

ASSEMBLY CIRCULAR LETTER N° 13
09 January 2026

4th SESSION OF THE IHO ASSEMBLY (A-4)

Monaco, 20-23 April 2026

APPROVAL OF THE LISTS OF INVITED OBSERVERS

References:

- A. General Regulations of the IHO, Article 4
- B. Assembly Circular Letter (ACL) No. 7 dated 25 August 2025 - Invited Observers, Submission of final lists for approval.
- C. IHO Resolution 5/1957, as amended, IHO Relations with Other Organizations

Dear Hydrographer,

1. In accordance with the General Regulations of the IHO (Reference A), Assembly Circular Letter No. 7 (Reference B) requested Member States to consider approving the lists of Observers¹, to be invited to attend the 4th Session of the IHO Assembly (A-4) and to provide further comments, if any, on the lists.
2. The IHO Secretariat thanks all 74 Member States that have replied to ACL07. Only seven Member States offered comments in addition to their vote and five Member States voted "No". The comments and the outcome of their review by the IHO Secretariat are provided in Annex A to this letter.
3. There are currently 103 Member States of the IHO with two Member States suspended at the time ACL07 was issued. Therefore, in accordance with Reference A applicable when Reference B was issued, the minimum number of votes required is 68. As this requirement has been met, the lists of invited Observers are approved and, consequently, the invitations to attend A-4 will be issued.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Mathias JONAS
Secretary-General

Annex A: Responses to IHO ACL No. 7 and comments from the IHO Secretariat

¹ a) States that are not Parties to the Convention
b) MS with voting rights suspended
c) IGOs
d) NGOs

**MEMBER STATES' RESPONSES TO ACL 7
AND COMMENTS FROM THE IHO SECRETARIAT**

Invited Observers to A-4

GEORGIA voted NO

“Georgia fully respects the technical and apolitical mandate of the International Hydrographic Organization, as defined in its Convention. Nevertheless, in line with Georgia’s national interests and in full conformity with the positions of the Government of Georgia, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as the requirements of Georgian legislation, Georgia is unable to support states that have recognized the autonomous republic of Abkhazia or so called South Ossetia as independent entities, including countries such as Nauru and Nicaragua. This position is based on the established norms of international recognition and reflects Georgia’s consistent policy of preventing any action that may inadvertently lend legitimacy to entities created in violation of Georgia’s sovereignty and domestic legislation. Georgia remains committed to constructive participation in the work of the IHO and values the Organization’s technical mission, while upholding the fundamental principles that guide its foreign policy and international obligations. At the same time, Georgia welcomes the participation of any state in the General Assembly as an observer, provided that such participation is consistent with the principles of territorial integrity, sovereignty, and internationally recognized norms.”

Comment from the IHO Secretariat:

The IHO Secretariat thanks Georgia for their vote and comment which is noted.

IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF) voted NO

Iran does not agree with inviting Israel as an Observer to A-4.

Regarding all other states listed in Annex B, Iran raises no objection and agrees with their invitation as Observers.

Comment from the IHO Secretariat:

The IHO Secretariat thanks Iran for their vote and comment which is noted.

KUWAIT voted NO

Kuwait is against inviting Israel

Comment from the IHO Secretariat:

The IHO Secretariat thanks Kuwait for their vote and comment which is noted.

MONTENEGRO voted YES

“Montenegro has no objections and agrees with the proposed list of non IHO Member States as observers to A-4.”

Comment from the IHO Secretariat:

The IHO Secretariat thanks Montenegro for their vote and support.

PAKISTAN voted NO

“Yes, states listed in Annex B except Israel may be invited as observer.”

Comment from the IHO Secretariat:

The IHO Secretariat thanks Pakistan for their vote and comment which is noted.

POLAND voted NO

“Poland would not support the invitation of Belarus to the IHO Assembly.”

Comment from the IHO Secretariat:

The IHO Secretariat thanks Poland for their vote and comment which is noted.

SOLOMON ISLANDS voted YES

“Solomon Islands is voting in support of IHO's Secretariat to invite appropriate observers as listed in annexes B and D to the 4th Assembly Meeting who are contributing positively to the advancement of hydrography and charting.

Considering the attendance of all active member states as priority.”

Comment from the IHO Secretariat:

The IHO Secretariat thanks Solomon Islands for their vote and support.