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International Seabed Authority – Secretary General Annual Report

Malta Statement delivered by H.E. Vanessa Frazier
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

President,

At the outset, I thank the Secretary-General for his annual report of the International Seabed Authority (ISA). The format of the publication and the quality of the work it contains are greatly appreciated.

The contribution of the ISA to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda is of vital importance. Recognition of the ISA's contribution to 12 of the 17 SDGs can be seen through the independent review commissioned in 2021, as well as at the 2022 UN Ocean Conference. I express Malta's deep appreciation as well.

I also commend the ISA and the SG for the leading role they play in the advancement of women empowerment and leadership in ocean affairs. Women in the Law of the Sea (WILOS) and in scientific research (WIDSR) contribute to the full and meaningful participation of women in the law of the sea. I am proud to be a gender champion, and to represent Malta in the IGC Network's Impact Group on Research and Oceans for Women (IGROW).



We strongly support the protection of the marine environment in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction, which is why Malta is a member of the high ambition coalition on the BBNJ. The ISA has a unique role in this regard as the only intergovernmental organization with a global mandate that allows the international community to do so, having successfully given life to the “precautionary approach”, which the work of the ISA is based on. The development of Regional Environmental Management Plans (REMPs) is a key example of this. The first REMP has led to the establishment of a network of areas of particular environmental interest (APEIs) in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone (CCZ) and represents 1.97 million square kilometres of protected seabed.

President

Malta acknowledges the role of the ISA under UNCLOS for Marine Scientific Research in the Area, as well as the important progress already made in implementing the strategic research priorities identified in the ISA MSR Action Plan in support of the UN Decade of Ocean Science. Strengthening the deep-sea scientific capacity of ISA members, in particular developing States. The e-learning platform titled “Deep Dive” will bring tremendous added value to the work of the Authority through supporting the development of capacities and skills of young professionals and experts.



The equitable sharing of the financial and other economic benefits from activities in the Area is a fundamental part of the legal regime created by Part XI of UNCLOS. We fully support the work of the Finance Committee in the development of options to achieve this goal.

Malta both supports and commends the work of the ISA SG in the reform of the Secretariat, as well as efforts to ensure that the ISA remains fit for purpose. Staff training, the incorporation of best practices, and even increased resilience against cybersecurity risks and threats are all forms of support for the important work of the Authority.

President

Public information and outreach are vital in all our work. This holds true for the Authority, and we commend its meaningful engagement with all stakeholders. Access to information is the strong point of the Anthropocene era, and it creates the responsibility to base our actions – including the ISA’s work – upon what science tells us is in the best interest of our planet and humanity as a whole. Malta will continue to support these efforts, given our deep appreciation for the work of the Authority.

I thank you.