

ISBA 27A SESSION. ASSEMBLY. REPORT OF THE SG. ITEM 9 OF
THE AGENDA

“Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Foremost, on behalf of the Brazilian Delegation, I would like to express my gratitude for the documents prepared, especially the Secretary General's Annual Report (“Ensuring the Sustainable Management and Stewardship of the Deep Seabed and its Resources for the Benefit of Mankind”), that contains an overview of the activities of the ISA since July 2021 and an update on the status of implementation of the strategic directions of the Authority as set out in the Strategic Plan 2019-2023.

I took note with great satisfaction that, despite the challenging circumstances of the last two years, the ISA has managed to

accomplish a considerable number of projects, according to these strategic directions.

I congratulate the Secretary-General, Mr. Michael Lodge, for the quality of the work done, for his competence, efficiency, diligence, and dedication, as well as to his team.

The achievements of the Authority include areas that are extremely relevant. I refer, for example, to the capacity-building programs, especially for developing countries. Brazil has participated in these programs as a provider as well as a recipient of technical cooperation. We are grateful for the opportunities to contribute, but also for countries whose contractors offered opportunities to Brazilian trainees.

I refer also to the initiatives to raise awareness and understanding of the general public of the mandate assigned to the Authority by the UNCLOS and the 1994 Agreement. Such initiatives contribute to more transparency and accountability about ISA's activities and

to a better dialogue with the different stakeholders and civil society.

Mr. President,

The Authority's participation in the "2022 United Nations Ocean Conference", in Lisbon, in June, was, certainly, an important step not only towards more visibility of the work performed by the ISA, its accomplishments and challenges, but also an opportunity to explore existing and new synergies, expand and consolidate cooperation and coordination, in particular with the UN agencies, as well as with the international organizations, academic institutions, etc., in matters of shared interests and concerns to all of us.

As the Lisbon Conference turned emerged, I would say, as a turning point in global action to protect the ocean, the exchange of views and perceptions about the current challenges related to ocean governance can enrich and contribute to our ability to make

a critical assessment of the content and direction of our institutional mandate, and generate an opportunity to review and, where appropriate, open new paths and take new courses of action that may prove to be more cost-effective and more in tune with our goals.

I am particularly looking forward to the “Sustainable Seabed Knowledge Initiative” (SSKI), launched at a high-level event during the Lisbon Conference, to advance scientific understanding of deep-sea ecosystems in the Area for the benefit of mankind. This project is co-sponsored by Argentina, the European Commission, the Republic of Korea, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. I commend the effort of the respective delegations present here and congratulate them on this initiative.

Mr. President,

I took note also with great satisfaction of the initiatives and personal commitment of the Secretary-General to advance

women's empowerment and leadership in marine research to support a more inclusive, sustainable ocean governance.

I highly commend the partnership and collaboration established with Tonga, Malta, Canada, and Antigua and Barbuda. Promoting and giving more visibility to gender equality is certainly a contribution of the ISA to Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 14.

In this context, I look forward to the conference on “Women in the Law of the Sea”, scheduled for September, as part of the events to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the and opening to signature of the UNCLOS.

I take this opportunity to express my joy and congratulate Dr. Kirsty Mc Quaid, from South Africa, for receiving from the ISA the Award for her Excellence in Deep-Sea Research.

Mr. President,

The participation of the Secretary General in the fourth session of the “Intergovernmental Conference on Marine Biodiversity of

Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction” (BBNJ 4), in March, was timely and useful, as it created an opportunity to increase the chances of a more refined common approach for the protection of the marine environment across different fora.

Ensuring coherence and consistency of positions, views, and actions in matters related to the common heritage of mankind is a vital step to promoting more effective global ocean governance.

Finally, Mr. President,

I would like to mention the decision taken by the Council related to the composition of the Legal and Technical Commission (LTC). After years of discussions, the decision approved last week must be seen as a very positive outcome, because it contributes to a more regional balance in the geographical assignment of seats, more qualified members, and more opportunities for countries of “special interests”.

Moreover, as the ISA advances the elaboration of a comprehensive legal regime to achieve, as provided by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the sustainable use of marine resources in order to provide benefit for mankind, on a fair and non-discriminatory basis, it's clear that more scientific knowledge and more expertise are required to address a significant amount of questions and issues related to the impact of the sea-bed mining on the marine ecosystems.

As we have noticed, the LTC has been confronted with a big workload. Thus, the new LTC composition may offer the possibility that studies that used to be commissioned to independent consultants can be elaborated internally by the Commission.

At this point in time, taking into consideration the new challenges raised along the discussions on the "Regulations on the Exploitation of the Mining Resources in the Area", the member states' concerns about issues that demand solid scientific knowledge or complex legal answers have a unique opportunity to be properly addressed.

Concerns about legal matters, like the one raised by the delegation of Chile, for example, related to the Section 1 (15) of the 1994 Agreement is, in my view, a matter to be addressed by the LTC, independently of the views we may, eventually, advance in plenary.

In any case, strengthening the institutional role of the ISA – and a stronger LTC comes in this direction – is essential, so the Authority can confront the challenges of a world in permanent “change mode”.

In my view, the ISA needs the support of a “scientific committee”, that, perhaps, could be designed inside the LTC. As we have all made every effort to ensure that our candidates were the best-qualified ones, this possibility may, eventually, be considered.

Finally, Mr. President, as we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Convention, allow me to give you the assurances that Brazil is fully committed to implementing the UNCLOS and supporting the ISA in the fulfillment of its mandate. You can count on our readiness,

goodwill, and effort to support the ISA to achieve its ultimate goals.

Thank you”