

**High-Level webinar to present the draft ISA Marine Scientific Research Action Plan in support of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development**

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**Statement by Ms. Marte Ziolkowski**

**State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Let me start by offering my sincere appreciation for the opportunity to participate in this panel discussion on capacity building, a topic of utmost importance for Norway. Let me also offer my gratitude to the Co-Chairs for their opening remarks, and for moderating this panel discussion.

There is an increasing interest among states, industry and other stakeholders for extracting deep sea mineral resources both in the Area and from coastal state's continental shelf. The Authority is now finalizing the regulatory framework necessary for extraction activities to commence in the Area. The Authority will play an important role in contributing to the development of the scientific knowledge necessary to secure sustainable mineral activity in line with the new regulations.

As deep sea mining continues to grow as an industry we must ensure that also developing states can benefit from such operations. This is especially salient regarding deep sea mining in the Area, as the mineral resources there are common heritage of mankind, and thus belong to us all. This is why capacity building needs to be central to our collective agenda.

The Authority is important as a provider of and facilitator for competence development and transfer of technology to developing states. In discussions on developing cooperation, the Authority is frequently mentioned as an example of how capacity building should be conducted. For Norway the Authority is an interesting partner for our new Ocean for Development Programme and we are looking for possibilities to expand our cooperation.

The challenge for the Authority is to ensure that capacity-building and technology transfer measures are developed and implemented effectively, subject to all legitimate interests, including the rights and duties of holders, suppliers and recipients of technology and that they reflect the needs of developing states, identified through transparent processes in which developing states are full participants.

The Authority is currently engaged in a number of capacity building activities. As an example, the Authority, in partnership with the African Union and Norway, implemented a project on fostering cooperation to promote the sustainable development of Africa's deep seabed resources in support of Africa's Blue Economy.

The project includes a series of workshops in Africa to raise African decision makers' awareness of these resources and the opportunities they represent. Norway is proud to support this initiative to build capacity of developing states in this field.

This project corresponds well with the mandate of the Authority and it corresponds well with the Norwegian aim to cooperate with other states to make it possible to utilize rights and possibilities under UNCLOS to improve development.

Cooperation and partnership between states that are in different stages of economic development and thus have unequal opportunity to thrive in this field should be generally encouraged. Some forms of capacity building could even be made mandatory in certain instances. Building on the detailed provisions on capacity-building and technology transfer contained in UNCLOS, the Authority must establish clear obligations on developed parties to assist developing states. This could be done by sharing marine scientific research, engaging in collaborative research and training programs and assisting developing states in establishing infrastructure necessary to conduct deep sea mining activities.

Capacity building can also consist of sharing information and technology transfer. Scientific information, including data relating to seabed and minerals could be shared in an open access system. However, sharing information means that we also have to increase the capacity of developing states to make use of that information.

One possibility that should be considered is to build on existing science networks and strengthen their practical relevance for developing states.

One could imagine practical cooperation on the institutional level between oceans management administrations in developed and developing states as well as cooperation between relevant organizations, such as ISA, UN-DESA and the International Hydrographic Organization.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to assure you that Norway will remain a steadfast supporter of the Authority in all its future endeavours, and that we will continue to assist in building capacity and competence in areas where Norway has particular expertise.

Thank you.