

Speaker: Mr Daniele Bosio

Report of the Chair of the LTC on the work of the Commission

Let me first of all, Mr. Chairman, thank the chair and the entire LTC for the hard-work in this critical juncture for the existence of the Authority. We are very much aware of the amount of work you have been required to carry out, especially in this difficult time. Your guidance is very relevant for the work of this Council.

I will only spend few words on some parts of your report Italy considers of particular relevance. First of all we commend the work of the LTC in the elaboration of the REMP for the Mid Atlantic Ridge. We look forward to the release of the first draft we are ready to to examine carefully and comment. As activities in the Area are gaining much more traction in these years, It is necessary that the LTC prioritizes this item in its agenda and proceeds towards the smooth development and analysis of the other REMP for prioritized areas. We also encourage the Commission to continue working on a standardized approach to REMP. As the debates within the IWG on environmental matters in these days have shown, the drafting of consistent, encompassing and science-based REMPs is a priority. We thus look forward to have this standardized document before the July session.

Finally, Italy would like to highlight the important work the LTC will undergo with respect to the review of the recommendations for the guidance of contractors for the assessment of the possible environmental impacts arising from exploration for marine minerals. We encourage the LTC to take into account the developments we are dealing with within the Council to ensure that, *mutatis mutandis*, similar provisions on EIAs are also developed during the exploration phase. Italy would also like to draw the attention of the LTC on the need for developing criteria for the establishment of impact reference zones and preservation reference zones, which are relevant for both the exploration and exploitation activities. We see with a bit of concern that the topic is not part of the LTC agenda, despite the relevance it will have, especially when mineral exploitation will approach.