



# Assembly

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**Twenty-seventh session**  
Kingston, 1–4 August 2022

## **Statement by the President on the work of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority at its twenty-seventh session**

1. The twenty-seventh session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority was held from 1 to 4 August 2022 (191st–196th meetings), at the Knutsford Court Hotel, Kingston, owing to the unavailability of the Jamaica Conference Centre on account of ongoing renovation work.

### **I. Adoption of the agenda**

2. At its 191st meeting, on 1 August 2022, the Assembly considered the provisional agenda of the Assembly for its twenty-seventh session.<sup>1</sup> The delegation of Chile proposed the inclusion of an additional item on the agenda.<sup>2</sup>

3. At its 195th meeting, on 3 August, the Assembly adopted the agenda of its twenty-seventh session.<sup>3</sup>

### **II. Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the Assembly**

4. At the 191st meeting, following the nomination of the Group of Asia-Pacific States to preside over the Assembly, the Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United Nations, Satyendra Prasad, was elected as President of the Assembly for its twenty-seventh session. The representatives of Ghana (Group of African States), Mexico (Group of Latin American and Caribbean States) and Norway (Group of Western European and Other States) were elected Vice-Presidents of the Assembly for the twenty-seventh session.

5. Also at the 191st meeting, Olav Myklebust of Norway (Vice-President) was designated by the President, in his absence, as acting President, to preside over the meetings of the twenty-seventh session.

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<sup>1</sup> See [ISBA/27/A/L.1](#).

<sup>2</sup> See [ISBA/27/A/9](#).

<sup>3</sup> See [ISBA/27/A/1](#).



### III. Appointment and report of the Credentials Committee

6. At its 192nd meeting, on 2 August 2022, the Assembly appointed a Credentials Committee, consisting of the following members: Bahamas, India, Italy, Lesotho, Netherlands, Philippines, South Africa and Trinidad and Tobago.

7. The Credentials Committee met on 3 August and elected Amanda Fraser (Trinidad and Tobago) as its Chair. The Committee examined the credentials of representatives participating in the twenty-seventh session.

8. At the 195th meeting, on 3 August, the Chair of the Credentials Committee presented the report of its Committee,<sup>4</sup> which was approved by the Assembly at the same meeting.<sup>5</sup>

### IV. Requests for observer status in the Assembly

9. At the 191st meeting, the Assembly considered and approved five applications for observer status in the Assembly, in accordance with rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly and the guidelines for observer status of non-governmental organizations with the International Seabed Authority,<sup>6</sup> from the following applicants: the Interamerican Association for Environmental Defense,<sup>7</sup> the Ocean Foundation,<sup>8</sup> Cluster maritime français,<sup>9</sup> Oceans North<sup>10</sup> and the World Organization of Dredging Associations.<sup>11</sup>

### V. Statement by the President of the Council on the work of the Council during the twenty-sixth session

10. At the 191st meeting of the Assembly, the President of the Council, Tomasz Abramowski (Poland), gave an oral report on the work of the Council during the twenty-seventh session, covering the first part, held from 21 March to 1 April 2022,<sup>12</sup> and the second part, held from 18 to 29 July 2022.<sup>13</sup> The Assembly took note of the report and noted that the third part of the twenty-seventh of the Council would be held from 31 October to 11 November 2022.

### VI. Annual report of the Secretary-General

11. At the 192nd meeting of the Assembly, the Secretary-General presented to the Assembly his report submitted in accordance with article 166, paragraph 4, of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. In his presentation, the Secretary-General focused on the relevant official documents of the Assembly<sup>14</sup> and the publication entitled *Ensuring the Sustainable Management and Stewardship of the*

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<sup>4</sup> See [ISBA/27/A/12](#).

<sup>5</sup> See [ISBA/27/A/13](#).

<sup>6</sup> [ISBA/25/A/16](#), annex.

<sup>7</sup> See [ISBA/27/A/INF/1](#).

<sup>8</sup> See [ISBA/27/A/INF/2](#).

<sup>9</sup> See [ISBA/27/A/INF/3](#).

<sup>10</sup> See [ISBA/27/A/INF/4](#).

<sup>11</sup> See [ISBA/27/A/INF/5](#).

<sup>12</sup> See [ISBA/27/C/21](#).

<sup>13</sup> See [ISBA/27/C/21/Add.1](#).

<sup>14</sup> See [ISBA/27/A/2](#) and [ISBA/27/A/2/Add.1](#).

*Deep Seabed and its Resources for the Benefit of Humankind*.<sup>15</sup> Under the same agenda item, the Secretary-General also reported on the implementation of the action plan of the Authority in support of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.<sup>16</sup>

12. At its 192nd and 193rd meetings, on 2 August 2022, the Assembly conducted a general debate on the annual report of the Secretary-General. One regional group and 38 members of the Authority, as well as nine observers, made statements.

