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Comments of the Republic of Korea on Japan's Proposal for the Revision of the IHO Special Publication "Limits of Oceans and Seas"(S-23)

The Republic of Korea (ROK) believes that Japan's proposal for the revision of the S-23 has the following problems.

- Since it was established in April 2009 by the approval of the IHO member states, the current S-23 Working Group has put significant effort into publishing a new edition of the S-23. After defining the Rules of Procedures and Terms of Reference, it clearly identified three "areas of concern" and has continued constructive discussions on the names and limits of those areas. Japan's proposal would invalidate the progress that the Working Group has made so far.
- Japan proposes that the revision of the S-23 be based on the 3rd edition of the S-23. However, the 4th edition should reflect the situation that has evolved since the 3rd edition was published in 1953. If the 4th edition of the S-23 is based on the 3rd edition as Japan proposes, the S-23 will not provide relevant and up-to-date information. Moreover, the immense amount of effort and work that has been put into revising the S-23 over the past several decades will go to waste.
- Japan's arguments for the merits of the "Chartlet Method" are not convincing.

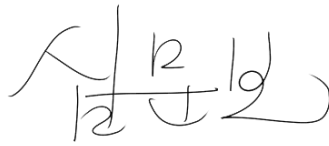
According to Japan's proposal, the "Chartlet Method" will allow the revision of the S-23 at every International Hydrographic Conference (IHC) in a timely manner. What Japan fails to mention is that the "Chartlet Method" requires a lengthy sequential approval process involving all interested Member States, a new standing Working Group, and the IHC. However, the 4th edition of the S-23 can be published in a more expeditious fashion if Member States simply agree to use simultaneously the names on which a consensus cannot be reached in accordance with IHO Technical Resolution A 4.2.6.

Japan states that the "Chartlet Method" would not prevent the revision of the entire S-23

even if different views remain among some member states on the names and/or limits of certain oceans or seas. This is not a sufficient justification for the use of the “Chartlet Method,” as there are other more effective means that would not prevent the revision of the entire S-23 despite disagreement on names and/or limits of oceans or seas. Some examples are the unpublished final draft of the S-23 in 2002 and the two volume approach suggested by the Chair of the IHC in 2007.

The ROK expects Japan’s sincere cooperation in resolving the naming issue concerning the sea area between the Korean Peninsula and the Japanese Archipelago so that this Working Group may progress with the immediate revision of the outdated 3rd edition of the S-23.

Moon Bo SHIM

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Moon Bo Shim' written in a stylized, cursive script.

Representative of the Republic of Korea to the S-23 WG