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Circular Letter No.4697
3 March 2023

To: All IMO Members
United Nations and specialized agencies
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO

Subject: **Seminar on legal issues including UNCLOS at the second session of the Joint MSC-LEG-FAL MASS Working Group (17 April 2023)**

1 The Secretary-General has the honour to invite participation in a seminar on legal issues relating to maritime autonomous surface ships (MASS), including matters arising from the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which will be held in person, complemented by hybrid capability, on Monday, 17 April 2023, from 9.30 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. at IMO Headquarters, in conjunction with the second session of the Joint MSC-LEG-FAL MASS Working Group (MASS-JWG 2).

2 The event, which will be conducted in English only, will be structured around three panel discussions guided by questions put forward by a moderator. The first panel will explore questions on the relationship between MASS and UNCLOS. The second panel will look at the role and responsibility of the master with respect to MASS. The third panel will look at the extent to which the liability and compensation regime will evolve with the operation of MASS. A Q&A session will follow the panel discussions. The tentative programme for the seminar can be found in annex 1 to this circular letter but may be subject to change.

3 Participation in this event is open to representatives from Member States, observer organizations (intergovernmental and non-governmental) and the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Those wishing to participate in this hybrid event are invited to register via the Online Meeting Registration System (OMRS). Further information on the registration procedures can be found in annex 2 to this circular letter.

4 Delegates who are already registered for MASS-JWG 2 and joining remotely are reminded to register separately for the seminar in order to receive the access link for the same.

5 The event will be streamed on [IMO's YouTube channel](#).

6 Any enquiries relating to this event should be communicated to mass@imo.org.

ANNEX 1

JOINT MSC-LEG-FAL MASS WORKING GROUP (MASS-JWG)

SEMINAR ON LEGAL ISSUES

Monday, 17 April 2023, IMO Headquarters

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

- 9.30 a.m.** Introductory remarks
Mr. Frederick J. Kenney (Moderator)
Director, Legal Affairs and External Relations Division, IMO
- 9.35 a.m.** Panel 1: The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and
Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS)
- Panellists
- 1 Dr. Alexandros X.M. Ntovas, University of Southampton
 2 Dr. Kristine Elfrida Dalaker, Norwegian Centre for the Law of the
 Sea, UiT The Arctic University of Norway
- 10.00 a.m.** Panel 2: Redefining the role and responsibility of the master of MASS
- Panellists
- 1 Dr. John A.C. Cartner, MSCL + Cartner, PLLC, and Center for
 Ocean Policy & Economics, Northeast Maritime Institute
 2 Dr. Goran Vojkovic and Dr. Melita Milenković, Faculty of
 Transport and Traffic Sciences, University of Zagreb
- 10.25 a.m.** Panel 3: Liability and compensation regime for MASS
- Panellists
- 1 Prof. Henrik Ringbom, Åbo Akademi University, and
 Scandinavian Institute of Maritime Law, University of Oslo
 2 Prof. Baris Soyer, Institute of International Shipping and Trade
 Law, Swansea University
- 10.50 a.m.** Q&A
- 11.00 a.m.** End of seminar

ANNEX 2

REGISTRATION

Online Meeting Registration System (OMRS)

1 Those intending to participate in the event are kindly requested to register via IMO's Online Meeting Registration System (OMRS), as advised in Circular Letter No.4336 of 5 November 2020.

2 Active participants are those registered as either physical (attending meetings at IMO Headquarters in person) or remote-active. They are authorized to take the floor and make interventions. Passive participants are those able to follow proceedings remotely via live streaming.

3 Remote-active participants will receive a personalized joining link via email before the session starts. The Zoom link is unique to the recipient and should not be shared with any other person. In-person participants should not join the Zoom meeting when physically present in the Main Hall or committee rooms, as this will have a detrimental impact on the hybrid system and reduce the number of licences available for those joining remotely.

4 Remote-passive participants will automatically receive a link, once their registration is approved, to a web stream of the session (live streaming), which will be broadcast via the IMODOCS page.

5 Participants attending in person will be issued a temporary pass to enter the IMO premises. Issuance of the access card will require photographic proof of identity, e.g. passport, identity card or driving licence. Attendees may also be required to show proof of identity at any time while they are in the Headquarters building, if requested to do so by IMO security. In view of the significant costs incurred in producing access cards, attendees who have previously been issued with one are kindly requested to bring it with them for reactivation.

6 Registration in the OMRS for remote attendance to MASS-JWG 2 and the Seminar on legal issues on the morning of day 1 thereof are separate. Delegates are advised to register accordingly for either or both events in the OMRS, as may be appropriate, in order to receive the respective joining links.

7 Any matters relating to registration in the OMRS should be communicated to:

Registration Unit
Meeting Services and Interpretation Section
Email: onlineregistration@imo.org

8 Members of delegations will not be registered to attend the meeting without authorization from their OMRS Delegation Coordinator. Delegates whose names do not appear on the OMRS list will be requested to contact their OMRS Delegation Coordinator in order to process their authorization to attend the meeting.