

**24th Conference
of the Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission
Constanta, Romania, 02-04 July 2024**

The 24th Conference of the Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission (MBSHC) was held in Constanta, Romania, from 02 to 04 July 2024, as a physical event. The Conference was chaired by Ms Vinka Kolić Bubić, Director of the Hydrographic Institute of the Republic of Croatia. A total of 65 registered participants from 18 Member States of the MBSHC (Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Türkiye, Ukraine), 2 Associate Members (United Kingdom and United States of America) attended the Conference, together with 4 Observers (Germany, the two Regional ENC Coordinating Centers (RENC) IC-ENC and PRIMAR, the Mediterranean Scientific Commission (CIESM)), and stakeholders from industry (ESRI, Exail, Fugro, Ocean Aero, Teledyne Caris and SevenCs). The IHO Secretariat was represented by Director Luigi Sinapi and Assistant Director Yves Guillam.

On 2nd of July MBSHC hosted the meeting of MBSHC WGs (ICCWG - Region F and S-1xx WG) and also presentations related to the MSDI and Capacity Building. Also there was a part dedicated to the Industry presentations – SevenCs, OCEANAERO, Exail, ESRI, Teledyne Caris and Fugro.

1. Opening and Administrative Arrangements 3rd of July

1.1 Opening Address (Chief of Romanian Navy, Chair, IHO Director)

Docs: MBSHC24-01.1A Welcome MBSHC24

The CHAIR welcomed the participants and invited the Chief of Romanian Navy, vice admiral Mihai PANAIT, to open the conference.

The Chief of Romanian Navy welcomed the IHO Director, the CHAIR, the representatives of MBSHC member states and all the participants at the MBSHC 24th conference and expressed his gratitude for their presence, commitment in promoting safety of navigation and enhancing the regional collaboration. He underlined the work in hydrography and cartography is vital not only for the safety and the efficiency of maritime navigation, but also for the protection of marine environment and to the sustainable development of coastal communities. The vice admiral also stressed the importance of keeping the freedom of navigation in the Black Sea and that is mandatory to take all the necessary measures to reduce the risks for navigation arisen by the drifting mines. The Chief of Navy wished to all participants a very productive meeting.

The CHAIR welcomed all the participants and expressed appreciation for their continued efforts on improving the safety of navigation in the Region and underlined that the main role and mission of MBSHC is to increase collaboration and also emphasized the important role of

the RHCs/MBSHC in realization of the strategic goals and work programs of the International Hydrographic Organization. The CHAIR also expressed her deep gratitude to the Host for organizing the Conference. The Chair welcomed the 24th member state of the MBSHC, Albania.

The IHO Director expressed his warmest thanks to the Host for the hospitality and for organizing the event and to Croatia for chairmanship for the last 2 years. He pointed out the importance of quick action in order to assure safety of navigation and control maritime pollution.

The CHAIR declared the 24th MBSHC officially opened.

1.2 Administrative Arrangements

Docs: MBSHC24-01.2A List of Documents (Chair)

The Chair informed the attendees that the documents and presentations are uploaded at the MBSHC web page and that representatives of the 18 Member States are participating at the MBSHC24. Apologies from Lebanon and Algeria were received. It was concluded that the quorum was met (18/24 member states).

MBSHC24-01.2B List of Participants (Chair)

The Chair has informed the attendees that the list of the participants is uploaded at the MBSHC web page.

The Vice - Chair introduced a presentation of on-site administrative arrangements.

1.3 Confirmation of Vice-Chair and Arrangements for Secretariat of 24th Conference

Doc: MBSHC23-01.3 MBSHC CL 08/21

Following the decisions of the MBSHC23, CROATIA became the Chair of the MBSHC. In accordance with the MBSHC Statutes regulations, ROMANIA will become Chair at the end of this Conference, and CROATIA will prepare and issue the decisions and actions list taken during this Conference. ROMANIA will email a copy of the minutes to the Members for comments.

Romania was confirmed as Vice Chair for the MBSHC24.

A selection process for the position of the new Vice-Chair was open by CL10/2024 - Call for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the MBSHC after the 24th MBSHC Conference and for candidatures to host the next 25th MBSHC Conference in 2026.

Nomination process was open by June 14, 2024.

With CL 11/2024, Chair concluded the nomination period with one nomination received for both Vice-Chair and host position from:

- France, Service hydrographique et océanographique de la Marine – SHOM – Rear admiral Laurent KERLÉGUER, the Director General of SHOM.

Subsequently, as no other candidate came forward, FRANCE was appointed to the post of Vice-Chair and host of 25th MBSHC.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Docs: MBSHC23-01.4A Agenda and Timetable

The CHAIR proposed adoption of the agenda. Greece objected.

On behalf of Greece, the director of the Hellenic Navy Hydrographic Service proposed a statement regarding the unilateral decision of the CHAIR of the MBSHC to withdraw the INT scheme proposed by Greece, requesting to withdraw Circular Letter No12/2024 dated 26 June 2024 in order to uphold the credibility of the IHO and MBSHC, which is an integral part of the IHO, and to include the Greek proposal in the agenda of MBSHC24 as per decision MBSHC23/17 for a voting procedure to take place.

The CHAIR noted the statement and assured Greece that this will be included into the Annexes of the MBSHC24 minutes.

Cyprus stated that it supports Greece statement.

The CHAIR stressed that the CL12/2024 is clear and in accordance with the Statutes of the MBSHC. She pointed out the need to proceed with the current agenda items and encouraged other member states to address their statements, and if any, to be annexed to the MBSHC24 minutes.

Greece objected to the proposal of the CHAIR and presented another statement.

The CHAIR noted the statement which will be included in the minutes and stressed that the matter will be discussed under the agenda item 6.4.2.

Türkiye has asked the question whether it is necessary to discuss under agenda item 6.4.2 what has been clarified in MBSHC CL No 12/2024.

The Chair emphasized that under agenda item 6.4.2., since it relates to the theme of the ICCWG, will give short overview declaring what is already stated in the MBSHC CL No 12/2024.

Türkiye agrees with CL No12/2024 dated 26 June 2024.

The CHAIR stressed that the CHAIR of MBSHC had the right to issue the CL 12/2024 dated June 2024.

Agenda for MBSHC24 was confirmed noting the statements from Greece and Türkiye.

3. MBSHC Administration

3.1 Chair's report

Docs: MBSHC24-03.1 Chair's report (Chair)

The CHAIR presented a report on MBSHC main activities since its 23rd Hybrid Conference in Ljubljana (Slovenia) in 2022. The CHAIR highlighted that the main goals and efforts during the two years of MBSHC Croatian chairmanships, were implemented into the Decisions, Actions and Recommendations adopted during the 23rd MBSHC conference, including numerous Permanent Actions updated during MBSHC23. This was possible through close cooperation with the members of MBSHC, especially with the chairs and coordinators of the working

groups of MBSHC and MBSHC representatives in various IHO bodies and working groups. The CHAIR stated that she acted in full compliance with the applicable regulations of the IHO, MBSHC by issuing a circular letter (CL) for a specific decision, action or recommendation. In total there were issued a number of 35 Circular Letters, and represented MBSHC into different IHO meetings: 3rd Session of the Assembly (A3, 2023), 6th and 7th Council Meetings, IRCC and HSSC meetings. The CHAIR underlined the key achievements from the last MBSHC meeting, the important findings and challenges, and the lessons learned during the MBSHC two years chairmanship.

