

RESOLUTION C.78(125) (adopted on 30 June 2021)  
THE ENHANCEMENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS  
TECHNOLOGIES (ICT) AT IMO

COUNCIL  
125th session  
Agenda item 21

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**THE ENHANCEMENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS  
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THE COUNCIL,

RECALLING the United Nations General Assembly resolution 68/198 on *Information and communications technologies for development*;

RECALLING ALSO the United Nations Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation to call for concrete actions that would enhance global digital cooperation;

RECALLING FURTHER Article 2(a) of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization (the Convention);

CONSIDERING Article 26 of the Convention regarding the function of the Council between sessions of the Assembly, and that the Council shall perform all the functions of the Organization, except the function of making recommendations under Article 15(j). In particular, the Council shall coordinate the activities of the organs of the Organization and may make such adjustments in the work programme as are strictly necessary to ensure the efficient functioning of the Organization;

RECALLING FURTHER resolution A.900(21) on *Objectives of the Organization in the 2000s* and resolution A.909(22) on *Policy Making in IMO – Setting the Organization's policies and objectives*;

RECALLING the adoption, at the thirtieth session of the Assembly, of resolution A.1110(30) on the Strategic Plan for the Organization, particularly strategic direction 7 (Ensure organizational effectiveness);

RECOGNIZING that ICT have the potential to provide new solutions to development challenges, particularly in the context of globalization, and have the ability to foster sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development, competitiveness, improve access to information and knowledge, poverty eradication and social inclusion that will help to expedite the integration of all countries into the global economy;

RECOGNIZING ALSO the crucial importance of information and communications technologies and their applications in promoting international collaboration, capacity-building, improved productivity and their ability to provide significant benefits for IMO's membership including accessibility for people with disabilities and specific needs to facilitate the work of the Organization and in meetings that require active participation to address important issues;

ACKNOWLEDGING that since technological advances present opportunities as well as challenges, their introduction needs to be considered carefully in order for them to be accommodated appropriately into the work of the Organization.

RECOGNIZING FURTHER the financial, legal, procedural and technical challenges of providing remote participation, particularly with respect to:

- .1 the difference in time zones in relation to IMO Headquarters in London, United Kingdom;
- .2 the telecommunication infrastructure limitations including unstable or inadequate connections and issues related to compatibility between devices and e-conferencing platforms;
- .3 the limitations associated with remote participation in comparison with physical participation;
- .4 the fact that the advancement of ICT creates new security challenges with the growing risk of cyberattacks; and
- .5 the limitations associated with the availability, accessibility, reliability and technical quality of interpretation.

HAVING CONSIDERED the above at its 125th session,

1 WELCOMES efforts taken thus far by the Secretary-General to strengthen IMO's capabilities with respect to the use of ICT and to further enhance international cooperation and collaboration and maintain the work of the Organization, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic;

2 AFFIRMS that e-conferencing platforms should continue to be used as facilitation tools to progress the work of the Organization with inclusivity during the COVID-19 pandemic, that they may be used in other exceptional circumstances where the physical meetings are not possible as decided by the Council and the Committees, and that e-conferencing is not aimed at replacing physical meetings;

3 AFFIRMS ALSO that e-conferencing platforms may be used for additional support of IMO's other work such as live-streaming of meetings, webinars, or as a complement for correspondence groups, intersessional work and capacity-building activities, and encourages the Secretary-General to continue to explore these options and to keep the Council apprised of these efforts;

4 INVITES IMO members and other stakeholders in the maritime community to give appropriate consideration to the issue of strengthening ICT and e-conferencing capabilities;

5 REQUESTS the Secretary-General, consistent with the above operative paragraphs, to continue to:

- .1 review current applicable policies and practices related to ICT;
- .2 explore and present to the Council feasible options, including the associated costs, bearing in mind the resources available and the strategic plan, prior to upgrading ICT infrastructure at IMO;

- .3 explore options for e-conferencing platforms that provide a high-quality interpretation service during IMO meetings;
  - .4 work towards the development of necessary arrangements for virtual meetings, including contingency arrangements in case of technical failures and, consider as far as possible, rotation of the commencement of meetings between time zones, aiming at ensuring equal and full participation of Members;
  - .5 take the necessary measures aimed at ensuring that the ICT infrastructure at IMO Headquarters is secure against cyberattacks;
  - .6 present a report to the 127th session of the Council on the lessons learned from the application of ICT to meetings and/or other IMO supporting activities to date, including Member States' and Secretariat experiences; and
  - .7 further report to the Council on the status of the implementation, and follow-up, of this resolution.
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