

**IMO COUNCIL, 128th Session,
28 November – 2 December 2022.**

The IMO Council held its 128th Meeting in-person complemented by hybrid on-line capability, from Monday 28 November to 2 December 2022, chaired by Mr Victor Jimenez of Spain and his Vice-Chair, Mrs Amane Fethallah of Morocco. All 40 Member States elected to the Council presented their credentials correctly.

Two Working Groups were formed and chaired as follows:

WG 1 Strategy and Planning, Ms A Sly (Australia)

WG 2 Council Reform, Mrs A Fethallah (Morocco).

OPENING REMARKS BY Mr KITACK-LIM, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF IMO.

Mr Lim welcomed delegates to the 128th session of the Council, the first-in-person for over two years, and also welcomed those joining remotely. He stated that many important items on the agenda would guide the work of the Organisation for the rest of this biennium and beyond.

As was evidenced during the pandemic and by recent geopolitical challenges, shipping continues to provide a critical contribution to world trade, invaluable to the global supply chain.

He spoke of the military conflict in Ukraine remaining a matter of grave concern at all levels, not least its major impact on the safety and welfare of seafarers; the safety of shipping operations and ships; and in particular, those stranded in affected areas. Despite these challenges, the establishment of the Humanitarian Maritime Corridor and the Black Sea Grain Initiative established in July showed what can be achieved with the cooperation of all involved parties. He was encouraged that an agreement has recently been reached to extend the initiative, thus permitting IMO to persevere with efforts to secure the safety of seafarers and in moving stranded ships.

Regarding this week's meeting, Council members will start developing the Strategic Plan for the six-year period 2024 to 2029 and will continue to progress the work programme on Council reform, tackling the outstanding issues on live-streaming and other matters. IMO Member States will be encouraged to ratify the amendments to the IMO Convention in order to enable implementation of the agreed reforms whilst an update will be given on the measures to enhance gender and geographical representation within the Secretariat. Budget considerations for 2022 and 2023 will be updated on measures to ensure the financial sustainability of the Organisation and a budget outline for the next biennium 2024-2025 also provided.

A report by the Technical Cooperation Committee is to be considered, as well as a proposal to establish an International Women in Maritime Prize and there will be an opportunity to provide inputs and comments on the development of the Member States Audit, also IMO's Maritime Training Institutions, and other matters.

The Secretary General closed his address by reminding delegates of an event, later in the afternoon, to commemorate the 40th anniversary of UNCLOS.

RULES OF PROCEDURE.

The Council recalled that with the adoption of the Revised Rules of Procedure of the Assembly in December 2021, the Assembly had requested the Council to "undertake, in consultation with the committees, as appropriate, a holistic review of the rules of procedure of all organs of the Organisation, with a view to recommending amendments to harmonise and update such rules to the greatest extent possible, also taking into account experience gained during the COVID-19 pandemic". To this end, the Council was requested to provide a report on the progress made on the harmonisation of the rules of procedure of all organs of the Organisation to the Assembly at its thirty-third session in 2023.

The Council noted the information set out in document C 128/3 (United Arab Emirates) proposing two possible ways forward with the holistic review of the rules of procedure of IMO organs and document C 128/3/1 (Russian Federation) commenting on the UAE document, and the comments made.

The Council agreed to delegate to each organ the task of undertaking a holistic review and harmonisation of their respective rules of procedure. Member States were therefore asked to submit concrete proposals at future sessions to better consider how to develop and structure the holistic review of the rules of procedure of the organs of the Organisation, in particular the process for conducting such a review.

STRATEGY, PLANNING AND REFORM.

