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**INTERNATIONAL BUNKER INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION REGIONAL FORUM IN
GIBRALTAR THIS WEEK**

"HMGoG and the Gibraltar Port Authority are delighted to be hosting the International Bunker Industry Association (IBIA) regional forum in Gibraltar on 24th-27th, February. The Strait of Gibraltar is a key European bunkering location with Algeciras, Ceuta, Tangier Med and Gibraltar collectively making up the largest supply hub in the Mediterranean, and Gibraltar being the leading port in terms of throughput. An international audience will be addressed by speakers from world leaders in this field including Peninsular Petroleum, World Fuel Services, Intertanko, Vopak, Vemaoil and Aegean.

Gibraltar, along with Singapore and Rotterdam, is one of the initial signatories to IBIA's Port Charter scheme designed to improve bunkering standards around the world. Signatories to the IBIA Port Charter are required to demonstrate that they have a licensing scheme for bunker suppliers in their port, and are able to monitor, regulate and enforce their regulations covering bunkering operations. The Charter also requires each of the port authorities to have appropriately qualified personnel working in the bunker supply chain and have real and effective testing regimes in place.

The Regional Forum will also include a workshop on bunkering, and an overview of bunkering in the Mediterranean. Other features include updates on the International Maritime Organisation's steps to improve fuel quality, IBIA's port charter initiative, and visits to bunkering barges.

Commenting on the forum, CEO and Captain of the Port, Commodore Bob Sanguinetti said: "We are delighted to be hosting this regional forum on behalf of IBIA. The conference will provide us with the opportunity to showcase the bunkering industry in Gibraltar, and to further cement our excellent working relationship with IBIA. It reflects the hard work that Gibraltar Port Authority and our operators put into the bunker industry, as well as reinforcing the prominence and high standards we have in place across the bunkering and wider shipping communities."

The visiting delegates will be welcomed and hosted at events by the Hon Paul Balban, Minister for the Port and the Hon Albert Isola, Minister for Maritime Affairs.