

IHO File No. S1/6100/2026

**ASSEMBLY CIRCULAR LETTER N°2 Bis5**  
**04 March 2026**

**4<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE IHO ASSEMBLY (A-4)**

**Monaco, 19-23 April 2026**

**NOMINATION OF REAR ADMIRAL (RET) DIMITRIOS EFSTATHIOU BY**  
**GREECE FOR THE POST OF DIRECTOR**

References:

- A. Assembly Circular Letter No.2 dated 29 April 2025 – *Call for nomination of candidates for the position of IHO Secretary-General and IHO Director.*
- B. General Regulations of the IHO, Article 21
- C. General Regulations of the IHO, Article 26 (a)

Dear Hydrographer,

1. Reference A invited IHO Member States to nominate candidates for the position of IHO Secretary-General and IHO Director and indicated that the names of candidates and their nomination forms will be published as soon as they are received.
2. Greece has nominated **REAR ADMIRAL (RET) DIMITRIOS EFSTATHIOU** to stand for election (Reference C) at the 4<sup>th</sup> Session of the IHO Assembly for the post of IHO Director. The nomination form is enclosed.
3. As required by Reference B, the Secretary-General will collate all the nominations received and present a consolidated inventory as part of the documentation for the consideration of the Assembly.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Mathias JONAS  
Secretary-General

Annex: Nomination Form from Greece.



**Candidature for a post of**

**SECRETARY-GENERAL**

**DIRECTOR**

(Article 20 of the General Regulations)

**Candidature à un poste de**

**SECRETAIRE GENERAL**

**DIRECTEUR**

(Article 20 du Règlement général)

**GENERAL – GENERALITES**

1. Nominating Member State - *Etat membre qui présente le candidat* : GREECE

2. Name – *Nom* : Dimitrios EFSTATHIOU

3. Nationality – *Nationalité* : Greek

4. Date of birth - *Date de naissance* : 06 November 1965

5. Titles and décorations - *Titres et décorations* :

Hellenic Navy Rear Admiral (Ret)

Former Director of the Hellenic Navy Hydrographic Service

2018 Commander of the Order of Honour

2023 Major Unit Leadership Commendation Class C

2023 Military Merit Medal Class A

2024 Staff Officer Service Commendation Class A

2024 Grand Commander of the Order of the Phoenix

2024 Meritorious Command Commendation Class A

**EDUCATION AND LANGUAGES - ETUDES ET LANGUES**

6. Education (periods, including specialized or special qualifications) - *Etudes (durée, y compris les qualifications spécialisées ou particulières)* :

1989 Hellenic Naval Academy – Naval Officer

1993 Advanced Maritime Studies Qualifications, Hellenic Navy Education Center

2006 Supreme Joint War College, Hellenic Armed Forces

2009 “Management of human and financial resources”, Certificate, City University of Seattle and Hellenic Naval Academy

2013 “Developing as a Leader” Certificate, Harvard Business Publishing School

2015 Diploma in Negotiation, Athens University of Economics and Business

2017 Hellenic National Defence College

2019 MSc in Geopolitical Analysis, Geostrategic Studies and International Security,  
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

7. Languages (speaking and reading capacity) - Langues (niveau oral et écrit) :

Greek (Native speaker)

English (fluent in speaking and reading)

**SERVICE AND EXPERIENCE - SERVICES ET EXPERIENCE**

8. Hydrographic service - *Services dans l'hydrographie* :

2022 – 2024 Director of the Hellenic Navy Hydrographic Service (National Hydrographer) during which:

- Strategic leadership in the modernization of hydrographic operations and governance frameworks, enhancing institutional effectiveness and efficiency.
- Direction and oversight of the procurement and acquisition of advanced hydrographic and geospatial equipment, including multibeam echo sounders and Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS).
- Development of sustainable human-capacity frameworks, through the integration of highly qualified scientific personnel and continuous professional development.
- Advancement of international cooperation and interoperability, including specialized training of naval officers abroad.
- Initiation and implementation of the IHO S-100 framework, through S-100 roadmap, ensuring alignment with next-generation international hydrographic standards. Under his strategic guidance, Greece became the first country to officially release S-101 ENCs, issuing 96 charts.
- Establishment of a modern, agile Mobile Hydrographic Survey Capability, enabling rapid deployment and operational flexibility.