The CHAIR asked the Member States if they had any comments, questions, inputs? There were none.

3.2 Matters arising from Minutes of 23rd MBSHC Meeting

Docs: MBSHC24-03.2A Minutes of MBSHC23 (Chair)

MBSHC24-03.2B Status Report on the MBSHC23 Action List (Chair)

CHAIR's legal advisor reviewed the Action List from MBSHC23, 17 actions established, list of completed (14) and ongoing (3) actions, three recommendations of three are completed and 35 circular letters in total were issued between two conferences concerning the task established through the decisions, actions, recommendations and permanent actions from MBSHC23.

Regarding this, Greece commented that its statement (annexed) stands for the presented MBSHC List of Actions.

The Chair said that their objection was noted.

4. IHO Work Programme 1 – “Corporate affairs”

4.1 General updates on IHO activities that may affect MBSHC

Docs: MBSHC24-04.1 IHO Secretariat's Report (Secretary)

The IHO Director presented the report prepared by the IHO Secretariat on activities that may impact the work of MBSHC, focused on the status of IHO Membership and Regional Applications for the IHO Membership, the 7th IHO Council Activities and arrangements for the 8th IHO Council, IHO Strategic Plan, INT Chart and ENC production coordination in Region F, Capacity Building Program, Maritime Safety Information Services, Crowdsourced Bathymetry, GEBCO Support through Seabed 2030, Technical Program and S-100 Implementation, IHO GIS and Databases and IHO Outreach.

4.2 Outcome of the 7th meeting of the IHO Council (C-7) and Preparation of C-8

Covered throughout the IHO Secretariat Report and presentation.

The IHO Director presented the report prepared by the IHO Secretariat on the outcome of the 7th meeting of the IHO Council (C-7) focused on the actions proposed and taken, and creation of new project teams to support S-100 infrastructure and standards development, establishing Champion of Hydrography Award. The award was assigned to Mr. Yves Guillam for his entire career at IHO, and his passion and dedication. Next items in the report were:

gender balance in hydrography, IHO resolution on guidelines for making IHO events more inclusive, IRCC to report to C-8 that the task of MSDIWG should be modified as “MSDIWG to monitor and provide assistance to the S-122 Protected Seas pilot project with specific focus on the High Seas and MPAs adopted by IMO, to demonstrate the benefits of S-122 for non-navigation purposes”.

C-8 will take place in Monaco, from 15th to 17th October 2024, and main focus of the agenda will be the list of actions taken on C-7 and revision of the IHO Strategic Plan.

4.3 IHO Strategic Plan

Covered throughout the IHO Secretariat Report and presentation.

The IHO Director reported the completion of the 3 main IHO goals for the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan. The IHO Correspondence Group (CG) started working via correspondence for the preparatory process of IHO Strategic Plan 2027 -2032, under the chairmanship of the Council Vice-Chair.

4.4 Information Management (IHO web site, ENC Catalogue, INTogIS III, etc.)

The IHO Secretariat will report on the updates regarding the IHO Information Management System

The IHO Assistant Director presented an introduction on how users can access and use IHO web site, the status on developing INTogIS III in order to accommodate Paper charts, S-57 ENCs, S-101ENCs and other S-1xx products and the development of INTogIS 4.

The Chair proposed an action to encourage every member state to regularly update their data into the information management system.

The IHO Assistant Director agreed.

4.5 Cooperation with International Maritime Organization (IMO)

Docs: MBSHC24-04.5 IMO Activities that may affect MBSHC (IMO)

The IHO Director presented an update on the cooperation and common activities between IHO and IMO.

4.6 Cooperation with the Mediterranean Science Commission (CIESM)

Docs: MBSHC24-04.6 CIESM Activities that may affect MBSHC (CIESM)

CIESM presented a new IT tool, easy to customize, developed from open-source technologies, that will facilitate integration of all kind of marine scientific data and application samples. CIESM presented an evaluation on Marine hazards, coastal vulnerability and risk (mis)perception in Mediterranean Sea.

4.7 Cooperation with Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)

Docs: MBSHC24-04.7 IOC general activities that may affect MBSHC

The IHO Director presented an update on the activities that might affect MBSHC.

4.8 Cooperation with International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA)

Docs: MBSHC24-04.8 IALA Activities that may affect MBSHC (IALA)

The IALA representative could not attend and the CHAIR presented an update on the IALA change of status, from an association into an intergovernmental organization.

4.9 IHO’s Satellite-derived Bathymetry Best Practice Project Team

“Satellite derived bathymetry” – best practice guide

The project team representative showed an overview of the work made in development of SDB. In September 2020, S-44 Ed. 6 was published, introducing SDB as a technique of depth measurement for the first time. In March 2024 IHO published B-13 SDB best practice guide, objective for this document is to provide background information on SDB techniques and a framework for collecting, processing, analyzing, interpreting and sharing the SDB data.

5. IHO Work Programme 2 – “Hydrographic Services and Standards”

Docs: MBSHC24-05 HSSC Activities that may affect MBSHC

IHO Director mentioned the input from HSSC16 regarding IHO Strategic Plan review.

6. IHO Work Programme 3 – “Inter-Regional Coordination and Support”

6.1 Inter-Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC)

Docs: MBSHC24-06.1B Overview of MBSHC report to IRCC16

MBSHC24-06.1A IRCC16 Main Outcome that may affect MBSHC

IHO Director’s presentation underlined the main key points of IRCC16 to be taken into consideration.

6.2 Cooperation with Member States

6.2.1 IHO Membership

The main achievements of IRCC16 are already included into the IHO Secretariat Report and presentation.

The IHO Director presented the report prepared by the IHO Secretariat on the status of IHO Membership and Regional Applications for the IHO Membership, which now stands at 100 Member States (Albania in May 2022, Cabo Verde in November 2023 and Kiribati in May 2024, the 100th IHO Member - IHO CL 24/2024). Serbia and Syria remain suspended from Member States rights. In the MBSHC, the IHO Secretariat is in contact with Libya and Israel.

6.2.2 National Reports

Docs: MBSHC24-06.2.2.X National Reports

Each member state provided their national report focused on key achievements, production capabilities (chart portfolio, new bathymetric surveys), rescheming plans, equipment capabilities, training and capacity building needs, research support, cooperation with national

and international bodies, bilateral and multilateral cooperation, S-100 plans and achievements.

Cyprus added a statement to Türkiye national report, underlining that Türkiye tried to politicize the MBSHC conference.

The CHAIR said that their statement will be noted and stressed that the MBSHC deals with technical issues.

Greece also added a statement to Türkiye national report underlying the inaccuracy of the map with the alleged Turkish NAVTEX Service area and the reference to the illegal secessionist entity in the occupied part of the Republic of Cyprus, namely “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)”.

