



IHB File No. S3/7020

CIRCULAR LETTER 86/2007  
26 September 2007

IHO SPECIAL PUBLICATION 23 "LIMITS OF OCEANS AND SEAS"

Reference: a) P-6 : Report of Proceedings of the XVIIth International Hydrographic Conference  
Monaco, 7-11 May 2007

Dear Hydrographer,

1 The XVIIth International Hydrographic Conference, reference a) refers, discussed potential ways ahead that could result in the publication of the fourth edition of IHO Special Publication 23, "Limits of Oceans and Seas" in the near term. While the Conference made no decision on such ways ahead, the Member States directly involved in the area of concern (Japan, Republic of Korea and Democratic People's Republic of Korea) were asked to advise the Bureau, whether their Governments would agree to the suggestion offered by the President of the Conference for the publication of Volume 1 of S-23 (which would cover all agreed issues), omitting the disputed portion (which will be included in a second volume which would not be published), as indicated in page 188 of Volume 1 of reference. The positions provided to the Bureau by the three interested Member States are shown in the attached annexes for your information.

2 In light of the absence of an agreement between the involved Member States on the suggestion offered by the President of the Conference, for S-23 to be published in two Volumes as indicated above, and the new alternative proposed by Japan, the Directing Committee invites Japan, Republic of Korea and Democratic People's Republic of Korea to provide further comments to the Bureau that may move forward the publication of S-23. Other Member States are also invited to provide any comments that they may have.

On behalf of the Directing Committee  
Yours sincerely,

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS  
President

Annex A: Letter from Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Korea dated 4 June 2007.

Annex B: Letter from Hydrographic and Oceanographic Department, Japan Coast Guard dated 16 August 2007.

Annex C: Letter from Hydrographic Department, Democratic People's Republic of Korea dated 19 September 2007.



Annex A to CL 86/2007

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE  
REPUBLIC OF KOREA

4 June, 2007

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS  
President  
International Hydrographic Bureau  
4 Quai Antoine 1er  
B.P. 445-MC 98011 Monaco Cedex  
PRINCIPAUTE DE MONACO

Dear Admiral Maratos,

I would first like to offer my sincere congratulations on your reelection as the President of the Directing Committee of the International Hydrographic Bureau. It is indeed a reflection of the recognition amongst all the Member States of your great commitment and contribution to the work of the IHB.

Above all, your leadership was invaluable in ensuring the remarkable success of the 17<sup>th</sup> International Hydrographic Conference held on 7-11 May in Monaco. My thanks go also to their members of the Directing Committee and staff of the IHB for their tireless devotion in making the excellent arrangements for the Conference.

I would refer to the decision of the Conference concerning the Publication of Limits of Oceans and Seas (S-23). As you are fully aware, there was intense debate during the Conference on the issue of the naming dispute over the sea area located between the Korean Peninsula and the Japanese Archipelago with respect to the publication of the S-23. As a result of the deliberations, the Conference, upon the recommendation of the President, concluded that the three countries directly concerned in the naming dispute advise the IHO whether their Governments would agree to the publication of the S-23 omitting the disputed portion.

Given the absence of agreement on the naming dispute among the concerned parties, the Government of the Republic of Korea firmly believes that the simultaneous use of "East Sea" and "Sea of Japan" in the fourth edition of the S-23 is the most desirable and fair solution. However, the proposed option whereby the S-23 will be published in two volumes, the first of which would cover all agreed issues, while the second volume, which would not be published immediately, would be referred to on those matters which remained unresolved, would indeed be conducive to progress on this issue.

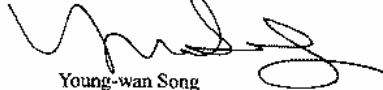
The Republic of Korea does not wish to see any further delay in the publication of the S-23. We are of the view that the publication of all the data agreed upon over the past 50 years would contribute to a breakthrough with respect to the long-awaited S-23.

It is in light of all these considerations that the Government of the Republic of Korea has decided to agree to the immediate publication of the S-23 omitting the disputed portion, as recommended by the President.

I hope that the Directing Committee will take into full consideration the position of the Republic of Korea as explained herewith and continue to make efforts to facilitate the reaching of agreement on this. It is also my sincere hope that the other countries concerned may agree to the recommendation of the President at the earliest. I would greatly appreciate it if you could inform us of your plans and thoughts on advancing this crucial matter.

