

Remarks

By Ambassador Alison StoneRoofe, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the
International Seabed Authority

Agenda Item 7: Annual Report of the Secretary-General under Article 166, paragraph 4, of
the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

Part II of the 26th Session of the Assembly
13th- 15th December 2021

Mr President,

Since Senator the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica declared the opening of the twenty-sixth session of the Assembly on 5 October 2020, in her capacity as President of the Assembly for the twenty-fifth session, the circumstances in which we have had to function have been most difficult.

Not only has the COVID-19 pandemic dominated the past year, but it also disrupted our programmatic activities, work schedule, operational methods and procedures; drained our resources; and created so much uncertainty around the Government of Jamaica's capacity to facilitate in-person meetings of the Council and Assembly.

Notwithstanding, Jamaica, as host State, stood steadfast in our commitment to facilitate and advance the work of the Authority by working diligently with the Secretary-General and the Secretariat.

In this context, I am most pleased that we are now able to find ways to get back to business, in this the second part of the 26th Session of the Assembly. I greet you all warmly, whether participating in-person or virtually, on behalf of the Government and people of Jamaica.

Against this background, Mr President, I am especially pleased to recognize the advances we have made, as outlined in your Annual Report;

Report on the Implementation of the Strategic Plan and High-Level Action Plan of the International Seabed Authority for the period 2019-2023 (agenda item 10) 14.

- Jamaica is encouraged by the assessment of the Authority's performance in implementing the high-level actions and outputs under the Strategic Plan and High-Level Action Plan of the International Seabed Authority, for the period 2019-2023;
- We note, in particular, the efforts to align the programmes and initiatives of the Authority with the UN United National 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals, in

particular Goal 14 (which deals with the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources);

- We also note the work on strengthening the regulatory framework for activities in the Area, including on the draft regulations on exploitation of deep seabed mineral resources and the revised roadmap for work on the Draft Exploitation Regulations for 2022 and 2023; as well as the submission by the Legal and Technical Commission of all the associated Phase 1 draft Standards and Guidelines (S&Gs).

Budget and Status of Contributions

- With respect to the budget and reported status of contributions, despite our significantly reduced fiscal space, Jamaica has sought to ensure that our contributions to the budget of the Authority are honoured. While we fully understand the difficulties being experienced by all Member States, we wish to encourage continued contribution to the voluntary trust funds, to facilitate the full participation of developing countries in meetings of the Legal and Technical Commission and the Council, as well to support the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Enterprise.

Mr. President,

Capacity Building for Developing Countries

- Jamaica further takes note of the implementation of the programmatic approach to capacity building for developing countries by the Authority, the reach of which is truly deserving of commendation. Some 600 individuals from various geographic regions have benefitted between 2020 and 2021, and this while mainstreaming a gender dimension in these capacity development efforts.

Lastly, Mr. President,

Fully Integrated Participation of Developing Countries

- **We wish to reiterate the urgency of** fully operationalizing the Enterprise, as a prerequisite to fully integrating developing countries like Jamaica in deep-seabed mining activities in the Area, and to ensure that our common heritage is accessible to humankind as a whole. In this regard, we are pleased to note the emerging consensus around the appointment of an Interim Director-General for the Enterprise to give much need momentum to the process.

I thank you.