2022 – 2024 Active participation and representation of the Hellenic Navy Hydrographic Service:

- IHO Assembly
- IHO Council
- Inter – Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC)
- Hydrographic Services and Standards Commission (HSSC)
- Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission (MBSHC)
  - Under his oversight, Greece served as Coordinator of the International Charting Coordination Working Group, Region F (F-ICCWG)

- IHO European Union Network Working Group (IENWG)

**9. Non-Hydrographic service - *Services autres qu'hydrographiques* :**

International & Strategic Assignments

- 2017 – 2020 Military Advisor at the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations, New York
- 2017 – 2020 Member of United Nations Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34)
- 2010 – 2013 Strategic Analysis Officer at NATO Headquarters, Brussels – Intelligence (NATO HQ – IMS/INT)

National Naval Assignments

- 2021 – 2022 Deputy Commander of the Salamis Naval Base
- 2020 – 2021 Commander of the Palaskas Naval Educational/Training Centre
- 2016 – 2017 Duty Director of the National Operations Centre (HNDGS)
- 2015 – 2016 Director of the Office of the Chief of the Fleet
- 2013 – 2015 Commanding Officer of HS Salamis (Frigate)
- 2006 – 2010 Director and other positions of the Office of the Chief of the Fleet
- 2003 – 2004 Commanding Officer of HS NIKI (Patrol boat)
- 2002 – 2003 Executive Officer of HS NAVARINON (Frigate)
- 2000 Executive Officer of HS AIGAION (Frigate)
- 1998 – 2000 Head Navigation Officer of AIGAION (Frigate)
- 1999 – 1998 Head Navigation Officer of HS YDRA (Frigate)
- 1989 – 1992 Junior Navigation Officer of HS TOMPAZIS (Destroyer)

**10. Scientific Activities - *Activités scientifiques* :**

Publication: Dimitrios Efstathiou, (2020), “The United Nations – Maintenance of International Peace and Security and Peacekeeping Operations», Published by the Hellenic Navy

As Head of the Hellenic Navy Hydrographic Service, he led the development and implementation of the comprehensive Training Manual “Training Guide: For the educational course of basic hydrographic / oceanographic training of foreign civil / military personnel”, 2023

Publication: Dimitrios Efstathiou, Panagiotis Gionis, Panourgias Siderakos, Christina Pandermaraki, Marianna Vasileiou, Helen Filtikaki, Georgios Petridis, Georgios Nektarios Tselos, Dimitris Sakellariou, Paraskevi Drakopoulou, Grigoris Rousakis, Ioannis Morfis, Isidoros Livanos, Chariklia Kyriakidou, (2024), “Undersea Feature Names of Hellenic Seas”, Published by the Hellenic Navy Hydrographic Service.

## **CANDIDATE'S POSITION - POSITION DU CANDIDAT**

It is with great honor that I submit my candidacy for the position of Director of the International Hydrographic Organization. My career in the Hellenic Navy, and in particular my tenure as Director of the Hellenic Navy Hydrographic Service, has taught me that the safety of navigation and the effective management of maritime data require strategic thinking, technical expertise, and close cooperation with the IHO Member States.

In my capacity as Director of the Hydrographic Service, I focused on the modernisation of the Service's procedures and equipment, the enhancement of cartographic and hydrographic activities, and the strengthening of personnel training and education, in order to ensure that all work was carried out with accuracy and consistency. My objective was to establish a technologically advanced and organisationally coherent Service, capable of meeting the demands of the twenty-first century, while at the same time fostering an environment of continuous learning and professional development for its personnel.

In parallel, my service in International Organisations has provided me with a deep understanding of the strategic and diplomatic processes related to maritime and hydrographic policy at a global scale. Specifically, I had the opportunity to serve in International Organisations, including NATO Headquarters and the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations, and have also participated in United Nations committees. This experience has familiarised me with the complexity of international coordination, as well as with the importance of cooperation and strategic thinking, elements that are essential for the leadership of an organisation such as the IHO.

