

**Statement to the Council in support of Blue Minerals Jamaica Limited's
application to the International Seabed Authority for an Exploration License
December 4, 2020**

Jamaica wishes to thank the Members of the Legal and Technical Commission for their consideration of Blue Minerals Jamaica Limited's application for the approval of a plan of work for exploration for polymetallic nodules in the Area. We are grateful for the Commission's recommendation to the Council for the approval of the application.

The Government of Jamaica takes this opportunity to reiterate its support of Blue Minerals Jamaica Limited's application to the International Seabed Authority for an Exploration License. Jamaica also stands proud to be the first Caribbean State to sponsor an entity.

The establishment of the International Seabed Authority, pursuant to the 1982 Montego Bay Convention, was designed to facilitate the organization and control of activities in the Area. Of particular note is the ISA's objective of administering the resources of the Area in the interests of all humankind, especially the needs of developing countries.

Jamaica was deeply honoured to be accorded the seat of the new Authority as provided for under Article 2 of the 1999 Headquarters Agreement. As host, we remain fully committed to supporting the Authority in achieving its mandate.

The sustainable development of the resources of the Area requires that deep seabed mining be conducted in a manner that preserves and protects the marine environment including, but not restricted to preservation of biodiversity. The significant work being undertaken by the Legal and Technical Commission in this regard deserves special recognition.

As a small island developing state, we very much welcome the opportunity to support participation in deep seabed mining in a sustainable way. We are fully aware of the tremendous responsibility we have to the Common Heritage of Mankind to ensure that we do not fail in our obligation of due diligence, as elaborated by the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in its 2010 Advisory Opinion.

The application by Blue Minerals Jamaica Limited (BMJ) in respect of the exploration of polymetallic nodules in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone also holds the promise of securing much needed mineral supplies that will contribute to climate change mitigation, through the adoption of green energy technologies.¹

Nonetheless, even as we seek to ensure that adequate supplies of the necessary minerals and metals are available, it is critical that we also ensure that adequate safeguards are maintained to protect the environment. We are confident that Blue Minerals Jamaica Limited is fully committed to the highest environmental standards. In this regard, we also believe that the high standards being developed by the Authority, will serve as a model for land-based producers.

Cognizant of our obligations as a Sponsoring State under Part XI of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, Jamaica is fully committed to implementing the necessary institutional framework and legislation expeditiously. We also recognize the need to sensitize our national entities and are working diligently to strengthen our capacity to meet our obligations.

It is our hope, given the recommendation by the Legal and Technical Commission, that the Council will approve the request by Blue Minerals Jamaica Limited, for the plan of work for exploration.

¹The World Bank has estimated that demand for the minerals required for solar panels – including copper and nickel could increase by 300% through 2050 should we maintain a 2 °C goal. Demand for cobalt, manganese and rare-earth elements is expected to grow exponentially given their importance in the production of wind turbines, electric vehicles and energy storage.