Strategy and Planning. Taking into account the information set out in documents C 128/4(a) and C 128/4(a)/1 (United Arab Emirates) as well as that provided orally by the Secretary-General and the delegation of the UAE providing information concerning the development of the Strategic Plan for the six-year period 2024 to 2029, WG 1 was established. Following the Group's work, the Council approved WG 1's report in general and, in particular:

- agreed to the revised timetable for the development of the Strategic Plan for the six-year period 2024 to 2029;
- Agreed to the establishment of an intersessional working group on the Strategic Plan (ISWG-SP) before the 129th session of the Council in the first half of 2023, and requested the Secretariat to find an appropriate time between March and May 2023 to hold the meeting;
- Approved provisional Terms of Reference for the intersessional working group on the Strategic Plan;
- Invited submissions on revisions, additions, and/or amendments to the current Strategic Plan, based on discussions and subsequent recommendations from the Working Group during C 128, for consideration at the intersessional working group; and,
- Requested the committees to review, comment and provide input on parts of the Strategic Plan under their purview to the intersessional working group on the Strategic Plan, C 129 and C 130, as appropriate, and, in particular request a verbal

report on any outcome pertinent to the development of the Strategic Plan from MSC 107 and MEPC 80 to C 129, in case a written report cannot be finalised in time.

Reform. A number of documents were submitted on the subject of Council Reform. Two of them alluded to live-streaming of IMO meetings to the public, as well as information provided orally by Australia. Member States were invited to make proposals on the basis of the agreement reached at C 127, bearing in mind the experience of Member States on this issue in other international bodies whilst the Secretariat was requested to provide additional information in order to facilitate further consideration, following which the item was deferred to the next session of the Council.

Also of particular note, was the information provided in document C 128/4(b)/1 relating to *Protection of contents on IMODOCS* covering issues such as copyright and commercial use of material, and which was referred to WG 2 for detailed consideration. The Group was instructed to consider the information provided in the document and to update the work plan to determine a timeline for completion. This tasking was duly completed by WG 2, following which the Council approved the report of its work in general, and in particular:

- Noted the recommendation of the Group that this matter deserved further thorough consideration;
- Noted the recommendation of the Group that the answer to the questions raised in document C 128/4(b)/1 needed to strike a balance between the following interests: on the one hand, the implementation needs of Member States and the interests of the industry and the public; and, on the other hand, the need for the Organisation to protect the authenticity, accuracy and integrity of IMO documents and to prevent loss of revenue for the Organisation;
- Noted that further information was required for the detailed consideration of this matter at a future session. Council requested the Secretariat to provide information on the practices of other international organisations, on the different types of documents such as circulars, meeting reports, resolutions, circular letters, IMO instruments (including, inter alia, conventions, codes and guidelines, etc.), to allow the Council to decide what documents need to be further protected and what can be freely available to the public, taking into account the decisions already taken by the Council on access to information on IMODOCS. Of the options available, which could range from making everything available free of copyright, considering a cost recovery element, to charging royalties, and on the financial implications of the different options;
- Instructed the Secretariat to consider the benefit of issuing a questionnaire to all Member States to collate information on national policies and practices with regard to the protection of relevant Government works, including legislation;
- Approved the updated work plan of the Working Group on Council Reform; and
- Endorsed the re-establishment of the Working Group on Council Reform at a future session of the Council.

Internal Oversight, Ethics and Joint Inspection Unit. The Council noted the information set out in document C 128/4(c) as well as that provided orally by the Secretary-General on matters relating to the Internal Oversight, Ethics and Joint Inspection Unit (JIU).

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.

Matters considered under this item were as follows:

- Human resources matters, including amendments to the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules;
- Report on the status of Member States' contributions to the General Fund and the Working Capital Fund, and Member States falling under the provisions of Article 61 of the IMO Convention;
- Budget considerations for 2022 and 2023; and,
- Results-based budget: outline of budgetary implications for 2024-2025.

Detailed information on these matters is available should it be needed.

CONSOLIDATED TEXT OF THE IMO CONVENTION.

The Council noted that the review of the consolidated text of the IMO Convention in all official languages is still under way and that further submissions will be made to a future session of the Council.

IMO MEMBER STATE AUDIT SCHEME.