Greece, with its extensive coastline, the numerous islands, and the large merchant fleet has a great hydrographic interest. Personally, drawing experience from my place of origin, which is a small island, and through my many years of service in the Hellenic Navy, I have developed a direct and practical understanding of the multifaceted role that the IHO is called upon to fulfill at the global level, as well as a comprehensive appreciation of the real-world application of hydrography.

Building on these experiences, I have developed a keen awareness of the technical and operational challenges facing the global hydrographic community today.

- **Technical challenges**

The global hydrographic community is currently confronted with a range of technical challenges that require not only adaptation to emerging technologies, but also effective coordination at the international level. The continuously increasing demand for digital navigation products, together with the need to integrate and exploit diverse marine data sources, is shaping a new operational environment in which Hydrographic Offices are required to invest in technologies, human resources, and robust processes.

- **S-100 / S-1XX**

The transition to the new S-100 / S-1XX era is the key technical challenge for the next decade. The new standards introduce flexible digital capabilities for ENC's and other

maritime products. The primary challenge lies in the gradual integration of data and the training of personnel. Furthermore, the incorporation of dynamic data products such as S-104 and S-111 requires real-time monitoring and data sharing. A strategic approach is therefore proposed, encompassing the development of S-101 for ENCs, pilot implementation of S-102 and S-111, the establishment of supporting infrastructure for all S-1XX products, and comprehensive training programmes to ensure smooth and safe operations across all Member States. The IHO can play a pivotal role in addressing these challenges through structured knowledge sharing and the provision of dedicated support tools.

- **Coordination with RENCs and industry engagement**

The quality and interoperability of hydrographic products depend on close cooperation with the RENCs and ECDIS and GIS industry. Strengthened communication, the development of joint testing initiatives, and the adoption of common standards for S-1XX products are required in order to ensure the compatibility, functionality, and reliability of digital nautical charts.

- **New technologies**

Technological progress is reshaping the way hydrographic surveys are conducted. Autonomous and unmanned vessels (USVs/AUVs) reduce both costs and operational risk. Robotics, automation, Satellite-Derived Bathymetry, LiDAR, GIS, and cloud-based data infrastructures provide high-resolution outputs and real-time accessibility. The IHO can support the gradual integration of these technologies through the development of standards, pilot projects, and targeted training, thereby enhancing the efficiency, reliability, and safety of hydrographic services worldwide.

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

Artificial Intelligence does not replace the role of the hydrographer; rather, it facilitates the analysis of large datasets, the automated detection of seabed features, and the improvement of charting accuracy. When combined with S-100 standards and products, as well as e-Navigation applications, it supports safer and more integrated management of maritime data. The IHO can promote the adoption of these technologies through the development of guidelines, pilot projects, and training initiatives, thereby strengthening the work of hydrographers and enhancing navigation safety worldwide.

- **Security, cybersecurity and resilience**

The transition to digital standards and the use of AI increase the risks to systems and data. The protection of ECDIS, the IHO Infrastructure Centre, and cloud-based infrastructures requires clear security standards and risk assessments. In this context, the IHO can enhance the resilience and reliability of the global navigation infrastructure, ensuring that digital data remain secure and accessible to all Member States.

- **International relations**

The IHO serves as a central hub of the global hydrographic community, collaborating

with both Member and non-Member States, international organisations such as the UN, IALA, and WMO, major technology companies, and specialised working groups. Challenges arise from differing priorities, technical standards, and regulatory frameworks, alongside the need to ensure data consistency and reliability, always respecting the Law of the Sea. The IHO can further strengthen transparency, communication, and joint initiatives, while integrating technologies that support safe and sustainable management of maritime resources.

- **Hydrography for environmental management and marine spatial planning**

The IHO promotes the use of hydrographic data beyond navigation, supporting environmental monitoring, the protection of marine ecosystems, sustainable development, and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP). The challenge lies in the reliable integration of these data into environmental and spatial applications. The organization can develop practical guidelines, software tools, and workshops, as well as facilitate the exchange of expertise among Member States.

- **Capacity building**

Strengthening the capacities of Member States remains a cornerstone of the IHO. Gaps exist in equipment, training, and access to modern tools, particularly in smaller States. The Director can advance a collaborative strategy, combining training programmes, mentoring, regional knowledge exchanges, and the effective use of international resources. At the same time, CB policies should support the smooth integration of new technologies so that all services can keep pace with global developments. Measurable indicators and collaboration with regional committees ensure practical impact and enhance the safety of navigation.

