

IALA COUNCIL
64th session



13-16 June 2017
Incheon
Republic of Korea

8.2 – STRATEGY AND POLICY

8.2 – IALA Advisory Group on change of status

8.2.1 – Pre-Diplomatic Conference April 2017

Note by the Secretariat

1. GENERAL

The French Minister of Foreign Affairs invited to the First Preparatory Diplomatic Conference 18 – 19 April 2017 in Paris to address IALA’s planned change of status to that of an intergovernmental organization (IGO).

Chaired by His Excellency, Mr Serge Ségura, Ambassador of the Oceans, on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development of the Republic of France, the Conference was successful in achieving its principal aim. This was to consider the concrete steps needed to achieve IGO status. The Conference accordingly considered and developed a Roadmap towards a Diplomatic Conference to adopt the IALA Convention (Agenda 8.2.3).

2. PROGRAMME AND OUTCOME OF THE CONFERENCE

There was strong support to broaden the preparatory work already achieved by the Council and its subsidiary bodies on the development of the IALA Convention and the General Regulations that will govern IALA as an IGO to the wider membership. National Members were therefore invited to submit written comments on these two key documents at their earliest convenience and not later than 30 September 2017.

The written comments will allow the Legal Advisory Panel to amend the draft texts of the IALA Convention and the General Regulations and the Secretariat to prepare the necessary input papers for a Second Preparatory Diplomatic Conference. This follow-up conference will be convened in February 2018 hosted by an IALA National Member. The main purpose will be to undertake a first detailed reading of the two documents.

The keen attendance from around the world at the Conference was very encouraging: 173 high-level delegates from 56 countries where IALA has National Members actively participated in the two-day proceedings. The many interventions were a clear indication that there is a genuine willingness to move forward in the direction of the General Assembly Resolution concluded in A Coruña in May 2014, which determines that IGO status should be achieved as soon as possible through the development of an international convention (GA Resolution A.01 of 27 May 2014).

The programme of the Conference was purposefully designed as a confidence-building exercise aimed at providing general information and a forum for a genuine exchange of views and comments on some of the complex issues pertaining to the Association’s transition to effective IGO status. The informal, open-minded and constructive approach undoubtedly contributed to widening understanding of both the substantive work already done on the legal and financial framework for



the future IGO and the diplomatic processes involved in preparing for and convening a Diplomatic Conference.

It proved also very fruitful that Secretary-General Kitack Lim of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and Secretary-General Robert Ward of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) were available to address the Conference about the long-established cooperation between the IMO, the IHO and IALA as partner international organizations – often referred to as ‘the trinity of excellence’ – and to answer questions.

The continued strong support for IALA was evident in the many statements by Government officials as well as representatives of national marine aids to navigation authorities. All expressed their keen willingness to cooperate to ensure that IGO status will safeguard IALA as a consensus-based, consultative and non-political international organization that delivers vital technical work in the interests of world maritime safety, improved harmonization of marine aids to navigation, maritime accident reduction, enhanced efficiency, and better protection of the environment. Speaking on behalf of the Industrial Members Committee, Mr Lars Mansner, Chief Executive Officer, Sabik Oy (Finland) reaffirmed the support of the Industrial Members for the transition to an IGO which would preserve their status and role within the marine aids to navigation community.

3. THE COUNCIL IS REQUESTED TO

- **Note** the information.