The CHAIR stressed that the MBSHC Conference is not the place for political views between two countries and that Member states should focus on the S-100 implementation. Türkiye commented that they were not trying to politicize the MBSHC meeting and asked for a statement to be noted in the MBSHC24 minutes.

The CHAIR underlined that the agenda must be followed and the MBSHC meetings are not the place to speak about political issues, this being disrespectful for the MBSHC CHAIR and Member States and the official statements must be sent to the MBSHC Chair to be noted.

Türkiye apologized to the participants of the MBSHC24 meeting and objected on the statements of Cyprus and Greece.

Ukraine annexed a document underlying the consequences of the destruction caused by Russian aggression.

6.2.3 National Reports - Associate Members

Docs: MBSHC24-06.2.3.X National Reports

Associate Members, United Kingdom and USA, thanked the Romanian host, presenting their national reports, focused on collaboration with MBSHC MS, capacity building support, international training, scheming, crowd source bathymetry, plans that might affect the F region, and main future challenges.

NGA plans to cancel all traditional paper charts and US Notices to Mariners by 1st of January 2026, shifting to a smaller suit created via *Certified Printed Electronic Navigational Charts*.

END OF FIRST DAY

6.2.4 Black and Azov Seas Working Group – BASWG

Docs: MBSHC24-06.2.4A Report of BASWG (Chair)

Docs: MBSHC24-06.2.4B Assigning one permanent quota from MBSHC to BASWG member states to be represented in the Council

Docs: MBSHC24-06.2.4C Consideration of the definition of Hydrographic Interests
The BASWG Chair (Türkiye) will report on the activities of BASWG since MBSHC23

The BASWG Chair (Türkiye) presented a short report of the BASWG, providing highlights of the recent BASWG17, starting with IHO CL21/2024 *Ukraine's Request for Assistance* outlining the challenges posed by the destruction of numerous weather stations, aids to navigation lighthouses and survey vessels. This destruction has made it difficult for Ukraine to fulfill its obligations under SOLAS regulations, particularly in the Northwestern part of the Black Sea.

Türkiye was elected as the BASWG CHAIR and the meeting will be held in Istanbul next year. Türkiye presented BASWG17 action lists, including 2 discussion papers (*MBSHC24-06.2.4B & MBSHC24-06.2.4C*), related to the *definition of the hydrographic interest* and *BASWG representation in the IHO COUNCIL*, supported by the BASWG member states.

BASWG invited MBSHC member states to consider this proposal provided by Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Türkiye and Ukraine.

France commented that the members at the Council are not representative of the Regional Hydrographic Commission, that they present their own country, and asked if there are any issues not considered or debated at the IHO Council.

Türkiye/BASWG Chair considered that is important that a BASWG member state to be included in the IHO Council to represent BASWG region interests.

France underlined that nothing prevents a member of IHO to attend the IHO Council as an observer.

Türkiye/BASWG Chair, agreed that any Member State of the BASWG can participate in the IHO Council and stressed that is important that at least one of the BASWG Member State to have a voting right in the IHO Council, pointing out that there is a war ongoing in the Black Sea.

The CHAIR highlighted that MBSHC has three seats available in the IHO Council for a three years period and explained the procedure and criteria related to the representatives of the MBSHC to IHO Council. Asked if the MBSHC Statutes needs to be changed and asked the IHO assistant director to explain the procedure and to give an advice.

Türkiye/BASWG Chair considered that this is not a matter of IHO, being a matter of MBSHC and proposed changing MBSHC ToRs and RoPs.

The CHAIR underlined that she has the right to ask for IHO advice regarding the procedures related to the representatives of the MBSHC to IHO Council.

The IHO Director emphasizes that the IHO Council is composed of 30 members, 20 selected by RHCs and another 10 within hydrographic interest. Each RHC elect their representatives, representing their States, not the RHC. MBSHC might consider the revision of the Statutes.

The IHO Assistant Director asked Türkiye/BASWG Chair if whether or not wishes to allocate a specific seat to a BASWG member state and if yes and if there is a consensus on this matter.

Spain proposed to increase IHO Council members from 30 to 35, to which the IHO Director responded that, accordingly to the article 6 of IHO convention states that the composition the

Council is 1/4 of members, but less than 1/3, remembering that the last change in the IHO Convention took 11 years for 2/3 of IHO members to ratifying the Convention (2005 – 2016).

France added that until July 15th every MBSHC member state can submit a paper on any kind of subject to France/Croatia/Italy to be presented and discussed at the next IHO Council.

Türkiye/BASWG Chair continued by stating that the war and mines threat in BASWG region makes it useful to have somebody from those seas to represent and share BASWG views and bring a new approach to the discussions into the IHO Council.

The CHAIR asked the floor for objections regarding the proposal made by the 5 member states of the BASWG to prepare a proposal for amending in the Annex of *MBSHC Statutes (Rules for the selection of Member States from MBSHC to the IHO Council)*, aiming to allocate one seat from BASWG member states in the IHO Council.

France objected.

Croatia objected to the proposal, stating that a special event, like a war in certain region, should not be criterion for allocating permanently a seat in the IHO Council to that region.

Spain objected, stating that it doesn't share the reasons of Türkiye and highlighted that there is a demand in other RHC's about the national tonnage being the only criteria (which is difficult to modify), but appointed the commission to change the number of representatives of the IHO Council.

Türkiye/BASWG Chair asked the MBSHC CHAIR for the proposal to be submitted for MBSHC Member States voting.

The CHAIR stated that new proposals are welcomed, but decided that the BASWG Chair proposal need to be further elaborated and that it is not yet mature enough for voting procedure. MBSHC decided not to amend the Annex to the Statues regarding the allocation of one seat at Council to BASWG members.

The CHAIR concluded that BASWG Chair or any other interested member state can submit proposal to the next IHO Council until 15 July 2024.

Türkiye/BASWG Chair presented how tonnage is affecting the election of member states with hydrographic interest in IHO Council. In the past, four countries wanted to change the definition of the hydrographic interest with no success. BASWG Member States believe that the tonnage alone is not an ideal measure of hydrographic interest used to determine 1/3 of the Council membership.

Greece added that the criteria of defining hydrographic interest is objective, and should be kept as simple as possible.

BASWG Chair stated that BASWG is looking for opinions and support on this matter.

The CHAIR proposed that the BASWG proposal to be included in the MBSHC24 List of Actions, Decisions and Recommendations, as a recommendation, and advised BASWG Chair to submit the proposal to IHO Council until 15 July 2024.

BASWG Chair proposed that MBSHC should submit this proposal to IHO Council.

IHO Director Assistant advised to study the previous report and read the recommendations from the Secretary-General, and invited Türkiye to attend the IHO Council as an observer and to make a submission regarding this proposal.

The CHAIR stated that the proposal will be included in the MBSHC24 List of Actions, Decisions and Recommendations, as a recommendation.

The Chair noted the proposal from 5 nations of BASWG and invited interested members to submit consolidate proposal on the evolution of the hydrographic interest (criteria) to the next IHO Council until 15 July 2024.