The Council noted the information provided in document C 128/7 on the progress made thus far on the implementation of the IMO Member State Audit Scheme and, in particular:

- Endorsed the revised overall audit schedule, including the decision to postpone the audit of the Russian Federation;
- Noted the additional information on experience gained in the conduct of remote audits, in the context of its consideration of the use of remote audits beyond the pandemic context;
- Encouraged those Member States that had not yet done so to provide the Secretariat with the details of an individual authorised to access Member State audit reports through the GISIS module as per Circular Letter No.3587;
- Invited audited Member States to provide the Secretariat with their comments on the progress of the implementation of their corrective action plans (CPICAP), especially when those deadlines had been reached or were approaching;
- Invited audited Member States that were undergoing the audit follow-up process to provide information and documentary evidence requested through the draft audit follow-up reports (DAFRs) in a timely manner;
- Encouraged auditors to update their profiles in the E-roster;
- Encouraged Member States to enhance women's participation in the audit scheme; and;
- Encouraged individuals, nominated for inclusion in the roster of auditors, and Member States, nominating such individuals, to use the procedures set out in Circular Letter No.3547.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A VOLUNTARY MULTI-DONOR TRUST FUND TO FACILITATE PARTICIPATION OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS) AND LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (LDCS IN IMO MEETINGS.

The Council noted the information set out in document C 128/8 (United Kingdom), as well as that provided orally by that delegation, on the report of the Correspondence Group on the Establishment of a Voluntary Multi-Donor Trust Fund to Facilitate the Participation of Developing Countries, Especially Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in IMO Meetings.

Following informal consultations carried out during this session, the Council endorsed finalised terms of reference (TORs) of the Fund and agreed to review the TORs, based on the experience of the first full year of operations of the Fund, no later than at the 130th session of the Council.

REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION COMMITTEE.

The Council noted the information set out in documents C 128/9 and C 128/9/Add.1 on the decisions and actions taken by the seventy-second session of the Technical Cooperation Committee. The Council, in particular:

- Noted the summary of the Committee's report on its seventy-second session (C 128/9/Add.1), in particular the progress on the establishment of the IMO Regional Presence Office (RPO) in Fiji for the Pacific Islands region; progress against the implementation of the Capacity-Building Decade 2021-2030 Strategy; the updated biennial status report of the Committee's outputs for the 2022-2023 biennium; the finalisation of the SMART indicators by the Working Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and the proposed substantive items for inclusion in its provisional agendas for the period 2023-2026;
- Noted the decision of the Committee to suspend in principle the participation of the Russian Federation in any IMO technical cooperation activity either as a recipient or as a host until the Committee decides otherwise;
- Noted that, in response to the Committee's invitation to the Secretary-General to continue collaborating with the relevant parties and the JCC on the need for the immediate release of stranded vessels in Ukrainian ports, especially those outside of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, the Secretary-General provided an update on the Initiative;
- noted that, due to limitations of the hybrid meeting capability in the committee meeting rooms at IMO Headquarters, the Working Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development had had to meet at lunch time in the Main Hall on the second day of the meeting, and urged the Secretary-General to take the necessary actions to ensure that the committee meeting rooms were equipped with the hybrid capability as early as possible;
- Noted the outcomes of the Committee's discussion on the matters raised regarding the establishment of a new RPO for the Middle East and North Africa region;
- Approved the establishment of an IMO RPO in Egypt for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, noting the Committee's agreement to consider the marine

environmental protection mandates of existing regional entities in the Mediterranean (REMPEC), Red Sea (PERSGA) and ROPME (MEMAC) Sea Areas;

- Noted the outcomes of the Committee's discussion on initiatives to progress the global women in maritime agenda, including the agreement to establish one new global maritime indicator to reflect the percentage of women seafarers on board ships, as well as the submission to the Council by interested Member States to propose the establishment of an IMO Gender Equality Award;
- Agreed to consider the inclusion of the following when developing the new Strategic Plan for the Organisation for the six-year period 2024 to 2029 when revising resolution A.1149(32) on Revised Strategic Plan for the Organisation for the six-year period 2018 to 2023:

.1 the Capacity-Building Decade 2021-2030 Strategy as an integral part of the next Strategic Plan;

.2 the strategic direction on the human element (SD 6: Address the human element) considering the needs and well-being of seafarers and, in doing so, emphasise the importance of education and training, as well as the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women; and,

.3 the new global maritime indicator to reflect the percentage of women seafarers on board ships.

