

FOURTEENTH ABLOS BUSINESS MEETING

Hilton Imperial Hotel, Dubrovnik

30 / 31 October 2007

1. **Welcome address**

Dr. Zvonko Gržetić, Director of the Hydrographic Institute of the Republic of Croatia welcomed participants to Dubrovnik and explained the arrangements for the meeting.

2. **Opening remarks by the Chairman**

Mr. Shin Tani, Chairman of ABLOS declared the meeting open at 09:02 on October 30. He thanked Dr Gržetić and the Hydrographic Institute of the Republic of Croatia for hosting the meeting and also Ms.Vinka Kolic for her hard work in organising it.

In his opening remarks he mentioned that since the last business meeting in Monaco, it has not proved possible to put in place all the necessary arrangements which would be required to be able to hold the next ABLOS conference in February 2008 as intended. He expressed his personal regret at the delay which was due to circumstances far beyond his control.

On the subject of Article 76, he mentioned that members should be prepared to respond to requests for assistance from states concerning claims or potential claims bearing in mind the fast approaching deadline.

The Chairman invited the participants to introduce themselves. He welcomed and thanked Commander Luiz Torres from the Brazilian Hydrographic Office to his first ABLOS meeting. A list of participants who attended is appended at annex 1 to these minutes.

Apologies were noted from Prof. Chris Rizos and Commander Muhammad Bashir who were unable to attend and the Chairman intimated that Dr. Don Grant had tendered his resignation from ABLOS. Commander Steve Shipman, Secretary, reported that he had had an approach from DOALOS asking if ABLOS could fund the DOALOS representative to travel to the meeting to which he had responded by saying that ABLOS could not fund a DOALOS representative. The Chairman pointed out that DOALOS were supposed to provide an ex officio representative. He mentioned that the relationship between ABLOS and DOALOS had been improving of late and that DOALOS had nominated a delegate who was willing to actively participate in ABLOS,

but as it turned out was unable to physically be present at this meeting due to a family bereavement.

The Chairman then asked the participants to observe a one minute silence in respect for the late Alexei Zinchenko who passed away suddenly earlier this year, having been the DOALOS representative to ABLOS for many years.

The Secretary thanked Dr Gržetić and the Hydrographic Institute of the Republic of Croatia on behalf of the IHB and passed on apologies on behalf of Admiral Maratos who was unable to attend the ABLOS meeting but sent his best wishes and said that he was aware that we had several important issues to discuss, and that the 5th ABLOS conference is a very important issue for him and he was keen to see it organised and re-scheduled later next year.

He informed the meeting that when the ToR were reviewed to reflect the stepping down of IOC from ABLOS, the number of members nominated by the two parent organisations was increased from three to four. The IHO had canvassed members for any nominations, and the names of Commanders Bashir and Torres had been put forward by their respective countries. The IHO could only appoint one candidate to the newly created position but felt that the other candidate should be invited to attend future ABLOS meetings as an observer until such times as a further vacancy arose and they could then be appointed immediately. Commander Bashir had been nominated for the new vacancy and Commander Torres had been nominated as an IHO observer.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

The provisional agenda had been circulated amongst the members, and in the absence of comments proposed that it be adopted – a proposal which was accepted unanimously.

4. Appointment of a member who is responsible for the minutes.

The Chairman intimated that he had asked Mr. Chris Carleton if he would take notes and produce the minutes. Chris Carleton said that he now had to leave on Wednesday, 31st morning and would not be able to undertake that task. He said that Mr. John Brown, an observer from the UK who would be present on both days, had indicated his willingness to do the job if that met with the approval of the meeting. Approval was unanimous and Mr. Brown was therefore tasked to be responsible for the minutes.

5. **Approval of the minutes of the 13th meeting**

The Secretary stated that he had received 2 or 3 suggested amendments to his draft minutes which had been incorporated prior to their publication on the IHO and ABLOS websites. There being no further suggested amendments the minutes were approved.

