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Interactive Dialogue 5

Promoting and strengthening sustainable ocean-based economies, in particular for small island developing States and least developed countries

Lisbon, Portugal

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STATEMENT

by

Mr. Michael W. Lodge

Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority

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The interests of all humanity in the ocean and the conservation and sustainable use of its resources make it imperative that the global governance regime reflects the maritime interests of all States, whether coastal or landlocked, and with due consideration for the specific needs of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

The deep sea may seem remote from the immediate and urgent challenges of today. The reality, however, is that investing today in science and technology, including the empowerment of women, is fundamental to addressing these challenges tomorrow.

The regime for the deep seabed under UNCLOS is one of the few international governance regimes that has been designed in such a way that the interests and needs of developing States are fully integrated into the regime.

To all developing States we say the same: this organization is yours, as well as the opportunities it opens to all. We therefore urge all LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS to continue to take full advantage of the regime and realize the benefits that are available.

Fundamentally, the mission of ISA is to strengthen capacity in order to promote the effective participation of all developing States in deep sea exploration and to ensure that the benefits of marine science and technology are distributed equitably.

In this sense, ISA serves as a platform for international cooperation in which the specific interests and needs of developing States, including LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, are explicitly recognized in the governance structure.

The ISA Strategic Plan and High-Level Action Plan provide for specific actions to improve the participation of developing States in the implementation of the regime of the Area.

This means identifying the needs of those States in the implementation of such regime but also the potential barriers to their participation in activities in the Area.

The need for improved capacities and access to marine scientific research programmes in the international seabed Area has also been explicitly recognized as a priority by our members when they have adopted the Action Plan for Marine Scientific Research in support of the UN Decade, in December 2020.

That is why our collective efforts have focused on developing capacity development programmes and initiatives to address the needs they have identified.

Our strong commitment to these objectives is also reflected in concrete actions already included in the Road map for Accelerated Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs and the Doha programme of Action for LDCs.

I trust that with the continued support of our members, ISA will continue to deliver against the increasing expectations of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS and consolidate the contribution they can effectively gain from the sustainable development of their blue economy.
