FOREWORD

Stability of ships has long been a problem of vital importance ever since the early dawn of maritime activities and will continue to represent a most important issue as long as ships and offshore floating structures are in existence.

It is of significant importance to evaluate all aspects of intact and damage stability of ships at the design stage, and to reflect the results of studies on stability in the development of criteria or standards for the design and operation of ships. Additionally, it is widely accepted that in spite of intense developments in the area, ship capsizing is still a phenomenon that challenges naval architects, researchers, regulators and certifying authorities.

In view of the recent increased interest of society to ship safety it is important to advance the scientific treatment of ship stability and capsizing in all its forms. This is an argument certainly strong enough to explain the effort of launching this Special Edition on Stability of Ships of the SOBENA journal *Marine Systems & Ocean Technology*.

It is important to mention that this special issue is an initiative in conjunction with another one directly related to the scientific approach to ship stability in which SOBENA is presently involved, namely the forthcoming 9th International Conference on Stability of Ships and Ocean Vehicles – STAB 2006 - organized by COPPE/UFRJ and SOBENA, to be held in Rio de Janeiro, 25-29 September 2006.

The material of this special edition is based on the proceedings of the 8th International Workshop on Stability of Ships, held in October 2005 in Istanbul and organized by the Istanbul Technical University. A total of 23 papers were presented, from which 9 were selected to be included in this special edition. These selected papers were peer reviewed and then revised accordingly before acceptance for publication.

The herein presented papers cover theoretical, numerical and experimental investigations on both intact and damage stability issues. They represent the state-of-the art in the area of ship stability and are indicative of the current trend of research activities in the field. We hope this special issue will stimulate the dissemination of innovative ideas and methodologies in the area, providing relevant references for all professionals involved in ship stability and safety.

We would like to thank the reviewers for their invaluable work. Special thanks are also due to Professors Metin Taylan and Ismail Hakki Helvaciglu from the Istanbul Technical University who were the organizers of the 2005 Istanbul workshop and greatly helped in the timely appearance of this special edition.

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