

**PRO -1.10      PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH AN IHO STRATEGY AND RESOLUTION  
FOR GENDER-INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE**

**Submitted by:** Canada, Japan

**References** : A. Action C3/09

B. UN Gender-inclusive Language. (English:  
<https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/>; Français:  
<https://www.un.org/fr/gender-inclusive-language/> ; Español :  
<https://www.un.org/es/gender-inclusive-language/> )

C. UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 – Gender Equality  
(<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>)

**PROPOSAL:**

**The Assembly is invited :**

- a. To endorse a new IHO Resolution regarding gender-inclusive language; and,**
- b. To task the Council to develop a strategy towards implementing the Resolution, that is, ensuring all IHO documentation and communications are consistent with the UN Guidelines on Gender-inclusive Language and to monitor the IHO's progress towards this goal.**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

1. During a discussion at the 3<sup>rd</sup> IHO Council meeting on amendments to an Article of the General Regulations, it was noted that IHO documentation lacks a consistency in the application of “gender-neutral” language. [This proposal will forthwith adopt the UN term, “gender-inclusive language”.] Given the soon-to-be 100-year existence of the organization and the great number of documents in the IHO collection, this is not a surprise, but neither should this be considered to cast a poor light on the Organization given the sizable evolvement of social norms over that period. In fact, a preliminary analysis of the English version of Basic Documents and the IHO Resolution (Annex B), finds relatively few cases of gender-specific pronouns and possessives i.e. ‘he’ ‘him’, ‘his’.

2. However, as the IHO enters its second century, it is time for the Organization to set a path to ensure, starting with its language, that gender equity is promoted and supported. It is a small step that the IHO can take to support the UN Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender Equality (Ref C). The UN states the following (Ref. B.):

*Using gender-inclusive language means speaking and writing in a way that does not discriminate against a particular sex, social gender or gender identity, and does not perpetuate gender stereotypes.*

*Given the key role of language in shaping cultural and social attitudes, using gender-inclusive language is a powerful way to promote gender equality and eradicate gender bias.*

3. This proposal is comprised of two elements:

a. A Resolution that will state clearly the IHO's commitment to ensuring that gender-inclusive language is used in all its documentation and communication. Any document or communication issued or updated after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the IHO Assembly must follow the UN gender-inclusive guidelines. A draft resolution to this effect is proposed in Annex A.

b. A strategy or plan, developed and monitored by the IHO Council (perhaps via a Council working group) to monitor the implementation of the Resolution.

Further notes:

-In recognition of the administrative load that would fall on the IHO Secretariat to simply update the current documents to the UN guidelines, it is recommended that the updating of the gender references take place in conjunction with other edits and revisions, as proposed by committees, sub-committees, working groups, and other organs of the IHO.

-This proposal and the Resolution, in no way change the current approval process, except if the change is purely to update the gender language. It is proposed that the Assembly delegate approval to the Council for these cases.

-The analysis summarized in Annex B was preliminary. Further investigation should be undertaken to ensure that all instances of less-inclusive gender language are identified.

-The UN Guidelines are available in each of the official languages of the IHO (plus others).

**Annex A to PRO 1.10**

<b>GENDER-INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE TO BE USED IN IHO DOCUMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<b>x/2020</b>	<b>IHO A-2</b>	
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1. Given that language plays an important role in shaping cultural and social attitudes, it is resolved that the Secretariat of the IHO and the organs of the IHO must ensure that the language used in IHO documents and communications issued or amended after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the IHO Assembly will be gender inclusive as per the UN Guidelines on Gender-inclusive Language (<https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/>).
2. Documents produced prior to the approval of this resolution will be updated at the earliest possible opportunity and, preferably, in conjunction with other content editing or revision.
3. The approval of documents amended solely to address gender language issues is delegated to the IHO Council by the IHO Assembly.
4. Documents amended for any other reason will follow the approval process that is appropriate for that particular document.

**Annex B to PRO 1.10**

**Instances in the IHO Basic Documents and in the Resolutions of the IHO (English version) of less-inclusive gender language (using examples from UN Guidelines).**

	<b>his/her</b>	<b>he/she or he</b>	<b>him/her or him</b>
Convention	n/a	n/a	n/a
General Regulations	Art. 14 Art. 14 ( <i>his or her</i> ) Art. 15 Art. 25c Art. 25d Art. 25e	Art. 11 (x3) Art. 12	n/a
Financial Regulations	Art. 19a	Art. 19c	n/a
ROP Assembly	Rule 16 Rule 25	Rule 17 (x2)	Rule 17 Rule 19
ROP Council	Rule 13 Rule 19	Rule 14 (x2)	Rule 14 Rule 15
ROP Financial Committee	Rule 15 Rule 19	Rule 11 (x2)	Rule 11 Rule 12
Resolutions of the IHO	6/2009 5(a)	2/2004 ( <i>he</i> )	