6. **ABLOS the way forward**

a. **Revised ToR**

The Secretary gave an update on the status of the ABLOS ToR which after revision to reflect the decision of the IOC to cease participation in ABLOS had been circulated to both the IAG and the IHO for approval. Both parent bodies had approved the revised ToR. The date indicated on the ToR at Annex 2 to the report of the 13th Business Meeting showing 11 December as the date of revision was the only practical method of identifying the version as the ToR had been approved by the parent Organisations on different dates.

Changes to the structure and organisation of the IHO which come into effect on 1 January 2009 may have a slight impact on ABLOS. Currently ABLOS reports to the International Hydrographic Conference (IHC) every 5 years with an annual report based on the business meeting minutes being sent to member states in the intervening years. Under the new arrangements, there will now be 2 main committees – one of which the Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSCC) will be technical in nature and the other being the Inter Regional Co-ordination Committee (IRCC). The IHO has decided that there are many regional aspects to ABLOS and that group should report to the IRCC with the Chairman of ABLOS having a seat on the IRCC. The ToR would need some minor revision to reflect the revised reporting routine within the IHO. The Chairman asked at this point what would happen if the ABLOS Chairman was an IAG sponsored delegate, was it fair to expect his parent organisation to fund his attendance at this meeting. Consultation of the ToR showed that the parent organisation should fund, but after discussion amongst the group it was felt that the Vice Chairman who in accordance with the ToR should be an IHO sponsored delegate could attend in the Chairman's stead as a pragmatic solution to the problem. Should that prove difficult, then the Secretary could undertake that duty and report back to ABLOS.

b. **Membership**

On the issue of membership of ABLOS, the Chairman made reference to a letter from DOALOS nominating Mr. Hariharan Pakshi Rajan as their representative to ABLOS.

Regrettably there had been no official correspondence from IAG on the subject of membership. The situation following the resignation of Dr. Don Grant is that the other two IAG members have reached the end of their respective terms and should be re-appointed or replaced. There remain~~s~~ two additional vacancies to be filled. Regrettably Prof. Lars Sjoberg, the only IAG representative who was due to attend the ABLOS business meeting, had been experiencing difficulties during his travel to the venue and was not yet present. The Chairman felt that the issue of IAG participation should not be discussed until Sjoberg actually arrived, so he postponed further discussion pending his arrival.

After Prof. Sjoberg had arrived, the Chairman apprised him of the earlier discussions, but he was not able to shed much more light on the topic of IAG appointed members. As far as he was aware, he said, he was continuing in post, but his re-appointment had not been officially confirmed. He said that discussions with Prof. Chris Rizos had revealed that there had not yet been a meeting of the IAG where names of potential appointees could be put forward. The Secretary mentioned that he had had e-mail correspondence with Dr. Chris Rizos at the beginning of October saying that he hoped to have discussions with the IAG in the imminent future which would lead to the formal appointment of new members.

The Chairman then asked Prof. Sjoberg if, as the only IAG member present, he was willing to take on the vice chairmanship of ABLOS – a position currently temporarily filled in an acting capacity by Dr Gržetić – but he replied that he felt in all honesty he could not commit to that role. There being no IAG candidates, ABLOS decided to seek a volunteer from amongst the IHO representatives present. Dr Gržetić indicated his willingness to undertake the role and was duly confirmed as the Vice Chairman.

Annex 1 to the report of the 13th ABLOS Business Meeting had a list of dates of membership which was reviewed.