13. Delegations thanked the Government of Jamaica for its hospitality and its strong commitment and efforts in making the meeting possible. Many delegations also called for continued discussion and cooperation between the secretariat and the Government of Jamaica to ensure that the meetings of the Authority would return to the Jamaica Conference Centre in future.

14. Delegations thanked the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report and welcomed the new format, which was considered as providing a clear overview of the work of the Authority, as well as the range of activities implemented to advance the strategic directions set out in the strategic plan and high-level action plan of the Authority for 2019–2023. The vast majority of the delegations commended the efforts and work of the Legal and Technical Commission, the Finance Committee and the Secretariat in 2022 to progress their respective programme of work.

15. Many delegations appreciated the overall achievements in relation to the strategic plan and high-level action plan of the Authority for 2019–2023, including the substantial progress in advancing the nine strategic directions and associated high-level actions and outputs. Many delegations welcomed the contribution of the Authority to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as documented in an independent report issued in 2021,<sup>17</sup> and noted with appreciation that the work of the Authority currently contributes to the realization of 12 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

16. A number of delegations acknowledged with appreciation the Authority's contribution to several global processes and, in particular, the United Nations Ocean Conference, held in Lisbon, the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, the 2022 high-level political forum on sustainable development, and the organization of the high-level event on fostering international and regional cooperation in support of the sustainable development of the blue economy of the least developed countries, land-locked developing countries and small island developing States, the organization of the Deep DiplomaSea webinar series and the Women in the Law of the Sea conference, to be held in September 2022. In this connection, the work of the Authority to promote gender equality and empowerment of women, in particular women scientists from developing States, in the area of marine scientific research was also highly appreciated by most delegations, which also encouraged the secretariat to pursue its efforts in this sector.

17. Several delegations called upon those members that were in arrears with the payment of their contributions to the administrative budget of the Authority to make their contributions as soon as possible. Some delegations informed the Assembly about their contributions to the voluntary trust funds administered by the Authority. In this regard, some delegations also pointed to the importance of the funding of scientific research and welcomed the establishment of the International Seabed Authority Partnership Fund. Several delegations called upon members, observers and other stakeholders to make contributions to the voluntary trust funds.

<sup>15</sup> Available at <http://bit.ly/ISA-AR-2022>.

<sup>16</sup> See ISBA/27/A/4.

<sup>17</sup> Available at: [https://isa.org.jm/files/files/documents/ISA\\_Contribution\\_to\\_the\\_SDGs\\_2021.pdf](https://isa.org.jm/files/files/documents/ISA_Contribution_to_the_SDGs_2021.pdf).

18. With regard to the regulatory framework for exploitation activities in the Area, a number of delegations highlighted that the draft exploitation regulations must ensure the effective protection of the marine environment and that regional environmental management plans should be in place before any mining activities start in the region concerned. In that regard, several delegations welcomed the progress made by the Legal and Technical Commission to develop regional environmental management plans for other areas, including the northern part of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. Several delegations emphasized the importance of the payment regime and benefit-sharing mechanism in giving effect to the principle of common heritage of mankind. Some delegations also expressed their concerns over the potential adverse effects of mining activities in the Area on the economies of developing land-mining countries.

19. A number of delegations highlighted the importance of the operationalization of the Enterprise and encouraged the Council to progress the work at the following meeting of the Council, noting the intention of the African Group to table a draft decision for that purpose. Several delegations also expressed their support for the operationalization of the Economic Planning Commission before the first plan of work for exploitation is approved.

20. Many delegations noted with appreciation the progress made in the implementation of the programmatic approach to capacity development for developing States, including the nomination of national focal points for that purpose, the training opportunities provided by contractors, as well as national or regional training workshops organized by the secretariat. Delegations congratulated Kirsty McQuaid of South Africa, who was present at the meeting to be awarded the third Secretary-General's Award for Excellence in Deep-Sea Research. Many delegations expressed their appreciation to the Africa Deep Seabed Resources project and welcomed the upcoming workshop to be held in Abuja by the Authority in collaboration with the Government of Nigeria in October 2022.

21. Many delegations welcomed the approval by the Council of the memorandum of understanding between the Authority and the African Union. Several delegations also commended the various strategic alliances and partnerships with subregional, regional and global organizations and in that regard called for the establishment of more partnerships. Several delegations also commended the work undertaken for the development of the e-learning platform of the Authority, Deep Dive, in support of the development of capacities and skills of young professionals and experts.

22. Many delegations also commended the work of the secretariat in promoting and encouraging marine scientific research in the Area and welcomed participation in several international scientific research projects. They encouraged further cooperation with other international organizations, contractors and other stakeholders. Many delegations also acknowledged the progress made in relation to implementing the strategic research priorities in the Action Plan of the Authority in support of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and offered their support to the different initiatives implemented by the secretariat, including on the Sustainable Seabed Knowledge Initiative, concerning the advancement of scientific understanding of deep-sea ecosystems in the Area.