IHO Director Assistant advised the BASWG Member States to study C4-02.3 A from the fourth meeting of IHO Council.

6.3 WEND Principles and Governance

6.3.1 Activities of WENDWG

Docs: MBSHC24-06.3.1 WENDWG14 Outcome, and Actions and Decisions that may affect MBSHC.

WENDWG Chair, supported by Region F coordinator, presented a very comprehensive report regarding the outcomes of the 14th WENDWG meeting that was held in USA, in February 2024, focused on S-100 products, requesting actions from MBSHC to resolve any ENC overlaps before migration to S-100 based products.

IHO Director Assistant proposed that MBSHC should designate a representative in the WENDWG, preferably ENC and S-100 coordinators

6.3.2 Status of S-100 Coordination in the Region

Docs: MBSHC24-06.3.2

The S-1xxWG coordinator asked member states to confirm their points of contact in order to send a draft of ToRs and RoPs of the S-1xxWG, for comments to be sent before 1st of September

6.4 Coordination of Global Surveying and Charting

6.4.1 Hydrographic survey status in the MBSHC area

Docs: MBSHC24-06.4.1 Report of on hydrographic surveys in the Region

In the IHO Secretariat report, the IHO Director presented an overview on the hydrographic situation in the MBSHC region.

6.4.2 Region F ICCWG Activities - MEDINTCHART Catalogue (INT Charts and ENCs)

Docs: MBSHC24-06.4.2 Report of ICCWG Coordinator

Region F - ICCWG Coordinator presented proposals of new INT chart Schemes submitted by Egypt, Lebanon, Greece and UK, over southeast area of Cyprus. FICCWG Coordinator proposed ToR and RoP revision under MBSHC 23/04 Decision, overseeing the survey regarding S-101 products and data services.

New TOR and ROP's are aligned with S 100 implementation and Chair stressed that is a good accomplishment for ICCWG. TORs and ROPS for the F ICCWG including final amendments on Article 3.6 (virtual meetings) were approved.

Chair also recommended that meetings should be more inclusive (in person or virtually – some themes which are complex should be only in person), and recommended to have at least one meeting yearly in person, at least two meetings in person during the two year period between conferences. It is not productive to have one meeting of this complex group the day before the conference. The final meeting should be held immediately before the plenary conference and by then the discussion held during the previous meeting should be systematized.

The proposal to increase the number of meetings (virtually or in person) will be included in the list of recommendations from this conference.

Region F Coordinator position moved from Greece to Türkiye for the next 2 years.

MBSHC confirmed the designation of Türkiye as Region F ICCWG Coordinator.

The CHAIR expressed the fact that is totally in line with what was stated in CL 12/2024. According to the CHAIR and to Croatian team, responsible for conducting the conference, the cooperation and dialogue were encouraged and that was highlighted during the last two days of the conference.

The CHAIR expressed her disappointment with some wording from Greece statement, that the CL 12/2024 was disseminated just two days before the conference. The CHAIR underlined that no MBSHC member state has jurisdictional repression right over the CHAIR of MBSHC, Greece is not in jurisdiction to tell Chair what to do, when to do it and how to do it, Chair has her own rights.

Chair stated that this approach shows great disrespect to the MBSHC Chair and MBSHC Secretariat who have done a great deal of work in the previous two years chairpersonship.

The CHAIR stated that she's totally aware with the issues not related to technical matters, and unfortunately during the last month before MBSHC24, the CHAIR experienced pressure from different kind of entities.

According to the Statute the CHAIR refused to create a precedent and stands by what was stated in MBSHC CL No 12/2024,. CL No 12/2024 is made after in depth analysis and included documentation from 1997 until 2024.

The CHAIR emphasized that she was acting in line with the “Action”17” from the previous MBSHC23 which is not a “decision” as Greece states, and that CL 02/2023 was her attempt to encourage the dialogue and consensus which was absent. The CHAIR further underlines that both member states had a period of 17 months to commence the communications and dialog. The CHAIR expressed that she finds the CL 12/2024 very clear and that further discussion on matters that are not only of technical nature are not necessary. The CHAIR expressed that she wants CL 12/2024 to be annexed to the minutes of this Conference.

Once again, The CHAIR reminded that the member states, MBSHC CHAIR and Secretariat had 17 months for an in-depth analysis considering this matter.

The CHAIR read in full the 2nd GREECE statement as well, with which she disagreed.

GREECE asked IHO for advice.

The CHAIR stressed that there is no time during the conference for IHO advice since we need to proceed with the agenda and the request will be introduced in MBSHC24 List of Actions and will have time to discuss this issue with new Chair.

The CHAIR expressed that she is fully aligned with each statement from the MBSHC CL 12/2024 and fully disagreed IHO acting according to the Article 7e during this Conference. However, since Chair found the conduct of the conference at that moment was disrupted with questioning the Chair’s authority, Chair asked for reservation to be included to the minutes of the MBSHC24 Conference.

The CHAIR highlighted that the conversation and dialog are only way forward.

The CHAIR also said several times during the Conference that Croatia maybe has even more complex questions related to the maritime boundaries with neighboring countries but is trying to solve that with the communication and close cooperation. Chair also gave an example of Italy and Croatia that had several bilateral meetings, when director Sinapi was a director of Italian hydrographic Institute, that resulted on agreeing on points related to the ENC cutting which are in close line with boundaries. Chair also emphasised that Croatia has constant and open dialogue with other neighboring countries which are also member states of the MBSHC, Slovenia and Montenegro. MBSHC Chair concluded that this agenda item is closed and expressed the urge for proceeding with the agenda.

Türkiye commented that any member state of the IHO can ask for advice and there is no need for this matter to be introduced into the MBSHC24 List of Actions.

France underlined that in-person meetings are held once every two years and VTC limitations do not permit discussing such matters, asking if there is need to wait two more years to discuss this matter.

The CHAIR emphasized that there is no need to wait for the new Conference to solve the open issues of other countries since there are other ways of addressing some issues, especially those related to the boundaries. Further, the CHAIR underlines the role of other working groups, such as FICCWG that can deal with those kind of matters but only if there is a consensus between interested parties, according to the TOR and ROP of the Region F ICCWG.

The CHAIR recommended to the FICCWG to open a dialogue between countries.

The IHO Director asked if IHO secretariat would express its position on this matter, and the CHAIR confirmed and pointed the matter to be included in the MBSHC24 List of Actions.

Greece expressed that they initially understood this matter will be discussed “right now” (under agenda item 6.4.2).

The CHAIR clarified that there is no time at this conference to talk about that theme and that we need to proceed with the agenda, and it stands by MBSHC CL no 12/2024.

The CHAIR stressed once again that she was quite clear and that Greece will get an advice from IHO and it will be included in the List of Actions.

Throughout this debate, Türkiye raised objections on this matter.

The CHAIR expressed that according with the CL12/2024 Greece INT chart scheme proposal is not included into the MBSHC24 Agenda and there will not be voting about the proposal.

