

## 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the IOC Assembly

Paris, France, 18-24 June 2015

The Assembly is the highest governing body of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO. It meets every two years. The functions of the Assembly are to consider matters related to managing the regional subsidiary bodies of the IOC and their programmes, to oversee the ocean research programmes, the ocean observing systems and data management, the regional tsunami warning systems, the coordination of warning and mitigation systems for ocean hazards, the capacity building programme and strategy, sustainable development and governance, the administration and management of the IOC and the governance of the IHO-IOC GEBCO Project in cooperation with the IHO Secretariat.

The 28<sup>th</sup> session of the IOC Assembly was held at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France, from 18 to 25 June. It was preceded by the 48<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Council on 16 June and an “Ocean Science Day” on 17 June. Among the delegations, the Hydrographers of the following IHO Member States were present: Brazil, Chile, Germany, Russian Federation and Turkey. Director Mustafa Iptes and Assistant Director Wyatt represented the IHO. The Assembly session was opened by Ms Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO, and Mr Vladimir Ryabinin, the Executive Secretary of the IOC.



*Executive Secretary of the IOC, Vladimir Ryabinin addressing the IOC Assembly during the opening session.*

### General

The Assembly received reports from the Executive Secretary and reports on the status of the IOC global ocean science report, the world climate research programme and the second international Indian Ocean expedition. Reports on the activities of the IOC regional subsidiary bodies – *the sub-commissions for the Western Pacific, the Caribbean and adjacent regions, and Africa and adjacent island States* - were considered also. The Assembly discussed the United Nations world ocean assessment and the progress of the Global Ocean Observing System, the Global Climate Observing System and the Joint World Meteorological Organization (WMO) - IOC technical commission for oceanography and marine meteorology (JCOMM). The Assembly also discussed the regional tsunami warning and mitigation systems covering the Pacific, the Indian Ocean and the North-Eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean and connected seas, the tsunami and other coastal hazards warning system for the Caribbean and adjacent regions, as well as the global coordination of warning and mitigation systems for ocean hazards and harmful algal blooms.

### Ocean Bathymetry and Capacity Building

Of particular significance to Hydrographers were the discussions on the IOC’s capacity development strategy, the International Polar Partnership initiative, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Indian Ocean Expedition and the IHO-IOC General Bathymetric Chart of the Ocean (GEBCO) Project. The latter covered two items – the consideration of proposed revised Terms of Reference (ToR) and Rules of Procedures (RoP) of the GEBCO Guiding Committee (GGC) and the consideration of a submission from the IOC Secretariat to review the role and involvement of the IOC in the GEBCO Project. The ToR / RoP of the GGC were discussed at length in a sessional working group, chaired by Mr Craig McLean, USA, with representatives from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Colombia, France, India, Ireland, Japan, Malaysia, Monaco, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Spain, Tanzania, Tunisia, Turkey, UK, and USA. The IHO representatives also participated with the Chair and officers of the GGC observing.

The IOC Assembly adopted by consensus the revised ToR / RoP of the GGC in the plenary session on 22 June and agreed to the proposed review of the role and involvement of the IOC inviting a report to be submitted to the IOC Executive Council meeting in 2016.

### Office Bearers

The Assembly unanimously elected Professor Peter Haugan of Norway as the Chair of the IOC for 2016 to 2017. Lieutenant Commander Ariel Troisi, from the Hydrographic Office of Argentina, was elected as one of the new Vice-Chair.

**Next Sessions**

The next session of the IOC Executive Council (49<sup>th</sup> session) will be held from 6 to 10 June 2016. The next session of the IOC Assembly (Assembly 29) is scheduled in June 2017.