- **Social dimension and equality**

The global hydrographic community faces challenges regarding the equitable participation of smaller States and the inclusion of women and young scientists. Supporting diversity yields benefits for innovation and sustainability. Proposed initiatives include mentoring, participation in international projects, and knowledge exchanges, thereby strengthening the engagement of all groups.

## **Conclusion**

With my experience in leadership, technical training, international collaboration, and a personal connection to the sea, I am ready to contribute to an IHO that combines technological excellence, strategic management, and a human-centered approach. My goal is to enhance the safety and reliability of navigation, promote the smooth implementation of new digital standards, and strengthen collaboration across the global hydrographic community. As highlighted in the IHO's mission, "to enable safe navigation, to support the sustainable use of the oceans", I believe that through clear focus, open dialogue, and respect for all stakeholders, we can unite technology, knowledge, and sustainable ocean management for the benefit of all mariners and Member States.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION - RENSEIGNEMENTS COMPLEMENTAIRES**  
**(if any) (le cas échéant)**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have the honor to express the full support of the Hellenic Navy General Staff for the candidacy of Rear Admiral (ret.) Dimitrios EFSTATHIOU for the position of Director of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO). Greece, as a founding member of the IHO since 1919, remains firmly committed to the principles and mission of the Organization in promoting safe navigation and international hydrographic cooperation.

Rear Admiral (ret.) Dimitrios EFSTATHIOU has extensive and multifaceted experience in senior administrative and staff positions, in both national and international environments. As Commander of the Hellenic Navy Hydrographic Service, he led the targeted modernization of the Service's operational capabilities, placing particular emphasis on the quality of hydrographic data, the transition to new digital standards, the upgrading of technical equipment with modern hydrographic instruments, and the strengthening of human resources through staffing and systematic training. Special importance was given to the creation of modern, highly qualified teams, fostering an environment of equal opportunities and gender equality, while supporting inclusive international education and training of personnel, with a view to the long-term sustainability of the Service.

Furthermore, his academic background in the fields of geopolitical analysis, international security, and negotiations has strengthened his strategic thinking and his ability to manage complex international issues with institutional consistency and realism. As Greece's representative to the IHO, he actively participated in the Organization's work and contributed substantially to the dialogue on the implementation of the S-100 standards, while his service at NATO Headquarters and at the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations has provided him with deep insight into multilateral processes and international cooperation.

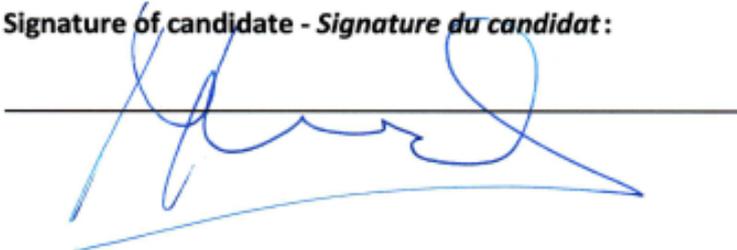
I am convinced that Rear Admiral (ret.) Dimitrios Efstathiou combines technical competence, administrative experience, and an international outlook, and will serve the mission of the IHO with consistency, for the benefit of all Member States. I kindly invite you to give favorable consideration to his candidacy and to provide him with your support.

Yours Sincerely,

Vice Admiral Dimitrios – Eleftherios KATARAS HN  
Chief of the Hellenic Navy General Staff

Date: 03/03/2026

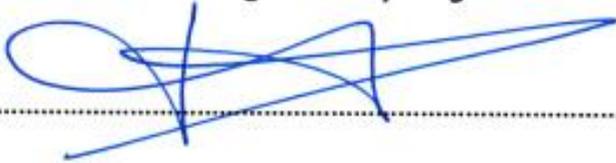
Signature of candidate - Signature du candidat :



**Forwarding Authority - *Autorité qui transmet* :**

**Vice Admiral Dimitrios – Eleftherios KATARAS HN  
Chief of the Hellenic Navy General Staff**

**Signature of forwarding authority – *Signature de l'autorité qui transmet* :**

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