

DPRK accedes to AFS Convention

On 20 August, Juche 109 (2020), the officials of the Permanent Representative of DPRK to IMO presented the instrument of accession for the International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-fouling Systems on Ships, 2001 (AFS Convention) to IMO official concerned.

The AFS Convention was adopted in the international conference which was held in London, UK, in October 2001. It took effect in September 2008. The number of contracting States to the AFS Convention currently totals to 90.

Taking into account the harmful effects of organotin in anti-fouling paints on the human health and marine organisms, the AFS Convention requires that an organotin compound should not be present above 2.5 g total tin per kilogram of dry paint.

The DPRK has long embarked on a project to prevent the pollution by the anti-fouling systems of ships and witnessed considerable successes therein.

It has ensured that the national environment-related laws and regulations including the Law of the DPRK on Maritime Administration were updated to stipulate the control on the ships' anti-fouling systems. It has also established and implemented the control system to secure the observance of these laws and regulations by the international voyage ships of 400 GT and above.

Given this, Anti-fouling paints producing companies and research institutions in the DPRK developed *Hyonmu*, environment-friendly inorganic paint, and introduced it to a number of ships for years, when it enjoyed a great popularity for its highly anti-corrosive and anti-fouling functions among shipbuilding companies. Further, *Hyonmu*, makes a splash not only in ships' anti-fouling systems but also in architecture painting markets while it has already been awarded a gold prize in the 22nd Geneva International Inventions and New Techniques Exhibition and granted a patent for in several countries including the UK, China and Germany.

All these successes encouraged the DPRK government to accede to the AFS Convention. It shows the DPRK's consistent will to contribute to the global maritime safety and marine environmental protection by effectively implementing the IMO instruments as its member State.