- Noted the outcome of the Committee's consideration of the four consolidated audit summary reports (CASRs) in the context of improvements in the provision of technical assistance to Member States;
- Noted that the Committee had considered the invitation of C 125 to develop priority lists in the context of the consolidation of certified texts of IMO conventions, and was of the view there is no need for the Committee to develop such lists;
- Noted that the Committee had decided to defer the election of its Chair and Vice-Chair to its seventy-third session; and,
- Approved the report of the Committee's seventy-second session for transmission to the thirty-third session of the Assembly, in accordance with Article 21(b) of the IMO Convention.

The Council noted the information in document C 128/9/1 which contained a proposal for the establishment of an IMO Gender Equality Award, as well as that provided orally by Mexico and in particular:

- approved the proposal made in paragraphs 6 and 7 of document C 128/9/1;
- approved the terms of reference for the IMO Gender Equality Award provided in the annex to the aforementioned document;
- Agreed that the start year for the IMO Gender Equality Award would be May 2024; and,
- Requested the Secretariat to take action, as appropriate.

LONDON CONVENTION 1972 AND 1996 PROTOCOL. The Council noted the information set out in document C 128/10, reporting on the outcome of the forty-fourth Consultative Meeting of Contracting Parties to the London Convention 1972 and the seventeenth Meeting of Contracting Parties to the 1996 Protocol to the London Convention, as well as that provided orally by the Secretary-General and Ms. Betsy Valente of the United States, Chair of the governing bodies of the London Convention and London Protocol.

TECHNICAL COOPERATION FUND: 2021 ACTIVITIES. The Council noted the information provided in document C 128/11 relating to the delivery of the ITCP activities supported by the Technical Cooperation (TC) Fund during 2021, as well as that provided orally by the Secretary-General. Council further noted that 102 activities were delivered to the value of \$10.5 million, including nearly \$4 million from the TC Fund allocation.

GLOBAL MARITIME TRAINING INSTITUTIONS.

World maritime University (WMU). The Council noted the information set out in documents C 128/12(a) and C 128/12(a)/1 on the report of the Board of Governors and budget of the World Maritime University (WMU) as well as that provided orally by the WMU President, Dr. Doumbia-Henry.

The Council, in particular:

- Noted WMU's Board of Governors report on key elements of the 2021 operations of the University, as presented in document C 128/12(a) and the Annual Report published on the WMU website;
- Noted the achievement of the accreditation of WMU degrees by Sweden, thanked the Government of Sweden for its efforts and urged, once more, Member States to take action so as to enable recognition, under their national legislation, of the degrees conferred by the University;
- Expressed its appreciation to all donors who had contributed through financial and in-kind support to the University;
- Expressed its appreciation to the Chancellor and the President for ensuring uninterrupted operations during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Strongly urged Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and industry to continue to support the University either by direct contributions to its operating budget, scholarship financing, equipment donation or through any other assistance;
- Noted the University's budget trend for 2022 and the initial budget for 2023 as presented;
- Welcomed efforts by the University's management to attract additional revenue; and,
- Commended the WMU President's excellent work and dedication to the University and agreed to submit to the Assembly a resolution expressing appreciation for the work and achievements of Dr. Doumbia Henry.

IMO International Law Institute (IMLI). The Council noted the information set out in documents C 128/12(b) and C 128/12(b)/1, on the report of the Governing Board of IMLI and the Institute's budget for the 2022 and 2023 financial years, as well as that provided orally by the new IMLI Director, Professor Norman Martinez, successor to Professor David Attard who retired in July 2022. Council welcomed Professor Martinez to his appointment.