7. 5th ABLOS Conference

a. Dates

E-mail communications had been received by the Chairman from several members indicating that October 2008 would be a favourable time to hold the delayed forthcoming conference and it was agreed to proceed on that basis. The Secretary checked availability with the IHB to see if there were any other bookings and reported there were none. The dates of 16th and 17th October 2008 were chosen, and at the same

time it was agreed that the next business meeting would take place on the 14th and 15th of October.

b. Subject

It was agreed that the subject would be that proposed at the 13th Business Meeting, namely “Difficulties in implementing the provisions of UNCLOS.” It was observed that this subject was not necessarily restricted to Article 76 and some discussion took place which gave rise to the following provisional sessions being suggested:

2 sessions on Article 76

- i Difficulties in acquiring data
- ii Coastal State experiences with submissions

Baseline issues

Environmental topics

Datums

Marine Cadastre

c. Organising Committee

The organising committee was appointed and functions/timelines were discussed. The names of the members and their assigned functions are:

Name	Area of responsibility
Shin Tani	Chairman
Asano Usui	Assistant to the Chairman
Chris Carleton	Abstracts, agenda, manuscripts
John Brown	Backup for Chris Carleton
Luiz Carlos Torres	Hydrographic Advisor
Lars Sjoberg	Geodetic Advisor
Ron Macnab	Communications
Steve Shipman	Local arrangements

The Secretary reported that the conference fund would stand at approximately 7000 Euros as of 1 January 2008. The lack of a precise figure was due to the funding of Macnab to attend the 14th BM in his capacity to assist with the planning and preparations of the 5th ABLOS Conference, this role having been previously agreed by ABLOS.

8. Status and maintenance of TALOS Manual (S-51)

In giving an update on the status of S-51, the Secretary said that it had proved impossible to obtain an accurate figure for the number of copies which had been downloaded from the web site for technical reasons associated with the web provider. He had heard favourable comments about the document – the English version of which has been available for over a year - and in particular the diagrams which had been provided by Japan.

The Secretary reported that the document is in the advanced stage of translation into Spanish, and SHOM are arranging for its translation into French. He has heard of no other States wishing to translate it into any other languages.

Mr. Ron Macnab was asked by the Chairman if he could provide support for editorial work under the direction of the Chairman of the Editorial Committee, to which he replied he would gladly do so.

Dr. Zvonko Gržetić accepted the role of the Chairman of the Editorial Committee and it was agreed that if there were ever substantial editorial work required, ABLOS would appoint extra persons to lighten the workload.

Since the last Business Meeting, no requests have been received either by the Chairman or the IHB for any amendments to be made to the document.

9. Reports on member's attendance at LOS related conferences

Members' participation is showed below.

Date	Conference	Venue	Participation & Presentation
12-15 February 2007	SOPAC Pacific Islands Regional Consultation with respect to Article 76 of the Law of the Sea Convention – Potential Claims to an Extended Continental Shelf	Brisbane, Australia	Mr. Tani presented on ‘Case study of Japanese continental shelf survey’.
19-22 March 2007	11 th International User Group Conference and Educational Sessions sponsored by Caris	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	Mr. Macnab presented on ‘Submarine Ridges and Elevations: Wild Cards in the Poker Game of UNCLOS Article 76’, and Cdr. Torres presented on ‘The Outer Limit of the Continental Shelf in the Brazilian Northern Continental Margin’.
22-24 March 2007	A Law of the Sea Institute Conference- Law of the Sea in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean: Unresolved Issues and Challenges	Texas A&M Corpus Christi, USA	Mr. Carleton presented on ‘Maritime Delimitation in Complex Island Situations’.
28-29 March 2007	IQPC Oil & Gas Conference- International Boundary Disputes and Unitisation – workshop on maritime delimitation	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	Mr. Brown presented the work shop on delimitation.
15-19 April 2007	XII Latin-American Congress of Sciences of the Sea (SCI) –COLACMAR	Florianópolis, SC, Brazil	Cdr. Torres presented on ‘Base of the Slope in the Amazon deep sea fan Region’
2-5 July 2007	IBRU Workshop on Maritime Boundary Delimitation	Durham, UK	Mr. Carleton and Mr. Brown tutored.
1-12 July 2007	IUGG XXIV meeting 2007 ¹	Perugia, Italy	Prof. Sjöberg made the poster presentation, ‘New solutions to classical geodetic problems on the ellipsoid’.

