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CIRCULAR LETTER 21/2013
12 March 2013

**IHO CONTRIBUTION TO THE PREPARATION OF THE THIRD SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON
GLOBAL GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (UN-GGIM)**

References:

- A. IHB CL 66/2011 dated 3 November - *IHO Participation in the UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management*
- B. IHB CL 82/2012 dated 22 August - *Report on the Second Session of the UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management*
- C. IHB CL 88/2012 dated 8 October - *Second High Level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, Doha, Qatar, 4-6 February 2013*
- D. IHB CL 17/2013 dated 17 February - *Second Chengdu Forum on UN-GGIM Global Map for Sustainable Development: Development and Applications in urban hazard mapping, Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China, 24-26 April 2013*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. IHB CL 66/2011 (Reference A) reported on the establishment of a UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) and the opportunities that participation offers to the IHO and its Member State organizations by raising awareness and encouraging top-down government interest and support for national hydrographic programmes. Participation in the UN-GGIM also assists in the coordination of the IHO programme with those of other international organizations, corporations and standards organizations at the top level. References B, C and D informed Member States of the progress and planning of activities related to UN-GGIM.

2. As reported in IHB CL 82/2012 (Reference B), the 2nd UN-GGIM Session requested reports on two items of direct interest to IHO for discussion at its 3rd Session planned in Cambridge (United Kingdom) from 24 to 26 July 2013. One item deals with the status of geospatial standards and the other with the status of hydrography and nautical charting.

3. Regarding the status of geospatial standards, UN-GGIM had invited the ISO, IHO, and the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) to produce a joint report. A draft has been prepared by office bearers of the ISO Technical Committee (TC) 211 - "*Geographic information / Geomatics*", the OGC Staff and the IHB and is now being circulated to the members of the three organizations for comments. The draft report is posted on the IHO website at: Home > Int Organizations' Documents related to the IHO > UN-GGIM together with some background documents.

4. The draft report provides an analysis of the standardization needs that are relevant to the UN-GGIM issues in relation to the current standards baselines from ISO/TC 211, the OGC and the IHO. The main body of the draft report includes four sections: the first section introduces the context of the report; the second section describes how ISO/TC 211, the OGC and the IHO operate and cooperate on standardization of geographic information; the third section provides a summary of the detailed analysis of the current standards and future requirements described in the Annexes; the last section contains recommendations for consideration by UN-GGIM.

5. The IHB input to the draft report is essentially factual. It highlights the role that the IHO is playing in the setting of global geospatial standards and shows that the level of harmonization and interoperability of hydrographic and nautical chart services on a world-wide basis can be considered as satisfactory. Therefore the IHB has emphasized in the draft recommendations (see section 4 of the draft report) the critical need to improve hydrographic services and the production of nautical charts and to coordinate the activities of coastal States within the framework of the IHO.

6. The status of hydrography and nautical charting worldwide will be discussed in more detail in a separate report addressing the second item mentioned in paragraph 2. The preparation of an IHO background paper based on C-55 is currently being discussed with the UN-GGIM Secretariat and will be reported to Member States in due course.

7. The draft report on geospatial standards will be finalized in the margins of the 36th Plenary of the ISO/TC 211 and associated meetings, to be held in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 27 to 31 May 2013. IHO Member States are invited to review the draft and to provide their comments to the Directing Committee at their earliest convenience and **no later than 30 April 2013**, in order to give sufficient time to the drafting group to compile the comments before the ISO/TC 211 meetings.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,



Gilles BESSERO
Director