6.5 Maritime Safety Information (MSI)

Docs: MBSHC24-06.5 Report of NAVAREA III Coordinator

The NAVAREA III Coordinator (Spain) report on NAVAREA III operational status, highlighting that seven NAVTEX stations are not operational, their number increasing since the last meeting, encouraging NAVTEX coordinators to proceed with repairs.

France added that Lagarde NAVTEX station has been repaired and will soon be operational.

Egypt also added that Alexandria NAVTEX station is operational.

Spain underlined that the report was released in May 2024.

6.6 Maritime Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI)

Docs: MBSHC24-06.6 Report of MSDIWG Coordinator

MSDIWG Coordinator encouraged MBSHC member states to provide them with their national reports, and presented a brief report on the items discussed during the 14th and 15th meeting amongst which data sharing, S100 implementation, IHO-OGC MSDI Concept Development Study, Updating of IHO Strategic Plan Target 2.1S-122/Marine Protected Area, Governance and Institutions, Capacity and Education, Future Perspectives, Maintain and Extend IHO Publication C-17. Also proposed a new questionnaire asked by Egypt for regional report focused on governance structures, data management practices, policy frameworks, and standards related to the best practices of MSDI implementation.

The CHAIR supported the proposal and asked to be introduced in the MBSHC24 List of Actions.

6.7 Capacity Building

6.7.1 Capacity Building activities within MBSHC

Docs: MBSHC24-06.7.1 MBSHC Report to CBSC22

The Regional CB Coordinator (Türkiye) presented a report highlighting capacity building activities, training programmes funded by IHO or IC-ENC parties and training not funded or postponed. The CB Coordinator committed to present to the next IC-ENC Steering Committee a proposal to have some of the training programmes funded from IC-ENC budget. The Regional CB Coordinator proposed that CB in the region should have its own budget for CB activities. Also, CB coordinator proposed that the next 2 CB Subcommittee meetings to be held in Monaco, in order to reduce costs and also suggested a theme for the World Hydrography Day.

France recommended that in the future, when seats are available for CB activities in the region, to inform eastern Atlantic CB coordinator about the seats available in order to increase cost efficiency and inter-regional cooperation.

The CHAIR and CB Coordinator agreed with the proposal.

Georgia asked if it would be possible for IC-ENC to support some of phase III training in the region.

IC-ENC manager pointed that IC-ENC only administers the member states funds and that he will support the proposal on the next IC-ENC SC meeting, but the decision to be taken lies with the IC-ENC member states. IC-ENC manager encouraged the IC-ENC members attending the meeting to present their needs at the next IC-ENC SC.

The IHO Director underlined that there are some CB activities potentially to be funded by IC-ENC but the decision is with IC-ENC SC, and all the CB activities are aligned with IHO Strategic Plan. The IHO Director confirmed that the next CB Subcommittee meeting will be held in Monaco.

France asked the Regional CB Coordinator if there is any action requested from MBSHC for the theme proposed for World Hydrography Day in order to be presented to the IHO Council.

The Regional CB Coordinator (Türkiye) agreed to be a common proposal.

IC-ENC manager highlighted the lack of trainers and training companies to conduct proposed CB activities and appealed to the room for providing locally known contacts to potential future suppliers for training capabilities. He also acknowledged the passionate involvement of the Regional CB Coordinator in managing both roles as IC-ENC Chair and Regional CB Coordinator.

The CHAIR agreed with the IC-ENC manager's point of view and stressed the utmost importance of capacity building activities. She also highlighted that there are big gaps between Member States in the goal to accomplish implementing the new S-100 standard, in the process of producing and maintaining the full range of products (paper charts, ENC's S-57 and ENCs S-101 and the wide range of S-100 products).

The CHAIR stressed that member states are investing their capacities through volunteering in various RHC's, boards, IHO working groups etc., spending their own funds for participation at the meetings, and it is necessary that IHO put additional efforts, as well member states, to try to find additional funds for Capacity building activities.

6.7.2 MBSHC (Three-year) and Capacity Building Work Plan for 2025

Docs: MBSHC24-06.7.2 (3-year) MBSHC CB Plan for 2025

The Regional CB Coordinator (Türkiye) presented a report with proposed capacity building activities for 2023 to 2025.

6.8 Disaster Response

Docs: MBSHC24-06.8 MBSHC DRF Updates (Chair)

A member of the Croatian delegation highlighted the progress made on updating and maintaining the DFR, respectively table 1 and 2.

IHO Director Assistant congratulated Croatia for the efforts put in developing and updating the DFR.

Exail representative proposed the DFR to be included in IFHS, in order to coordinate with other 400 members from industries or institutions.

The CHAIR agreed the proposal to be included in the List of Actions.

6.9 IHO-EU Network WG

Docs: MBSHC24-06.9A IENWG Updates (Greece)

IENWG's presentation underlined activities that contribute to the rise of the involvement of the hydrographic offices in the European activities and programmes, as they cover a large spectrum of common interest between IHO and EU, from the support to several marketing users to the standardization for marine data exchange.

IHO Director underlined the important work done by IENWG to develop cooperation between HOs and EU.

6.10 GEBCO/Seabed 2030 Project/Crowd-Source Bathymetry Activities

Docs: MBSHC24-06.10.A GEBCO/Seabed 2030 Project presentation

Docs: MBSHC24-06.10.B UK presentation Seabed 2030

Docs: MBSHC24-06.10.C CSBWG presentation

The IHO Director presented an update on the progress made on SEABED 2030, GEBCO and CSB activities highlighting the data needed to enrich these projects. He expressed gratitude towards contributors from F Region for providing data that led to 54% coverage.

The UKHO presented an update on the progress made on SEABED 2030 in collaboration with the Nippon Foundation.

6.11 Regional ENC Coordination Centre (RENCs) Operations

Docs: MBSHC24-06.11.A PRIMAR presentation

Docs: MBSHC24-06.11.B IC-ENC presentation

The Director of Primar presented the chain of data distribution, governance and strategic plan, S-100 strategy and activities, dual-fuel validation and S-101 conversion tests, CB capabilities and ongoing projects.

USA asked if the Primar training modules are available for others, beside the member states.

Director of Primar replied that the modules are free for members states and on purchase for interested parties.

IC-ENC GM presented the chain of data distribution through VARs and DPs for ECDIS and non-ECDIS users, IC-ENC services on validation, production and technical support, distribution, revenue management, training capabilities: face-to-face, cloud and online, Conversion Readiness service and S-100 support.

Regional CB Coordinator asked if it will be possible for IC-ENC to support all the CB activities in 2025.

IC-ENC GM underlined that this decision is to be made by the IC-ENC member states.

7. Any other business

No other business was addressed.

8. Closure

8.1 Review of Actions, Decisions and Recommendations

The CHAIR presented a provisional list of Decisions, Actions, and Recommendations, to be circulated for comments and amendments.

Türkiye objected to the proposal of including into the **LIST OF MBSHC24 ACTIONS** the request from Greece for IHO secretariat's advice to be provided regarding in INT chart scheme in the Aegean Sea because was not present into the Agenda and stressed that Greece, as an IHO member state, can ask for IHO Secretariat's advice without an action from MBSHC.

