

ESTABLISHMENT OF A “WORLD HYDROGRAPHY DAY”

Dear Hydrographer,

Decision No. 10 of the XVIth International Hydrographic Conference in April 2002 stated that the Organization shall establish an International Hydrographers’ Day and instructed the Directing Committee to investigate how the United Nations could recognize a Hydrographers’ Day.

The Directing Committee has collected information on the procedures and actions needed for the establishment and recognition of the “Hydrographers’ Day” through communications with the Permanent Representative of Monaco to the UN, the IMO and WMO. From the information collected the following points should be highlighted:

- a. The IMO has established a “World Maritime Day” and the WMO a “World Meteorological Day”. Both Organizations celebrate the “activity” and not the “persons” associated with these activities;
- b. The IMO Assembly decided in 1977 to establish the “World Maritime Day” and to celebrate it on 17th March, the anniversary date of the entry into force of the IMO Convention in 1958. However, the Assembly decided that from 1980, “World Maritime Day” would be observed in the last week of September, with each country free to decide on which particular day in that week it would hold its celebration.
- c. The WMO Congress (its supreme governing body) decided to celebrate the “World Meteorological Day” on 23rd March to mark the establishment of WMO as a UN specialized agency in 1950.
- d. The purpose of an Annual Day in both cases was to provide a common opportunity for the Secretariats and their Member States to give suitable publicity to their works at national and international levels. The theme for each Annual Day is one major area of the work of the Organizations.
- e. Both Organizations have a half-day event, with a press release, a presentation by the Secretary-General, or a designated keynote speaker, on the theme of the year and an official reception to which representatives of the host Governments, diplomatic missions, other Organizations and local and foreign press are invited.
- f. Both Organizations reported the decisions of their governing bodies to establish Annual Days to the Chief Executive Board (former Administrative Committee on Coordination) of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN. In both cases there was no formal adoption by the UN General Assembly but the CEB took note and welcomed this initiative.

Considering the above procedures followed by IMO and WMO, the Directing Committee proposes the following regarding the establishment of the “Hydrographers’ Day” :

- a. To follow the principle adopted by the IMO and WMO to name the day “World Hydrography Day”.
- b. To celebrate this day either on 21st June, which is the date the Bureau was established in 1921, or on 22nd September (1970), the date when the IHO Convention entered into force. The Directing Committee proposes the first option to reflect the longevity of the Organization.
- c. To communicate the Member States’ decision to the CEB of the UN for recognition.
- d. Details as to how this Day should be celebrated at the Bureau and by the Member States will be discussed at a later stage. The arrangements followed by IMO and WMO will be taken into consideration.

Member States are requested to examine the attached Resolution, which will be forwarded to the UN and send their comments to the Bureau by 30th April 2004.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,

(original signed)

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS
President

Annex 1: Resolution Establishment of the “World Hydrography Day”

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE “WORLD HYDROGRAPHY DAY”

The International Hydrographic Organization (IHO),

NOTING the importance of Hydrography for the safety of navigation and the protection of the marine environment,

BEARING IN MIND the provisions of Regulations 2, 9, 13, 19, 27, 31 and 34 of the revised Chapter V of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, which entered into force on 1 July 2002,

BEARING IN MIND ALSO the provisions of Regulation 9 of the revised SOLAS Chapter V, under which Contracting Governments undertake to arrange for the collection and compilation of hydrographic data and the publication, dissemination and keeping up to date of all nautical information necessary for safe navigation,

RECALLING that by its Resolution 53/32, the United Nations General Assembly (1998) invited States to provide Hydrographic Services needed for the safety at sea and the protection of the marine environment,

RECALLING ALSO that by its Resolution 58/240, the United Nations General Assembly (2003) encouraged increased membership in the IHO by States,

RECALLING ALSO that one of the Strategic Goals of the IHO is to raise global awareness of the importance of Hydrography,

DECIDES to establish an Annual Day for the IHO, to be designated “World Hydrography Day”, with the aim to give suitable publicity to IHO and its work at the national and international level,

FURTHER DECIDES that the “World Hydrography Day” will be celebrated on 21st June, date when the Organization with the name International Hydrographic Bureau (IHB) was established in 1921,

INSTRUCTS the Directing Committee of the International Hydrographic Bureau (IHB) to inform the appropriate body of the United Nations and other International Organizations of this decision of the IHO.