

**Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation**

## Preamble

The States Parties to this Convention:

**RECALLING** that the International Association of Lighthouse Authorities was established on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1957 and was renamed the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities in 1998;

**RECOGNIZING** the role of the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities in the improvement and continued harmonization of Marine Aids to Navigation for the safe, economic and efficient movement of vessels for the benefit of the maritime community and the protection of the environment;

**CONSIDERING** the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982 and the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended; and

**CONSIDERING FURTHER** that developing, improving and harmonizing Marine Aids to Navigation for the benefit of the maritime community and the protection of the environment is best coordinated by international organizations;

**HAVE AGREED** as follows:

### Article 1 Establishment

1. The International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (hereinafter the "Organization") is hereby established under international law as an intergovernmental organization.
2. The Organization shall have a consultative and technical nature.
3. The Organization shall have its seat in France, unless otherwise decided by the General Assembly.
4. The functioning of the Organization shall be set forth in detail in the General Regulations, which are subject to the provisions of this Convention but do not form an integral part thereof. In the event of any inconsistency between this Convention and the General Regulations or any other basic documents covering the governance of the Organization, this Convention shall prevail.

### Article 2 Definitions

For the purposes of this Convention:

1. **Marine Aid to Navigation** means a device, system or service, external to a vessel, designed and operated to enhance safe and efficient navigation of individual vessels and vessel traffic. For the purpose of the Organization this definition includes Vessel Traffic Services.
2. **Member State** means a State that has consented to be bound by this Convention and for which this Convention is in force.
3. **Associate Member** means a territory or group of territories for which a Member State has responsibility for its international relations and for which it has requested membership which has been approved by the General Assembly, and national members of the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities from States that are not Member States, in accordance with paragraph 5 of the Annex.
4. **Affiliate Member** means a manufacturer or distributor of Marine Aids to Navigation equipment for sale, or an organization providing Marine Aids to Navigation services or technical advice under contract and any other organization or scientific agency concerned with Marine Aids to Navigation which has applied for membership, and which has been approved by the Council.

### **Article 3 Aim and Objectives**

The aim of the Organization is to bring together governments and organizations concerned with the regulation, provision, maintenance or operation of Marine Aids to Navigation in order to further the objectives of:

- (a) Fostering the safe and efficient movement of vessels through the improvement and harmonization of Marine Aids to Navigation worldwide for the benefit of the maritime community and the protection of the marine environment;
- (b) Promoting access to technical cooperation and capacity building on all matters related to the development and transfer of expertise, science and technology in relation to Marine Aids to Navigation;
- (c) Encouraging and facilitating the general adoption of the highest practicable standards in matters concerning Marine Aids to Navigation; and
- (d) Providing for the exchange of information on matters under consideration by the Organization.

### **Article 4 Functions**

In order to achieve the aim and objectives set out in Article 3, the functions of the Organization shall be:

- (a) To develop and communicate non-mandatory standards, recommendations, guidelines, manuals and other appropriate documents;
- (b) To consider and make recommendations on standards, recommendations, guidelines, manuals and other appropriate documents that may be remitted to it by Member States, Associate Members and Affiliate Members, by any organ or specialized agency of the United Nations or by any other intergovernmental organization;
- (c) To provide mechanisms for consultation and the exchange of information covering *inter alia*, recent developments and the activities of Member States, Associate Members and Affiliate Members;
- (d) To develop international cooperation by promoting close working relationships and assistance between Member States, Associate Members and Affiliate Members;
- (e) To facilitate assistance, whether technical, organizational or training, to governments, services and other organizations requesting help with Marine Aids to Navigation;
- (f) To organize conferences, symposia, seminars, workshops and other events; and
- (g) To liaise and cooperate with relevant international and other organizations, offering specialized advice, where appropriate.

### **Article 5 Membership**

1. The Organization shall be comprised of Member States, Associate Members and Affiliate Members.
2. Any Member State having responsibility for the international relations of a territory or group of territories may request Associate membership for such territory or group of territories, by notification in writing to the Secretary-General.
3. The Council may require or a Member State may request that aspects of an application for Affiliate membership be reviewed by the Member State or Member States where the applicant carries out its activities or has its principal place of business or registered office. The Council shall take into consideration the views of the requesting and reviewing Member States when deciding on Affiliate membership.

## **Article 6 Organs**

1. The Organization shall have as its organs:
  - (a) The General Assembly;
  - (b) The Council;
  - (c) Committees and subsidiary bodies necessary to support the Organization's activities; and
  - (d) The Secretariat.
2. There shall be a President and a Vice President of the Organization. The President, or in case of the President's absence, the Vice President shall chair the General Assembly and the Council.
3. The General Regulations and Financial Regulations shall detail the Rules of Procedure that shall apply for each organ and govern the day-to-day management of the Organization.