The Council, in particular:

- Noted IMLI's Governing Board report on key elements of the 2021 operations of the Institute, as presented in document C 128/12(b) and the Annual Report published on the IMLI website;
- Urged Member States, once more, to take action so as to enable recognition, under their national legislation, of the degrees conferred by the Institute;
- Expressed its appreciation to the Government of Malta and all the donors who contributed through financial and in-kind support to the Institute;
- Strongly urged Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and industry to continue to support the Institute either by direct contributions to its operating budget, scholarship financing, equipment donation or through any other assistance, pursuant to resolution A.934(22) on Sustainable financial support for the IMO International Maritime Law Institute; and,
- Noted the information related to IMLI's budget for 2022 and 2023 as contained in document C 128/12(b)/1.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS.

Relations with the United Nations and the specialised agencies. The Council noted the information set out in documents C 128/13(a) and C 128/13(a)/Add.1 on relations with the United Nations and the specialised agencies, as well as that provided orally by the Secretary-General and in particular, noted information on:

- The fourth and fifth sessions of the Intergovernmental Conference on Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ);
- The 2022 UN Ocean Conference;
- The fiftieth anniversaries of both the first UN Conference on the Human Environment (the Stockholm Conference) and the adoption of the London Convention;
- The thirty-second Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS); and,
- The United Nations General Assembly resolution on Territorial integrity of Ukraine: defending the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Relations with intergovernmental organisations. No documents were submitted.

Relations with non-governmental organisations. The Council noted the information set out in documents C 127/14(c) and C 127/14(c)/2 dealing with the applications for consultative status and the recommendations of the first session of the Intersessional Working Group on Relations with Non-governmental Organisations (ISWG-NGO 1) on

these applications, and document C 127/14(c)/1, on the additional information submitted by the Zero Emissions Ship Technology Association (ZESTAs).

Having considered the recommendations of the Intersessional Working Group, the Council decided:

- Not to grant consultative status to Young Ship International and INTERMEPA;
- To refer the application submitted by IPEN for further screening by MEPC to assess its expertise and consider whether the Committee's work would benefit from IPEN's contribution; and,
- To grant consultative status to the TIC Council and EDF and, within the classification of organisations in consultative status by interests/activity, to place the TIC Council under Standards and EDF under Environment.

In relation to the information contained in document C 127/14(c)/1, the Council decided to grant consultative status on a provisional basis for no more than two years, after which a review would be conducted and to place ZESTAs within the classification of organisations with consultative status under Standards.

World Maritime Day. Council noted the very worthwhile contributions which various Member Governments, organizations and individuals had made to the success of World Maritime Day 2022, by their attendance at the activities and the reception held at IMO Headquarters and through events organized by them; by joining the illumination initiative to promote the year's theme; as well as the messages sent to the Secretary-General on the occasion or posted on social media. The Council expressed its appreciation to all those Governments, organizations and individuals and, in particular, to the Government of South Africa for successfully hosting the sixteenth World Maritime Day Parallel Event.

The generous offer made by the Government of the Republic of Korea to host the World Maritime Day Parallel Event in 2026 was accepted with appreciation whilst Member States willing to host the Parallel Event in 2027 may submit offers for the Council's consideration from 3 January 2023 (00:01, UTC) to be considered on a "first come, first served" basis.

The Council recalled that it had previously accepted the generous offer of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to be the next host in 2023, however it rescinded its decision to accept the Russian Federation's proposal to host the World Maritime Day Parallel Event in 2024. Member States were accordingly invited to submit proposals to C 129 regarding bids to host the event in 2024.

The Council further recalled that at its 127th session, it had decided that the World Maritime Theme for 2023 should be "MARPOL at 50 – Our commitment goes on" and noted that the Secretary-General would make all necessary arrangements for the celebration of the World Maritime Day, in accordance with past practice.

Day of the Seafarer. The Day of the Seafarer (25 June) is recognised by the United Nations as an official observance day. It was established in a resolution adopted by the 2010 Diplomatic Conference in Manila convened to adopt the revised STCW Convention. Its stated purpose is to recognise the unique contribution made by seafarers from all over

the world to international seaborne trade, the world economy and civil society as a whole.