23. Many delegations welcomed the participation of the secretariat in the intergovernmental conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. They highlighted the importance of ensuring the consistency of such an instrument with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 (1994 Agreement) and ensuring harmonization,

complementarity and coherence between the instrument and the draft regulations on exploitation of mineral resources in the Area, through coordination and cooperation.

24. The Assembly took note of the annual report of the Secretary-General. The Assembly also took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the action plan of the International Seabed Authority in support of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to mobilize the necessary resources for the implementation of the strategic research priorities under the Action Plan for Marine Scientific Research and encouraged all members of the Authority, other States, relevant international organizations, academic, scientific and technical institutions, philanthropic organizations, corporations and private persons to contribute to the implementation of the Action Plan.<sup>18</sup>

## **VII. Report of the Finance Committee and adoption of the budget of the Authority**

25. At its 194th meeting, on 3 August 2022, the Assembly considered the report of the Finance Committee.<sup>19</sup> Taking into account the recommendations of the Council in its decision relating to financial and budgetary matters,<sup>20</sup> and also the relevant recommendations of the Finance Committee,<sup>21</sup> the Assembly adopted a decision relating to financial and budgetary matters at the same meeting.<sup>22</sup>

## **VIII. Election of members of the Finance Committee, in accordance with section 9 of the annex to the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982**

26. At its 195th meeting, the Assembly elected the following persons to serve on the Finance Committee of the Authority for a term of five years, commencing on 1 January 2023 and ending on 31 December 2027:

Ainomuhisha, Medard (Uganda)  
 Akubor, Anastasia Francilia (Nauru)  
 Alam, Khurshed (Bangladesh)  
 Benninghofen, Jens (Germany)  
 Bhat, Kajal (India)  
 Fan, Kejun (China)  
 Fujimoto, Shoko (Japan)  
 Hilton, Christopher (United Kingdom)  
 Kavina, Pavel (Czechia)  
 Korbieh, Solomon (Ghana)  
 Litvinov, Sergey (Russian Federation)  
 Ortolland, Didier (France)  
 Pádua, Thiago Poggio (Brazil)  
 Walton, Viola (Jamaica)  
 Wong, Kenneth (Canada)

<sup>18</sup> See ISBA/27/A/4, para. 43.

<sup>19</sup> See ISBA/27/A/8-ISBA/27/C/36 and ISBA/27/A/3/Add.1/Rev.1-ISBA/27/C/22/Add.1/Rev.1.

<sup>20</sup> ISBA/27/C/40.

<sup>21</sup> ISBA/27/A/8-ISBA/27/C/36, para. 36.

<sup>22</sup> ISBA/27/A/10.

## **IX. Election to fill vacancies on the Council, in accordance with article 161, paragraph 3, of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea**

27. At its 196th meeting, on 4 August 2022, the Assembly elected 18 members of the Council for the term from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2026, subject to an agreed rotation arrangement.<sup>23</sup>

## **X. Tribute to the memory of the late Nii Allotey Odunton**

28. At the 191st meeting of the Assembly, the Secretary-General delivered a statement in memory of the late Nii Allotey Odunton, the second Secretary-General of the Authority, who had died on 13 February 2022. The Assembly observed one minute of silence to pay tribute to the memory of Mr. Odunton. Several delegations also delivered statements in memory of Mr. Odunton.

## **XI. Other matters**

29. At its 194th meeting, the Assembly considered the capacity development strategy of the Authority<sup>24</sup> and adopted a decision relating to the implementation of a programmatic approach to capacity development.<sup>25</sup>

30. At its 195th and 196th meetings, the Assembly discussed a proposal submitted by Belgium concerning amendments to rule 82 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly.<sup>26</sup> It was agreed that the Assembly would revert to this matter if and when appropriate.

31. Several delegations and observers made statements concerning the interpretation and application of paragraph 15, section 1 of the Annex to the 1994 Agreement.

## **XII. Commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the adoption and opening for signature of the Convention**

32. At the request of the Government of Jamaica as the host country, a special event was held on the afternoon of 1 August 2022 to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the adoption and opening for signature of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica, Kamina Johnson Smith, made a statement. Two regional groups, 24 delegations and three observers also made statements. Delegations congratulated the Government and people of Jamaica on the sixtieth anniversary of independence of Jamaica.

## **XIII. Dates of the next session of the Assembly**

33. The twenty-eighth session of the Assembly will be held from 24 to 28 July 2023. It will be the turn of the Group of African States to nominate a candidate for the presidency of the Assembly for its twenty-eighth session.

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<sup>23</sup> See [ISBA/27/A/14](#).

<sup>24</sup> See [ISBA/27/A/5](#).

<sup>25</sup> See [ISBA/27/A/11](#).

<sup>26</sup> See [ISBA/27/A/6](#).