## **Article 7 The General Assembly**

1. The General Assembly is the principal decision-making organ of the Organization and shall have all the powers of the Organization, unless otherwise provided by this Convention.
2. The General Assembly shall consist only of Member States. Attendance shall also be open to Associate Members and Affiliate Members.
3. Each Member State shall designate one of its delegates as its principal delegate at the General Assembly.
4. Regular sessions of the General Assembly shall take place once every three years.
5. Extraordinary sessions of the General Assembly shall be convened whenever one-third of Member States give notice to the Secretary-General that they desire a session to be convened, or at any time if deemed necessary by the Council, after a notice of ninety days.
6. A majority of Member States shall constitute a quorum for the sessions of the General Assembly.
7. The General Assembly shall:
  - (a) Elect the President and the Vice President from amongst the Member States in accordance with the General Regulations;
  - (b) Decide the overall policy and the strategic vision of the Organization;
  - (c) Review and approve the General Regulations and the Financial Regulations of the Organization;
  - (d) Elect, in accordance with Article 8, the Council from amongst the Member States other than the Member States holding the Presidency or Vice Presidency;
  - (e) Elect the Secretary-General from amongst nationals of the Member States in accordance with the General Regulations;
  - (f) Establish and terminate Committees and subsidiary bodies and review and approve their Terms of Reference;
  - (g) Review and approve the financial arrangements of the Organization, including the outline budget for the following three years and the rate of contributions for Member States and fees for Associate Members and Affiliate Members;
  - (h) Consider the reports and proposals put to it by any Member State, the Council or the Secretary-General;
  - (i) Approve standards;
  - (j) Decide on Associate membership;
  - (k) Rule on Affiliate membership upon the request of one or more Member States;
  - (l) Make recommendations to Member States, Associate Members and Affiliate Members on matters within the aim and objectives of the Organization;
  - (m) Approve agreements with States and international organizations; and

- (n) Decide on any other matters within the aim and objectives of the Organization.

## **Article 8 The Council**

1. The Council is the executive organ of the Organization and shall be responsible for directing the activities of the Organization.
2. The Council shall consist of the President and the Vice President and twenty-three other Member States.
3. Council members shall be elected by ballot at each regular session of the General Assembly in accordance with the General Regulations. Council members should, in principle, be drawn from different parts of the world, with a view to achieving a worldwide representation.
4. At the Council, Member States shall preferably be represented by a delegate from a national authority responsible for the regulation, provision, maintenance or operation of Marine Aids to Navigation of that Member State.
5. Seventeen members of the Council, at least one of which must be the President or Vice President, shall constitute a quorum for the sessions of the Council.
6. The Council shall meet at least once a year.
7. Any Member State not represented on the Council may participate in the Council meetings, but will not be entitled to vote.
8. The Council shall:
  - (a) Exercise such responsibilities as may be delegated to it by the General Assembly;
  - (b) Coordinate the activities of the Organization within the framework of the overall policy, the strategic vision and the outline budget, as decided by the General Assembly;
  - (c) Review and approve the financial statements, including the annual budget;
  - (d) Decide on Affiliate membership;
  - (e) Convene the General Assembly;
  - (f) Report to the General Assembly on the work of the Organization;
  - (g) Review papers submitted to it in accordance with the General Regulations;
  - (h) Refer to the General Assembly all matters requiring decision by the General Assembly;
  - (i) Approve recommendations, guidelines, manuals and other appropriate documents;
  - (j) Approve submissions to other organizations;
  - (k) Appoint Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees and subsidiary bodies and review and approve their work programmes;
  - (l) Decide the venue and the year of the Organization's conferences and symposia as described in the General Regulations; and
  - (m) Approve the Staff Rules.
9. Council members may, after having informed the President and the Secretary-General, invite Affiliate Members to participate as technical advisors at Council meetings to provide advice and support on operational and technical matters.

## **Article 9 Committees and Subsidiary Bodies**

1. Committees and subsidiary bodies shall support the aim and objectives of the Organization.
2. The Committees shall:
  - (a) Prepare and review standards, recommendations, guidelines, manuals and other appropriate documents identified in the work programmes;
  - (b) Monitor developments in the area of Marine Aids to Navigation;

- (c) Facilitate the sharing of expertise and experience amongst Member States, Associate Members and Affiliate Members; and
- (d) Conduct any other tasks as decided by the Council.