The CHAIR underlined that the issue was discussed in the agenda under the item 6.4.2. and GREECE's statements to be included in the MBSHC minutes.

USA suggested to reword the proposed action as a request from MBSHC to IHO Secretariat to better cover the equity of the MSHC Commission.

The CHAIR replied that MBSHC didn't ask for IHO Secretariat advice, Greece did, so the proposal was not accepted.

USA supports the action.

Greece agrees with the position of the CHAIR regarding the action and underlined that there was no objection to their second statement.

Romania supported the MBSHC CHAIR.

The IHO Director stated the IHO Secretariat will advise any request on technical matters.

Albania proposed that other countries' opinion on the matter to be included as a footnote.

The CHAIR concluded that Türkiye's objection will be noted.

Türkiye pointed out that MBSHC's actions are to be taken in consensus.

The Chair invited the representatives of Greece and Turkey aside of the table to try to find a joint understanding of the inclusion of IHO advice to the Greece in the List of Actions, Recommendations and Decisions supported by the IHO director and Secretariat. After negotiations that exceeded the expected duration of the last items on the agenda according to the timetable, the Chair concluded this issue by including the provision of IHO advice to Greece in the LIST OF MBSHC24 RECOMMENDATIONS with the following wording: "*MBSHC noted the request from Greece for IHO Secretariat's advice to be provided regarding 8 INT Chart Scheme in the Aegean Sea (advice to be sent back to Greece, cc to MBSHC Chair)*"; and, therefore, deleted it from the LIST OF MBSHC24 ACTIONS.

Türkiye objected on the recommendation no. 9 from the LIST OF MBSHC24 RECOMMENDATIONS.

8.2 Date and Venue of the Next Meeting

MBSHC25 will be held in France and the date of the next meeting needs to be considered, taking into account the IHO Calendar, and proposed in CL.

Romania proposed the date to be around the 23rd of February, as the Maritime Hydrographic Directorate of Romania celebrates its 100th anniversary.

8.3 Designation/Transfer of the Chairpersonship

The CHAIR handed over the MBSHC chairmanship to Romania to preside over the Commission, for the next 2 years, until the end of MBSHC25. Romania, as the new CHAIR, congratulated Croatia for their great work as the former CHAIR of the MBSHC.

8.4 Closing Remarks (End of Conference)

The former CHAIR thanked IHO for advice, congratulated the host for the excellent organization of the Conference and expressed its gratitude to all attendants for their participation.

IHO thanked Croatia for the 2 years of chairmanship of MBSHC, the host for the successful event and for hospitality, also to all participants.

The Conference was closed by Captain (N) Lucian Grigorescu, Chief of the Maritime Hydrographic Directorate of Romania, as the new CHAIR of the MBSHC.

Annex 1 to MBSHC24 Minutes

Statement by Greece

Thank you madam Chair,

1. Hellenic Navy Hydrographic Service expresses its strong discontent about the unilateral decision made and announced by MBSHC's Chair through its Circular Letter No12/2024 dated 26 June 2024, not to include in the MBSHC24 Agenda the Greek proposal, as per MBSHC CL 10/2022-Proposal of INT chart scheme by Greece.
2. Procedure-wise, the decision violates the statutes of the MBSHC (9th edition, April 2022) for the following reasons:
 - a) The Greek proposal of INT chart scheme on the Aegean Sea is pending from the 23rd Conference of MBSHC as Decision MBSHC 23/17 and remains fully operative according to article 7e of the Statutes of the MBSHC.
 - b) As such and as explicitly stipulated in Status report on the list of Actions and Recommendations from MBSHC 23 from the MBSHC 23 up to 15 February 2023, the action is transferred for discussion to MBSHC 24.
 - c) According to article 7d of MBSHC Statutes, the Chair has no competence whatsoever to overrule any decision adopted by the MBSHC. On the contrary, the article provides that MBSHC decisions "should be adopted by consensus in general or otherwise in accordance with the procedure described in article 4". What is solely left at the discretion of the Chair according to the very same article of MBSHC Statutes is the decision to submit or not a decision or resolution to a vote.
 - d) In light of the above, the Chair has exceeded the limits of its power and competencies by announcing unilaterally and arbitrarily the withdrawal of the Greek proposal from the agenda.
 - e) Moreover, the MBSHC Chair contradicts herself since in MBSHC CL 02/2023, 01 February 2023, she expressed her intention to call for a secret ballot voting procedure in a physical session at the beginning of MBSHC 24. Besides, it should be recalled that the Chair put the Greek proposal to the vote, in December 2022, without raising the political concerns she is invoking now, merely two working days before the Conference.
3. As to the rest of the Chair's allegations in the CL 12/2024, the Reference D to the ToR and RoP of the Region F- ICCWG is misleading, since the F-ICCWG has already decided that Greek INT charts are technically sound and that technical arguments to the contrary are absent (see 2019_CL_02_RegionF_ICCWG_8_DMI_REX_INT_result).
4. Content-wise, references in the said Circular Letter 12/2024 such as "consensus between Greece and Turkiye is required", "bilateral disputes should be overcome", "a common solution should be found" are not related to hydrographic issues, thus falling outside of the scope of IHO. Such references involve MBSHC and consequently IHO, into baseless unilateral political claims and runs counter to article II of the Convention on the IHO which

clearly states that “The Organisation shall have a consultative and purely technical nature.” The eight Greek INT Charts depict exclusively continental and insular Greek territory along with its territorial waters as well as international waters (a map is provided for your convenience). No Turkish territory is depicted in those charts whatsoever, and therefore there is no need of Turkish consent in this respect.

5. Considering all the above,

- Greece requires the withdrawal of the MBSHC CL 12/2024.

