MERCHANT NAVY VETERANS DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

Media Advisory

Merchant Navy Veterans Day
Ceremony at the National War Memorial
Sunday, September 8, 2013

Ottawa – Members of the media and the public are invited to attend a wreath laying ceremony at the **National War Memorial** to commemorate the ***10th Anniversary of the Merchant Navy Day of Remembrance***, under *Bill C-411, An Act to establish Merchant Navy Veterans Day*.

During the Second World War, a total of **25,343** merchant ships, with **164,783,921** tons of cargo on board, sailed from North America to Britain. The Canadian Merchant Navy suffered the highest losses, losing one seafarer in eight of the **12,000** who served in the crews of the Canadian, British, and Allied merchant ships – there are only (approximately) **1,000** that remain. In total, **70** Canadian Merchant ships were sunk, with over **1,700** Merchant Navy personnel losing their lives due to enemy action.

"As fellow mariners, the members of today's Royal Canadian Navy have tremendous respect for the men and women of the Canadian Merchant Navy," says Vice-Admiral Mark Norman, Commander RCN. "These merchant sailors were the front line in a campaign that was waged crossing after crossing, convoy battle after battle, year after year, with the knowledge that each watch could be their last."

Today, the typical age of our Merchant Seaman is mid-to-late 80s and 90s, and the attrition rate is very high. Sadly, this may well be the last year for a large gathering of our aging and ailing Veterans in Canada.

This commemorative ceremony will include representatives from Canadian Veterans' organizations, a small youth contingent of cadets, Parliamentarians, various government representatives, members of the diplomatic corps, and more.

Let us now **stand united**, without hesitation, and demonstrate our **unwavering support** to the remaining men and women of the **Canadian and Allied Merchant Navies**. No human being is beyond owing them their due recognition. Let Canadians and members of the international community come together, and show our Veterans how much we appreciate our **FREEDOM**, and that we are **eternally grateful** to them for ensuring its preservation.

Date: Sunday, September 8, 2013

Time: 10:30am

Location: National War Memorial
Ottawa, Ontario

Media Enquiries:

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