The 'Day' was celebrated very successfully this year with the theme: 'Your voyage then and now, share your journey', which looked at seafarer voyages, what it includes and how it has evolved over time, and what remains at the heart of the seafarers' reality.

Some 30 million people inter-acted with the theme on social media whilst the IMO Secretary-General's video was viewed over 50,000 times.

IMO Goodwill Maritime Ambassadors Scheme. The Council noted that the annual meeting of the IMO-GMAs was held on 30 September 2022 in hybrid format and a total of 32 Goodwill Maritime Ambassadors participated. In addition to receiving reports on their regular activities, the participants were also requested to assist in supporting the promotion of the 2023 International Day for Women in Maritime; World Maritime Day; and Day of the Seafarer campaigns.

REPORT ON THE STATUS OF THE IMO CONVENTION AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE ORGANISATION.

Since the 127th session of the Council which was held in July 2022, there has been no change in the membership of the Organisation which stands at 175, with the number of Associate Members remaining at three.

2021 amendments to the IMO Convention. As of 23 September 2022 there were three acceptances of the amendments, by Honduras, Norway and Malta. The amendments will enter into force 12 months after their acceptance by two thirds (117) of the Members of the Organization.

REPORT ON THE STATUS OF CONVENTIONS AND OTHER MULTILATERAL INSTRUMENTS IN RESPECT OF WHICH THE ORGANISATION PERFORMS FUNCTIONS.

The Council noted the information provided in documents C 128/15 and /15/Add.1, and in particular:

- Endorsed and supported the Secretary-General's continuing efforts to encourage Governments to consider accepting those instruments to which they were not yet Parties; and reiterated its plea to Member Governments to ratify the 2009 Hong Kong Ship Recycling Convention, the 2012 Cape Town Agreement and the 2010 HNS Protocol, to enable their entry into force as soon as possible;
- Noted the progress made with regards to the 2021 amendments to the IMO Convention, with Honduras, Malaysia, Malta, Norway, Netherlands, Spain and Singapore accepting the 2021 amendments so far, and endorsed the Secretary-General's request for Member Governments who had not yet done so to accept these amendments at their earliest opportunity; and,

- Welcomed all ratifications during the period under review and endorsed the Secretary-General's request for further ratifications, to achieve widespread implementation and enforcement.

HYBRID MEETING CAPABILITY.

The Council noted information provided on the preliminary review of hybrid meeting capability and initial experience gained in holding hybrid sessions. In particular, Council:

- noted the updated information provided orally by the Secretary-General;
- Encouraged the Council and the IMO organs to:
 - .1 hold working group sessions in the hybrid mode as far as practicable;
 - .2 use the trial period to gain more experience in the Main Hall as well as Committee Rooms 9 and 10 when hybrid capabilities are available; and,
 - .3 noted that the modalities for working groups and drafting groups should be identified as early as possible to be included in the circular letter for each meeting.

The Council invited the Secretariat to continue working on a single list of requests to speak (showing the list of delegations requesting to speak from both in-person and remote participants), so that it is visible for delegates. The information provided in document C 128/16/1 (United Arab Emirates) proposing to develop interim guidance to facilitate hybrid sessions of the IMO Council was also noted, however it was decided to consider this matter further at its next session, taking into account the experience gained from the trial period.

MATTERS ARISING FROM C/ES.35. The Council considered the information provided in documents C 128/17 (Panama) and C 128/INF.5 (Secretariat), together with an additional update provided orally by the Secretary-General, on matters related to the situation of international shipping and seafarers in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov, taking into account the ongoing military conflict between Ukraine and the Russian Federation, and the establishment and operation of the Initiative on the Safe Transportation of Grain and Foodstuffs from Ukrainian Ports (Black Sea Grain Initiative).