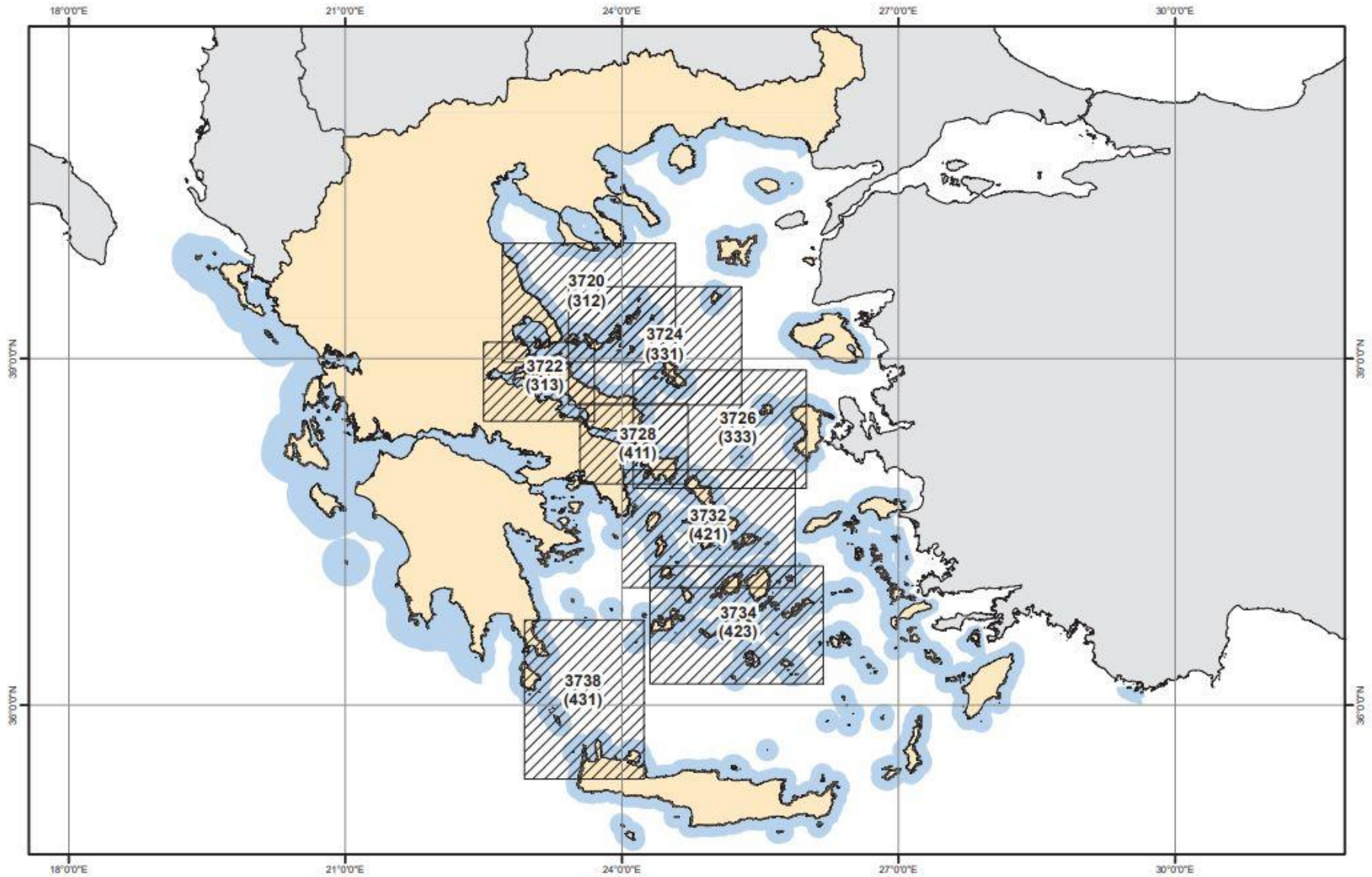
This is a prerequisite to uphold the credibility both of the IHO and of the MBSHC, which is an integral part of the IHO.

- Greece requires the immediate implementation of Decision MBSHC 23/17 and the inclusion of the Greek proposal in the Agenda of MBSHC 24 in order a new voting procedure to take place.

Thank you.



GREEK PROPOSAL OF EIGHT (8) INT CHARTS



Annex 2 to MBSHC24 Minutes

Statement by Greece

Thank you Madam Chair,

Greece does not accept the way that you have handled such an important issue, **which raises questions as to its reasons and purposes. On the basis of** article 7e of MBSHC Statutes, Greece objects to your decision by which the Final List of Actions of MBSHC 23 and specifically MBSHC 23/17 as a decided Action **have been unilaterally modified beyond any provisions of the MBSHC Statutes**, and asks that the matter be referred to the IHO Secretariat for advice.

Thank you

Annex 3 to MBSHC24 Minutes

Statement by Türkiye

In accordance with MBSHC CL No. 12/2024, the conditions required for putting the Greek proposal to vote at MBSHC24 have not been met. That is why, the proposal can not be added to the agenda. As of Türkiye, we agree with MBSHC CL No. 12/2024 and there is no need to discuss the proposal in the plenary session.

Annex 4 to MBSHC24 Minutes

Statement by the Republic of Cyprus

Cyprus would like to comment on Türkiye's report uploaded on IHO website under item 6.2.2. Cyprus wishes to clarify, first of all, that she believes that this meeting is not the appropriate forum to discuss issues of political nature and does not want to engage in exchanging written statements with Türkiye within this forum. Nevertheless, since Türkiye has chosen to politicize this meeting by presenting a working document which questions the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus, Cyprus is obliged to respond to Türkiye's provocative document and to state the following:

Türkiye's actions constitute yet another effort to legalize the results of the Turkish invasion against Cyprus in 1974, which has been condemned by numerous United Nations Security Council Resolutions. Any actions by Türkiye aiming to promote the illegal secessionist entity in the occupied by Türkiye part of Cyprus is contrary to international law and the instruments establishing the Republic of Cyprus signed also by Türkiye, and run contrary to the United Nations Security Council Resolutions - 541 (1983) and 550 (1984) declaring the secessionist entity as «legally invalid». It should also be noted that the illegal entity is not recognized by any international organization or country, with the sole exception of the occupying power, Türkiye.

TÜRKIYE COMMENTS ON THE NATIONAL REPORT OF SO CALLED "CYPRUS"

The "Cyprus" mentioned in the meeting being talked about, is not the original partnership state established in 1960. Therefore, Türkiye declares that the term of "Cyprus" neither amounts to any form of recognition of the Greek Cypriot Administration nor prejudice Türkiye's rights and obligations emanating from the Treaty of Guarantee and the Treaty of Establishment of 1960.

The statements that are aiming at Türkiye in the aforementioned report are baseless, selfclaimed and most certainly doesn't reflect the real situation in the region. They are, instead, remarks that intend to serve a political propaganda, disguised as a technical difficulty.

Türkiye comdemns the efforts to legitimatize illegal claims of the Greek Cypriot Administration by means of technical reports and technical communities, and deems them invalid.

Annex 6 to MBSHC24 Minutes

Statement by Greece

Thank you Madam Chair,

With reference to the National Report of Türkiye submitted to the MBSHC-24, Greece would like to point out the following:

A. The National Report presents, in page 5, a map with the alleged Turkish NAVTEX Service Area. This map is inaccurate, unfounded and misleading for the following reasons:

The presented Turkish NAVTEX service area is illegal to the extent it overlaps Greek territorial waters. Moreover, it was declared unilaterally by Türkiye, given that the latter did not follow the procedure provided by the IMO & IHO for the establishment of NAVTEX Service Areas. As a result, the alleged Turkish NAVTEX service area overlaps parts of the Service Areas of the Greek NAVTEX stations in Limnos and Iraklion.

The Greek NAVTEX Service Areas were established together with the Greek NAVTEX Stations (Kerkyra, Limnos, Iraklion) in 1986 in full conformity with the IMO and IHO Regulations (see attached map). In particular, the Greek NAVTEX stations in Limnos and Iraklion, with the transmitter identification character (B1), L and H respectively, have been efficiently operating within their service areas since 1986 without encountering any problems and fully covering the needs for the safety of navigation within their service areas, in accordance with the IMO and IHO specified features, regulations and principles. In this respect, it should be underlined that these areas contain a nexus of widely spread Greek islands, where a large number (more than 300) of lighthouses, lights, fog signals, buoys and other navigational aids are situated, which are under continuous inspection and repair by the respective Greek services, aiming at ensuring the safety of navigation and the preservation of the marine environment.