## **Article 10**

### **The Secretariat**

1. The permanent Secretariat of the Organization shall be comprised of the Secretary-General and such staff as may be required for the work of the Organization within the approved budgetary framework.
2. The term of the Secretary-General shall be three years. The Secretary-General may be re-elected for up to two additional consecutive terms of three years each.
3. The Secretary-General shall be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Organization, subject to any guidance issued by the General Assembly or the Council.
4. The Secretary-General shall be responsible for the conclusion of agreements with States and international organizations subject to the approval of the General Assembly in accordance with Article 7.7 (m).
5. The staff of the Secretariat shall be appointed in accordance with the Staff Rules by the Secretary-General on such terms and to perform such duties as the Secretary-General may determine.
6. The Secretariat shall:
  - (a) Maintain all such records as may be necessary for the efficient discharge of the work of the Organization and shall prepare, collect, and circulate any documentation that may be required;
  - (b) Administer the Organization's finances under the direction of the Council, in accordance with the General Regulations;
  - (c) Prepare the financial arrangements and the financial statements;
  - (d) Keep Member States, Associate Members and Affiliate Members and other organizations informed with respect to the activities of the Organization;
  - (e) Organize and support meetings of the General Assembly, the Council, Committees and subsidiary bodies;
  - (f) Organize and support conferences and symposia as approved by the Council;
  - (g) Organize and support seminars, workshops and other events; and
  - (h) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by this Convention, the General Regulations, the General Assembly or the Council.
7. In the performance of their duties, the Secretary-General and the staff shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any other source external to the Organization. They shall refrain from any action which might reflect on their position as international officials responsible only to the Organization. Each Member State on its part undertakes to respect the exclusively international character of the responsibilities of the Secretary-General and the staff and not to seek to influence them in the discharge of their responsibilities.

## **Article 11**

### **Voting**

1. All efforts shall be made for the General Assembly and the Council to adopt decisions by consensus amongst Member States.
2. Where decisions of the General Assembly or Council cannot be adopted by consensus, they shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority of Member States present and voting through a secret ballot.
3. Only Member States shall have voting rights. Each Member State shall have one vote, except as specified in Article 13.4.

4. The election of the President, Vice President and Secretary-General shall be made by secret ballot with a simple majority of Member States present and voting in accordance with the General Regulations.
5. The election of the Council shall be made with the highest number of votes of the Member States present and voting through a secret ballot, in accordance with the General Regulations.

**Article 12**  
**Languages**

The official languages of the Organization shall be Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

**Article 13**  
**Finance**

1. The expenditure for the functioning of the Organization shall be met by the financial resources provided by:
  - (a) Member State contributions;
  - (b) Associate Member and Affiliate Member fees; and
  - (c) Donations, bequests, grants, gifts and other sources approved by the Council upon recommendation by the Secretary-General.
2. Each Member State shall pay a contribution and each Associate Member and Affiliate Member shall pay a fee to the Organization on an annual basis in the amount determined in accordance with Article 7.7 (g). The contribution shall be set at the same rate for each Member State.
3. Member State contributions and Associate Member and Affiliate Member fees shall be due and payable in accordance with the Financial Regulations.
4. Any Member State which is two years in arrears in making contributions shall, after written notification by the Secretary-General, be denied voting rights and the right to be elected to the Council until such time as the outstanding contributions have been paid, in accordance with the Financial Regulations, unless the General Assembly waives this provision.
5. Following the Council's approval of the Organization's audited financial statements, these statements shall be distributed to all Member States, Associate Members and Affiliate Members in the Annual Report.

**Article 14**  
**Legal Personality, Privileges and Immunities**

1. The Organization has international legal personality and has the capacity to:
  - (a) Contract and conclude agreements with governments, organizations and other bodies;
  - (b) Acquire and dispose of immovable and movable property; and
  - (c) Institute legal proceedings.
2. In the territory of each of its Member States, the Organization shall enjoy, to the extent provided for in an agreement with the Member State concerned, such privileges and immunities as may be necessary for the exercise of its functions and the fulfilment of its aim and objectives.
3. No Member State, Associate Member or Affiliate Member shall be liable, by reason of its status or participation in the Organization, for acts, omissions or obligations of the Organization.

## **Article 15 Amendments**

1. Any Member State may propose an amendment to this Convention, in writing, to the Secretary-General.
2. The Secretary-General shall circulate the proposed amendment in the official languages to all Member States at least six months in advance of its consideration by the General Assembly.
3. The proposed amendment shall be adopted by vote of the General Assembly.
4. Any amendment adopted in accordance with paragraph 3 shall be sent by the Secretary-General to the Depositary. The latter shall notify all Member States of the adoption of the amendment.
5. The amendment shall enter into force for all Member States six months after written notifications of acceptance by two-thirds of the Member States have been received by the Depositary, except for a Member State which has notified the Depositary, prior to the entry into force of such amendment, that the amendment shall enter into force for that Member State only after a subsequent notification of its acceptance.
6. Notwithstanding paragraph 5, the General Assembly may decide by consensus that the amendment shall come into force for all Member States six months after written notifications of acceptance by two-thirds of the Member States have been received by the Depositary. If within this period of six months a Member State gives notification of withdrawal from the Organization on account of an amendment, the withdrawal shall, notwithstanding Article 21, take effect on the date on which such amendment comes into force.
7. The Depositary shall inform the Member States and the Secretary-General of the entry into force of the amendment, specifying the date of its entry into force.

