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THEME FOR WORLD HYDROGRAPHY DAY 2020 AND MEDIA OUTREACH

Reference: IHO CL 53/2019 dated 23 October - *World Hydrography Day – Report on Member States activities in 2019 and the proposed theme for 2020*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. As announced in the Reference, the theme proposed for the celebration of World Hydrography Day in 2020 (WHD 2020) was **"Hydrography – enabling autonomous technologies"**. The IHO Secretariat thanks the following Member States for their responses: Chile, Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom. Their comments are provided in the Annex to this letter. The Secretariat would like to thank the Member States for their inputs and after carefully considering the proposals it was decided that the theme would remain as initially proposed:

"Hydrography – enabling autonomous technologies"

2. The theme highlights the pivotal role of hydrography in autonomous technologies. Autonomous platforms such as autonomous surface vehicles (ASV), autonomous underwater vehicles (AUV) and Lidar-equipped unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), such as drones can be used to conduct hydrographic surveys. In doing so, hydrography provides a testing ground for these technologies, while at the same time increasing the coverage of properly surveyed areas. As a knock-on effect, these initiatives will pave the way for the development of safe, secure and environmentally sound Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS) operations under the auspices of the IMO, which also require certified up-to-date hydrographic information in order to be implemented.

3. In support of WHD 2020, the IHO Secretariat will feed the established IHO Facebook page, Twitter account, LinkedIn account and YouTube channel. In addition, the IHO Secretariat will organize a dedicated page on the IHO website, where papers and other material relevant to the celebration will be posted. Member States and Stakeholders are invited to forward to the Secretariat any material that they may create in support of their national WHD 2020 celebrations for posting on any of these platforms.

4. Focus of the IHO Secretariat's media outreach activities for 2020 will be a reminder of last year's celebration of the 100th anniversary of the first International Hydrographic Conference, which was held in London, United Kingdom in 1919. 2020 is therefore effectively regarded as the second of the triennium of the centenary celebrations of international cooperation in hydrography.

5. As always, the Secretariat welcomes any comments and suggestions to improve the organization and support of this important annual event or future activities with relation to the triennium of celebrations. The Secretariat takes this opportunity to thank all of those Member States who have already contributed through ideas, advice and materials to this important process.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Mathias JONAS
Secretary-General

Annex: Summary of Comments from Member States

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS FROM MEMBER STATES

Chile

We are of the opinion that the use of autonomous sensors constitutes the application of a technology in hydrographic works, but it does not help to increase the public awareness of the vital role that Hydrography represents for the society. The theme tries to emphasize this technology and not the value of the product that Hydrography generates. In our opinion, to associate Hydrography to the technologies that will allow the autonomous operation of the ships does not seem to be a topic that fulfills the objective of the celebration of the World Hydrography Day. We also recall that all previous year's themes refer to the contribution that Hydrography makes to the society.

Saudi Arabia

Supports the proposed theme as it clearly defines the advances in technology capabilities that the hydrographic community has embraced, to gain efficiencies in operation, time, cost and safety.

United Kingdom

Endorses the proposed World Hydrography Day theme but suggests a slight amendment to add more clarity: Hydrography – underpinning maritime autonomous technology development.