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The Legal Counsel
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IHB File N° TA5 UN

10 March 2008

Reference: a. IHB File No TA5 UN dated 15 October 2007
b. Your letter dated 17 January 2008

Dear Mr Michel,

Further to my letter in reference (a) I would like to emphasize that one of the most important objectives of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), is to provide support and advice to coastal States, especially to developing countries and to small island developing States, to establish and enhance their hydrographic capabilities.

An adequate hydrographic infrastructure is an essential foundation layer not only for the primary purpose of safety of navigation but also in support of all other marine activities, including economic development, security and defense, scientific research, environmental protection, coastal zone management, marine disaster protection, et cetera.

The IHO has identified Capacity Building as one of its Strategic Issues, aiming at building effective national hydrographic organizations, with appropriate numbers of skilled staff and equipment and with special reference and interest to the developing world. For this reason it has established a Capacity Building Committee, a Capacity Building Strategy and a Capacity Building Fund in order to respond to needs and requirements for Capacity Building and training support. For 2008 the IHO has planned the following activities concerning technical and advisory visits and technical workshops, seminars and short courses, funded mainly by its Capacity Building Fund:

- **Technical and advisory Visits**, in order to raise awareness of the importance of hydrography, assess the status of the hydrographic services and decide on the needs and requirements for Capacity Building and training support:
 1. Technical visit to Fiji and Papua New Guinea within the activities of the IHO South West Pacific Hydrographic Commission;
 2. Advisory visit to Angola, Malawi and Namibia within the activities of the IHO South Africa and Islands Hydrographic Commission;
 3. Assessment visit to Guinea Bissau, as a follow up to a previous one under the auspices of the IHO East Atlantic Hydrographic Commission;

4. Technical visit to Israel, Lebanon, Libya and Syria as a result of decision taken by the Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission.
- **Technical workshops seminars and short courses**, in order to provide training to specialized needs and requirements on specific topics to the interest of various Regional Hydrographic Commissions:
 1. Technical training course on the Maritime Safety Information, for the benefit of the States in the IHO Mediterranean and Black Sea Hydrographic Commission and the Meso-American and Caribbean Hydrographic Commission;
 2. Workshop on the exchange of Regional hydrographic data for the benefit of states in the IHO South East Pacific Hydrographic Commission;
 3. Course in the production of Electronic Navigation Charts (ENCs) for the benefit of States in the IHO Meso-American and Caribbean Hydrographic Commission;
 4. Workshop on port and shallow water surveys, in accordance with the IHO standard S-44, for the benefit of the States in the IHO ROPME Sea Hydrographic Commission;
 5. Technical support in developing regional hydrographic and cartographic plan for the benefits of States in the IHO South West Atlantic Hydrographic Commission;
 6. Conduct of Basic Practical Hydrographic Survey Course for the benefit of States in the IHO East Atlantic Hydrographic Commission;
 7. Support to staff of Bangladesh, Myanmar, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles and Sri Lanka Hydrographic Offices, to attend Category A and Category B Hydrographic courses;
 8. Support to Oman for on the job training in the production of ENCs in Pakistan;
 9. Financial support to 18 students from the IHO East Asia Hydrographic Commission to attend courses on surveying and post processing using Multi Beam Echo Sounders and for the Quality Assurance on the ENCs production.

The persons responsible at national level for cooperating with the IHO and the Regional Hydrographic Commissions, for organizing the events and participating in the various workshops and seminars are the Directors of the Hydrographic Offices. The Capacity Building and training efforts of the IHO is aiming at providing support to various developing States in different regions of the world, in order to be in a position to develop national hydrographic, cartographic and navigational capabilities that will support them in issues concerning safety at sea, protection of the marine environment, coastal zone management, fisheries and other application of national and regional interest. The Capacity Building and training program of the IHO is in line with and supports the efforts of the UN Secretary-General for assistance to least developed countries and small islands developing States, to realize the benefits of sustainable and effective development of marine resources and uses of the oceans.

On behalf of the Directing Committee

Yours sincerely,

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS
President

