

**GEO Ministerial Summit**  
**17 January 2014**  
**IHO Statement on the Geneva Declaration**

Honourable Ministers,  
GEO Co-Chairs,  
Secretariat Director,  
Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentleman

On behalf of the Directing Committee of the International Hydrographic Organization, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Declaration which is offered for the consideration of this Ministerial Summit.

The IHO, the International Hydrographic Organization, is an intergovernmental organization established in 1921. Its principal role is to ensure that the world's seas, oceans and coastal waters are properly surveyed and charted. It does this through the setting of international standards, the co-ordination of the endeavours of national hydrographic offices and through capacity building. The IHO has been a Participating Organization of GEO since 2006.

The IHO fully supports the objectives of GEO as reaffirmed by the Declaration, notably the improvement of global coverage and availability of earth observation data, products and services as a foundation for sustainable growth. This is particularly relevant for the Oceans, which covers more than 70 % of the surface of our planet, and for the sustainable development of the so-called Blue Economy, which was the theme of last year's World Hydrography Day.

The IHO welcomes the promotion of a more active role of GEO in coordinating and bridging the various programs and initiatives dealing with the observation of the Earth at the national, regional and international levels, in order to make better use of existing arrangements, avoid duplication, address gaps and improve the overall efficiency.

The IHO welcomes the strengthening of the engagement with developing countries in line with the development of its own capacity building programme.

The IHO stands ready to contribute to the preparation of the new Implementation Plan called for by the Declaration.