It should be underlined that Türkiye not only did not object to the establishment, in 1986, of the boundaries of the Greek NAVTEX Service Area, but also accepted their operation until 2008. A Turkish proposal for modification of the existing NAVTEX Service Areas in the Aegean and the Mediterranean, submitted in 2008, was rejected due, among other reasons, to the lack of consent of the neighbouring countries, as clearly stated in the NAVAREA III Coordinator's letter dated 31 March 2008.

B. The National Report, in page 5, paragraph 2, makes a reference to the illegal secessionist entity in the occupied part of the Republic of Cyprus, as the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)", while the map on the same page shows this part of Cyprus as being part of the so-called "TRNC".

It should be recalled out that this illegal secessionist entity is in the part of the Republic of Cyprus which has been occupied by the Turkish military since 1974, and its unilateral declaration of independence, in 1983, has been condemned by the UN Security Council. In its Resolutions 541 (1983) and 550 (1984), the UNSC explicitly states that there is only one State on the island of Cyprus, the Republic of Cyprus, and it calls upon all States not to recognize, nor facilitate or assist in any way this secessionist entity. Indeed, since 1983, this illegal entity has not been recognized by any State, with the sole exception of Türkiye.

Thank you

Annex 7 to MBSHC24 Minutes

Türkiye's statement regarding NAVTEX Service Areas in the Aegean Sea and Eastern Mediterranean Sea

There is no NAVTEX Service Area delimitation in Aegean Sea or Eastern Mediterranean Sea that is officially confirmed or approved by IMO or IHO, nor by Türkiye. Moreover, coordination efforts by Türkiye in the past to get an agreement over this issue have been unreciprocated. Türkiye has not been officially asked or approached by any of the relevant national or international authorities for the joint delimitation of NAVTEX service areas in the Aegean as well as the Eastern Mediterranean. In such a semi-enclosed sea such cooperation and coordination is among the bedrock principles of relevant international instruments as well as customary and the IMO practices.

It should be noted that Türkiye, starting from 1975, declared her strong willingness to assume responsibility and offered every possible assistance concerning WWNWS in NAVAREA III and has started to broadcast MSI on 1985 and since then has been disseminating MSI ceaselessly.

Türkiye, acting with good faith and spirit of cooperation, clearly stated many times that she stands ready to arrive at a negotiated solution acceptable to all. Türkiye regrets that such a technical subject has been taken out of its context. Some other Service Providers exploit the NAVTEX system as a political discussion platform and hence defeating the very purpose of the system totally disregarding the safety and well-being of mariners at sea by promulgating NAVTEX messages stating that Turkish NAVTEX stations are unauthorized.

Turkish NAVTEX stations, as in the past, will continue to promulgate NAVTEX messages for the sake of navigation safety, until a delimitation of service limits in those areas is affected by an agreement with the consent of parties concerned.



International
Hydrographic
Organization



MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEAS HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION

26 June 2024

MBSHC CIRCULAR LETTER No 12/2024

Subject: Proposal of INT chart scheme by Greece

Reference:

- A. MBSHC23 list of Actions, Decisions and Recommendations
- B. MBSHC CL 10/2022 – Proposal of INT chart scheme by Greece
- C. MBSHC CL 02/2023 – Outcome of the voting in response to CL 10/2022
- D. ToR and RoP of the Region F ICCWG
- E. Art. 7.d of the Statutes of MBSHC (9th Edition, April 2022)
- F. Art. II of the Convention on the IHO
- G. Objections from Türkiye, last dated 01 December 2022
- H. the IHO S-11 - GUIDANCE FOR THE PREPARATION AND MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL (INT) CHART AND ENC SCHEMES AND CATALOGUE OF INTERNATIONAL CHARTS

Dear colleagues,

1. In accordance with MBSHC Action from Reference A, the Hellenic Navy Hydrographic Service (HNHS) – (hereinafter “Greece”), has resubmitted a proposal (hereinafter “Greek proposal”) of INT chart scheme on the Aegean Sea for eight (8) international (INT) charts (No 3720, 3722, 3724, 3726, 3728, 3732 and 3738) to the MBSHC for approval (Ref. B).
2. In accordance with Reference C, the MBSHC Chair has concluded that the conditions required by the Statutes of the MBSHC before adopting any resolution or decision are not fulfilled. The MBSHC Chair has concluded that the voting procedure will be repeated at the MBSHC24 Conference once the quorum is met.
3. In the period after the temporary closure of this proposal and in the light of the existing circumstances, the MBSHC Chair reconsidered the Greek proposal in accordance with the Statutes of MBSHC and other regulations in force (Ref. D, E, F, H).
4. Furthermore, in accordance with Reference E, the main condition for any proposal to be submitted to the MBSHC that concerns the concerted action of merely a limited number of member states is unanimity and cooperation between those states. The Greek proposal is closely related to the interests of another concerned member state, Türkiye, however, consensus between concerned member states does not exist to this day, nor have we been informed about it (Ref. G).



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HRVATSKI HIDROGRAFSKI INSTITUT
HYDROGRAPHIC INSTITUTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
HR-21000 Split, Hrvatska, Zrinsko-Frankopanska 161, p.p. 291
Tel: +385 (0)21 308 800; Fax: +385 (0)21 347 242; e-mail: office@hhi.hr

5. Noting that detailed analysis of the procedures related to this issue was carried out and considering the IHO regulations in force, in accordance with Reference E, the MBSHC Chair states as follows:

As the main principle of the IHO community is **cooperativity and consensus, consent of member states, which is the basis for making any decision, we consider that the conditions for putting the Greek proposal to vote at MBSHC24 have not been met, for the reason that the first principle of undertaking INT chart production is not fulfilled, i.e. the consensus of countries to whose territory the INT charts relate.** In the present case, there is no consensus between Greece and Türkiye, and therefore the Greek proposal has not been included on the MBSHC24 agenda (Ref. H).

6. Accordingly, we encourage the two member states, Greece and Türkiye, to engage in a dialogue to find a common solution that can overcome their bilateral disputes, and we propose to:
- encourage mutual dialogue and reach consensus through conclusion of a technical agreement, which is a common practice within the hydrographic community, especially when solving disputed jurisdiction issues, with an indication that the published charts shall in no way prejudice national borders of signatories to the technical agreement;
 - postpone the resolving of this issue until a consensus is reached in accordance with the rules and main principle of the IHO Convention, MBSHC Statutes, IHO publication S-11, and Region F ICCWG Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure;
 - when in accordance with the above mentioned procedures a consensus is reached, submit an agreed proposal to Region F ICCWG for adoption, and then to the MBSHC for voting;
 - where appropriate, engage an independent legal expert, with the aim of reaching a solution to mutual satisfaction of the two member states and the whole MBSHC region.

Yours sincerely,

Vinka KOLIĆ BUBIĆ, M.Sc.

