

PRESS RELEASE

Marine mineral resources to benefit all including landlocked states

Kampala, Uganda, 2 May 2017 – Seabed mining experts from all over the world convened today in the capital of the landlocked state of Uganda to discuss opportunities and explore the potentials of marine mineral resources in contributing to the regional and global development goals.

In his opening remarks, Michael Lodge, Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority, said,

“This workshop on the marine mineral resources of Africa’s continental shelf and adjacent international seabed area is unique, and it is also the first time that we are discussing marine mineral resources in a landlocked country. This is a clear example of what the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) calls for—that marine resources belong to us all; it is a common heritage to mankind and Least Developed Countries and landlocked states have access to these resources and benefits from them.”

This groundbreaking event is a first of its kind and is organized by the African Minerals Development Centre (AMDC), the Government of Uganda, the International Seabed Authority (ISA), GRID-Arendal of Norway, and PEW Charitable Trust. The initiative gathers key stakeholders and global experts of marine mineral resources together to strategize future partnerships and activities that will harness the resources in the continent’s 20 million square kilometers of maritime areas.

Among the topics discussed are the relevance of marine resources on the global development agenda, particularly Sustainable Development Goal 14, which calls for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources.

The discussions are divided into the following sessions:

- Law of the Sea regime and its importance for the sustainable development of the African continent
- Prospecting, exploration and exploitation activities in national continental shelves and international seabed area
- Production, management and dissemination of geological, mineral and environmental information
- Establishment of African Centres of Excellence on seabed mapping and spatial planning
- Promotion of Public and Private Partnerships (PPPs) for preparation of application for plan of work for exploration in the Area by African nationals

AMDC with an observer status with ISA pushes for the implementation of the Africa Mining Vision (AMV), the continental framework to reform and transform the mining sector. AMDC sees this workshop as a key component into the fruition of the AMV as it is aligned with its aim in harnessing the region’s mineral resources for socio-economic transformation.

The workshop, which will run until 4 May, is expected to raise awareness and promote engagement among African States and partners about the potential for prospecting, exploration

and exploitation activities in the African continental shelf and in the adjacent international seabed area. Other outcomes expected from the event include:

- Strengthening the African legal framework to support the sustainable development of Africa's Maritime Domain and Africa's Blue Economy
- Promote the production, management and dissemination of geological and mineral information and how to create spatial data infrastructures (SDIs) to support decision-making, investment and governance of African-based seabed activities.
- Establishment of African Centres of Excellence, to provide African States with increased access to marine geo-scientific information
- Identification of potential PPPs to allow application for plan of work for exploration in the Area by African companies and governmental agencies;

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