The Council noted the comments made by the Secretary-General and delegations on the current status of the Black Sea Grain Initiative. In relation to document C 128/17, the Council, in particular:

- Encouraged the Secretary-General to continue working on humanitarian efforts to evacuate all stranded ships and seafarers in the conflict area, including efforts to expand the Black Sea Grain Initiative to other types of ships and additional ports;
- Thanked the Secretary-General and the Secretariat for the important contribution to the success of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which had been achieved through an

interagency "One UN approach" involving relevant UN bodies, other international agencies, NGOs and the Member States concerned; and,

- Emphasised the important contribution that the Black Sea Grain Initiative, recognised by the UN Secretary-General as a landmark agreement to help vulnerable people in every corner of the world, was making to alleviate the global food supply shortages resulting from the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.

The Council also considered document C 128/17/1 (Russian Federation), commenting on the proposals in document C 127/4(b)/6 (Ukraine) to amend the IMO Convention.

In relation to document C 128/17/1, the Council did not support the views so expressed and decided that it has the authority to consider amendments to the IMO Convention and referred the proposal contained in document C 127/4(b)/1 to the 129th session of the Council for further consideration.

The Council noted that unless requested otherwise, pursuant to Article 71 of the IMO Convention, the Secretary-General will circulate the proposed amendments to the IMO Convention set out in document C 127/4(b)/1, for consideration by the Assembly at its thirty-third session.

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA ITEM.

The Council considered document C 128/20 on urgent matters emanating from the 106th session of the Maritime Safety Committee, inviting it to endorse the holding of intersessional meetings approved by the Committee for 2023, and document C 128/20/1 (Japan) on the consideration of possible measures to prevent acts of endangering the safety of navigation.

In relation to document C 128/20, the Council endorsed the holding of the following intersessional meetings approved by the Maritime Safety Committee for 2023:

- .1 two intersessional meetings of the E&T Group for the IMDG Code, one in the spring of 2023 and another one immediately after CCC 9;
- .2 the nineteenth meeting of the Joint IMO/ITU Experts Group on Maritime Radiocommunication Matters;
- .3 the thirtieth meeting of the ICAO/IMO Joint Working Group on Harmonization of Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue;
- .4 two intersessional meetings of the MSC/LEG/FAL Joint Working Group on MASS; and,
- .5 an intersessional meeting of the FSA Experts Group.

In relation to document C 128/20/1, the Council:

.1 recalled the decisions at its twenty-ninth extraordinary session (23 to 24 November 2017), which were also endorsed by the Assembly, where it strongly condemned the unlawful missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea which posed a clear and serious danger to the safety of shipping in international trade and reiterated that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should cease unlawful ballistic missile launches across international shipping lanes, in line with the obligations and procedures listed in *Navigational warnings concerning operations endangering the safety of navigation* (MSC.1/Circ.1551);

.2 noted the communication by the Governments of Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United States, disseminated by Circular Letter No.4649 on 1 November 2022, which referred to the recent ballistic missiles launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which constituted a blatant violation of the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, and posed a grave threat to the region and the international community;

.3 noted that, at the 106th session of the Maritime Safety Committee (2 to 11 November 2022), many Member States condemned the recent ballistic missiles launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and expressed their grave concerns about them;

.4 strongly condemned the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for its recent missile launches without proper prior notification, aside from the incompatibility of ballistic missile launches with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, which seriously threaten the safety of international shipping;

.5 urgently called upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply strictly with SOLAS regulation V/4, the recommendations contained in resolution A.706(17), as amended, on World-wide navigational warning service (in particular, paragraph 4.2.1.3.13 of annex 1 thereto) and relevant circulars, and cease unlawful and unannounced ballistic missile launches across international shipping lanes; and,

.6 invited the Maritime Safety Committee, at its 107th session, to consider possible measures to be taken to address this issue and inform the Council of any action taken, including recommendations and guidelines, as appropriate, for consideration at its 129th session, and invited Member States to submit relevant proposals to MSC 107.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting of the IMO Council (C 129) will take place from Monday 17 to Friday 21 July 2023. It will comprise in-person participation, complemented by hybrid capability.

END

Captain Paddy McKnight