¹ The Secretary gave an update about an IAG Inter-commission Project (ICP1.2) on the development of a world-wide vertical reference frame, and mentioned that they have published a report which he had been able to provide input to as the representative of the IHO Tidal Committee in the form of inserting a section concerning chart datum.

9-11 October 2007	The International conference and exhibition of InWaterTec 2007	Kiel, Germany	Mr. Carleton presented the paper on 'Hydrographic aspects of UNCLOS'.
15-17 October 2007	Underwater Mining Insitute 2007 MARINE MINERALS OF THE PACIFIC: SCIENCE, ECONOMICS, AND THE ENVIRONMENT	Tokyo, Japan	Mr. Tani participated.
October 2007	ILA Committee on Outer Continental Shelf, Article 82	Utrecht	Mr. Carleton participated.
October 2007	NF-ITLOS Training Programme	Hamburg, Germany	Mr. Carleton presented the paper to ITLOS interns on technical aspects of maritime delimitation.
21-24 October 2007	XXIII Brazilian Congress of Cartography	Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil	Cdr. Torres presented on 'Brazilian Submarine Relief Map' and 'Blue Amazon – The Brazilian Maritime Geographic Space'

*Mr. Macnab intimated that an invitation had been received to attend a research forum in Finland, but could not be actioned, however a paper on maritime boundaries was sent to be presented.

10. Science / Technical questions (brought forward from 13th BM)

It was felt that several of the topics which had been brought forward from the 13th Business Meeting would be incorporated into the various sessions of the 5th Conference, in particular one area it was felt could be worthy of further investigation was what could the hydrographic and geodetic communities contribute to the issues concerning the transition from maritime to land mapping in the coastal zone.

11. 5th ABLOS Conference Organising Committee

The organising committee met, agreed the suggested session topics and reviewed the actions necessary to ensure all planning and organisation would be conducted in a timely manner. An indicative timeline of necessary actions was prepared by Mr. Macnab

12. New developments relating to CLCS submissions

Mr. Ron Macnab gave a presentation updating the record of continental shelf submissions to October 2007 which highlighted the fact that of an estimated potential 65 submissions only nine had been submitted so far and of those four were partial, leaving the CLCS with an enormous challenge to deal with all anticipated submissions in a timely manner.

Commander Luiz Torres gave a presentation on the Brazilian Continental Margin in the Vitoria-Trindade region where he showed that the submission in this area was based on submarine elevations.

Mr. Shin Tani, having thanked both presenters for their interesting and thought provoking presentations and gave a short talk highlighting the uncertainties within Article 76 concerning submarine ridges and submarine elevations and just how critical their treatment could be to any claim, using example from the New Zealand submission and the French submission in the vicinity of New Caledonia.

13. Review of requests to ABLOS

The Chairman reported having received a communication from Mr. Mark Alcock of Geoscience Australia indicating interest in the forthcoming conference. He said that there was also a request from the Ocean Policy Research Foundation in Tokyo for a speaker to give a presentation on the topic of “Diversity in interpretation of Article 76 –

as seen in the executive summaries of the submissions” at a seminar on the Establishment of the Outer Limits of the Continental Shelf beyond 200 Nautical Miles under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea – its Implications in International Law to be held in Tokyo in February or March 2008 (tbd).

14. Any Other Business

Ms. Asano Usui brought the attention of delegates to a report of integrated proceedings of “International Symposium on Scientific and Technical Aspects on the Establishment of the Outer Limits of the Continental Shelf beyond 200 Miles” and “ Expert Meeting on Technical Matters regarding the Outer Continental Shelf” which had been held consecutively in March 2006 in Tokyo, Japan. The Ocean Policy Research Foundation had some spare copies which she would distribute to interested delegates.

15. Date & venue of next meeting

The next ABLOS business meeting will be on the two days preceding the conference in Monaco, namely the 14th and 15th October 2008.

16. Close of the meeting

The Chairman thanked the delegates for attending and the Hydrographic Institute of the Republic of Croatia for the excellent meeting arrangements and for being such attentive hosts and closed the meeting at 12:29.