

Rear Admiral (Retd.) Md Khurshed Alam
President of the Council of the International Seabed Authority
Kingston
Jamaica

Via email to: Council2020@isa.org.jm

1 December 2020

Dear President Alam,

We are writing in response to your letter of 27 November 2020 concerning the application for approval of a plan of work for exploration of polymetallic nodules submitted by Blue Minerals Jamaica Ltd., which invites observers to submit written statements by 4 December 2020. We would like to note that the letter doesn't seem to be available on the ISA website (<https://www.isa.org.jm/node/19713>), so other observers may not be aware of it.

As observers to the ISA, Greenpeace believes that the testimony we have received from a Jamaican citizen, Esther Figueroa, is very relevant for the discussions on this matter and therefore we submit it for consideration by all Council members and non-members, as well as observers.

Esther Figueroa Ph.D. is a Jamaican Citizen and the Producer-Director of "Fly Me To The Moon" (2019) - an award winning feature documentary about Jamaica's role in the global aluminum industry. She resides at 12 Riverside Heights Drive, Gordon Town, St. Andrew, Jamaica. Her testimony is as follows:

As a Jamaican citizen who has studied and documented the Government of Jamaica's relationship to global extraction, in particular Jamaica's 70 plus years as an integral part of the global aluminum industry, and the sorts of mining and quarrying that the government subsidizes, encourages and or partners with, I object strongly to the International Seabed Authority Council permitting of Blue Minerals Jamaica Ltd. for the following three reasons:

1. Bad Public-Private Partnerships

Blue Minerals Jamaica Ltd. is a public-private partnership which continues the decades long trend of the Government of Jamaica signing extractive agreements which put it at a disadvantage, whereby the government (and thus the citizens, residents and tax payers of Jamaica) assume risks, debts and dangerous concessions in return for often pie in the sky unrealistic claims as to potential economic benefits, whether jobs, spin offs such as training and technological transfers, GDP growth and/or national development.

2. Bad Governance, Lack of Transparency and No Public Participation

In March 2019, the Government of Jamaica publicly announced in the media that it had signed the agreement which created the public-private partnership Blue Minerals Jamaica Ltd. This was without any previous political discussion or public consultation, and most Jamaicans have no idea that there is such a partnership or what it entails. This again continues the decades of the Government of Jamaica's lack of transparency, lack of real democratic governance practices, whereby the government enters into agreements which are cloaked in secrecy, signed with very short notice, often under some sort of crisis deadline, with no input from the formal political

opposition, civil society or the citizenry, yet the short comings and failures of these agreement will have economic ramifications for generations. This is an agreement which can lead to deep sea exploration/prospecting/mining anywhere in the world, whereby the Government of Jamaica will be liable for any mishaps or difficulties. Deep sea mining is a very dangerous and expensive enterprise. Surely the people of Jamaica deserve to be informed and have some say over the choices their government is making supposedly in their name and on their behalf, and for which they will be the victims, whether because of graft, corruption, the taking on of further national debt, or other obligations, risky investments and other forms of liabilities.

3. A Leader in SIDS Climate and Environmental Justice Advocacy Exploiting and Negatively Impacting other SIDS Territories

The Government of Jamaica likes to position itself as a champion of Environmental and Climate Change Justice advocacy. The government's narrative is that Jamaica as a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) is a victim of the historical and contemporary decisions, industrial practices and consumptive behaviours of rich, powerful, industrialized and developed nations and regions. Jamaica is a signatory to the Paris Climate Accord, led the 1.5 To Stay Alive Movement regarding global warming targets, is a signatory to many other international environmental agreements, and has been a leader in calling for SIDS to receive financing for Climate Adaptation and Mitigation measures. Jamaica has itself been a recipient of such funding. Blue Minerals Jamaica Ltd. would be deep sea exploration/prospecting/mining in places like the Pacific Ocean, where the peoples of the Pacific Small Island Developing States (places known to be especially vulnerable to the impacts of the Climate Crisis having suffered centuries of colonial and neocolonial extraction) have individually and collectively explicitly objected to sea bed, deep sea mining and other forms of extraction in the Pacific Ocean and Region. These Pacific island nations all have indigenous peoples with indigenous customary and traditional land ownership, seafaring, cultural practices and scientific knowledges which are completely opposed to the exploitation and destruction of the environment, whereby their indigenous laws, world views and spiritual practices hold that humans depend upon the natural world and most live in a mutual respectful and in an unharmed relationship with all of the living planet. For Jamaica, itself a victim of even longer centuries of colonial and neocolonial extraction, to itself perpetuate harm against others who it should instead be in solidarity with would be a moral disgrace, as well as expose the absolute hypocrisy of the Jamaican government's position as a leader in global struggles for human dignity, equality and environmental and climate justice. The people of Jamaica stand in solidarity with those who suffer, and would not want to be unknowing and unwilling agents of such suffering.

We would be grateful if you could make this letter available to Council members and non-members and observers.

Yours sincerely,



Sebastian Losada
Senior oceans policy adviser
Greenpeace International