Looking forward to the opportunity to meet with you again in the near future, I wish you every success in your noble endeavours.

Sincerely yours



Young-wan Song  
Director General  
International Organizations Bureau  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
Republic of Korea



**HYDROGRAPHIC and OCEANOGRAPHIC DEPARTMENT  
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H.O.D. 27/07

16 August 2007

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS

President

International Hydrographic Bureau

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Dear Admiral Maratos,

I would like to express again my heartfelt congratulations on your election to the President. It is my pleasure to have more five years with you. We have all benefited from your expertise and leadership.

In this letter, let me respond to your recent e-mail in which you reminded us of Japan's reaction to Dr. Williams' suggestion made at the International Hydrographic Conference in May regarding the revision of S-23.

Let me first reiterate the basic position of Japan that "Sea of Japan" is the only name of the referred sea area, which has been established both internationally and historically. Therefore, the suggestion made by the then Chairman Williams to divide the revised edition into two volumes is unacceptable on the following two grounds.

First, Japan is concerned that publishing the Fourth Edition of S-23 as two-volume edition would be misleading no matter how the referred sea area is mentioned, because it would create a wrong impression that a dispute over the name of "Sea of Japan" should exist. Such publication would result in the same consequences as the fifth suggestion made by Dr. Williams, in which he proposed the one-volume Fourth Edition with some blank pages. Let me remind you that Dr. Williams himself described this option as unacceptable for Japan.

Second, if S-23 should be divided into two volumes, the first volume could not cover all sea areas. Therefore, the two-volume option would not meet the appropriate quality required for a publication issued by a responsible international organization.

On the other hand, Japan shares concern of many IHO member states that the update of S-23 is long overdue. The revision of S-23 has been delayed due to the improper proposals by certain members which politicize technical issues in the IHO. Japan strongly objects such politicization. However, since Japan cannot endure further delay, which could hinder the progress of the international hydrographic community, Japan could live with the following alternative to the suggestion made by Dr. Williams.

First, the current Third Edition of S-23 would be updated and revised comprehensively and without any exception as the Fourth Edition. Second, each name of sea area with no agreement among member states concerned to revise the Third Edition would remain unchanged in the Fourth Edition. For your reminder, the e-mail, which Dr. Williams sent to you and me on 5<sup>th</sup> July, also states that the description in the Third Edition remains effective regarding a name with no agreement between the concerned states. Finally, the Fourth Edition would include general annotations at the introduction or at the end. Such annotations would state (i) that not all names in the Fourth Edition are approved with

the consensus of all IHO member states, and (ii) as soon as a new agreement is reached on a name, a modification would be issued with a list of corrigenda.

Finally, let us remind you the view of Japan that the IHO should be kept away from any disruptions caused by political assertions made by certain member states. For this reason, Japan is committed to protecting the integrity of the IHO by opposing any attempt which could create a negative precedent of the IHO.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shigeru Kato". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

Shigeru KATO, Dr.  
Chief Hydrographer  
Hydrographic and Oceanographic Department  
Japan Coast Guard



조선민주주의인민공화국 수로국

루게 No. 19

평양시

2009년 9월 14일

INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC BUREAU

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**ANNOUNCEMENT FOR OUR STANDPOINT FOR THE PUBLICATION OF  
S-23 (Limits of Oceans and Seas)**

Dear Sirs,

Let us be known to you that we received the Fax from IHB (IHB File S3/7020) on which the standpoint of our government for the publication of new edition of S-23 (Limits of oceans and Seas) was requested.

We express our thanks for the sincere effort of IHB for the amicable settlement of the matters related to the sea name.

Returning to our country after the 17<sup>th</sup> IHC in May (Monaco), we have already submitted the letter on which our standpoint was expressed clearly.

On this occasion, we clarify the stand of the D.P.R.K. Government, once again.

1. When publishing the Volume 2 of the IHO publication S-23 (Limits of Oceans and Seas), the name forms of each of the languages in question should be accepted surely for the sea between the Korean peninsula and Japanese series of islands (Simultaneous writing), according to the A.4.2.6 of the Technical Resolutions of the IHO, in the present circumstances.

2. Until the problem for the sea name will be fairly solved, it must be published in the state that the name of the sea between the Korean peninsula and Japanese series of islands is not written and the part is left blank on S-23 (Limits of Oceans and Seas).

Yours sincerely,

Vice Admiral Jo Gyoung O  
Director of Hydrographic Department  
of D.P.R.K.