## **Article 16 Reservations**

No reservations shall be made to this Convention.

## **Article 17 Interpretation and Disputes**

Member States shall make every effort to prevent disputes on the interpretation or application of this Convention, and shall use their best efforts to resolve any disputes by peaceful means which may include consultation and negotiation with each other and any other means as agreed to by the parties to the dispute.

## **Article 18 Signature, Ratification, Acceptance, Approval and Accession**

1. This Convention shall be open for signature by any State that is a member of the United Nations at Paris from 27 January 2021 and remain open until 26 January 2022.
2. This Convention is subject to ratification, acceptance or approval by the signatory States.
3. This Convention shall be open for accession by any State that is a member of the United Nations which has not signed this Convention from the day after the date on which this Convention closes for signature.
4. Instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession shall be deposited with the Depositary, who shall then notify all States having deposited such instruments with the Depositary and the Secretary-General thereof.



**Article 19**  
**The Depositary**

The French Republic shall serve as the Depositary for this Convention. This Convention shall be registered by the Depositary pursuant to Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations.

**Article 20**  
**Entry into force**

1. This Convention shall enter into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit of the thirtieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.
2. For each State ratifying, accepting, approving or acceding to this Convention after its entry into force this Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the deposit of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.
3. The transitional arrangements that shall apply upon entry into force of this Convention are set out in the Annex.

**Article 21**  
**Withdrawal**

1. Any Member State may withdraw from this Convention by giving at least twelve months' written notice to the Depositary, who shall immediately inform all Member States and the Secretary-General of such notification.
2. Notification of withdrawal may be deposited at any time after the expiration of six months from the date on which this Convention has entered into force.
3. The withdrawal shall take effect on 31<sup>st</sup> December of the year following that during which the notice of withdrawal was deposited.

**Article 22**  
**Termination**

1. This Convention may be terminated by a vote of the General Assembly following at least six months' notice of such a vote.
2. The date of termination shall be twelve months after the date of the above decision, and in the intervening period the Council shall be responsible for the winding up of the Organization, in accordance with the General Regulations.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorized by their respective governments, have signed the present Convention.

DONE at Paris on 27 January 2021 in the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish languages, each text being equally authentic, an original of which shall be deposited in the archives of the Depositary. The Depositary shall transmit certified copies thereof to all the signatory and acceding governments and to the Secretary-General of the Organization.

## Annex

### Transitional Arrangements

At the XIIIth General Assembly held in A Coruña from 25<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2014, the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities adopted a Resolution affirming that the status of an International Organization would best serve its objectives and determining that such status should be achieved as soon as possible by the means of the adoption of an international convention.

As a consequence, Article 13 of the Constitution of the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities was amended to facilitate the winding up of the association and the transition of its assets to the Organization.

The purpose of the transitional arrangements is to ensure the uninterrupted international efforts to develop, improve and harmonize Marine Aids to Navigation and to facilitate the transition from the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities to the Organization.

1. Upon the entry into force of this Convention, the President, Vice President and the Council of the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities shall be invited to become the President, Vice President and Council of the Organization and will operate as such until the first General Assembly convened under this Convention has elected a President, Vice President and Council, which must be within a period not exceeding six months.
2. The Committees of the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities shall operate until Committees are established under this Convention.
3. Until such time as the Secretariat of the Organization has been established, the Secretariat of the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities shall be invited to serve as, and perform the functions of, the Secretariat. The Secretary-General of the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities shall serve as the Secretary-General of the Organization until the General Assembly elects the Secretary-General in accordance with this Convention.
4. Until such time as the Organization has adopted General Regulations, it shall function in accordance with the General Regulations of the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities *mutatis mutandis*.
5. All national members of the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities from States that are not Member States shall, subject to their formal request, become Associate Members of the Organization for a duration of up to ten years from the date of entry into force of this Convention, unless the General Assembly decides to extend that period.
6. In the event that a State which has a former national member with Associate membership in accordance with paragraph 5 becomes a Member State, the Associate membership shall cease on the date on which this Convention enters into force for that State.
7. All Associate and Industrial Members of the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities up to date with their fees shall, subject to their formal request, become Affiliate Members of the Organization.
8. The transfer of rights, interests, assets and liabilities from the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities to the Organization will take place pursuant to French law.

**Done at Paris, on 5 November 2021.**

**For the Kingdom of Belgium**



**Lydia PEETERS**

**Flemish Minister for Mobility and Public Works**