director Claus Bech via communications advisor Mads Lindberg on mail: press@shipcraft.dk or phone: +45 2981 0290