

INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY

Council



Distr.
GENERAL

ISBA/4/C/14
28 August 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Resumed fourth session
Kingston, Jamaica
17-28 August 1998

STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL DURING THE RESUMED FOURTH SESSION

1. The resumed fourth session of the International Seabed Authority was held at Kingston from 17 to 28 August 1998. Among the matters considered by the Council during this part of the session were the budget for 1999, the scale of assessments for contributions to the budget, the Financial Regulations of the Authority and the draft mining code. According to the agenda adopted during the first part of the present session (ISBA/4/C/2), the Council was also to consider the Staff Regulations of the Authority, the agreement between the Authority and the Government of Jamaica concerning the headquarters of the Authority and an agreement concerning the relationship between the Authority and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea. The Council was informed, however, that these matters were not yet ready for its consideration and were therefore deferred to the fifth session of the Authority in 1999.

Election of members of the Legal and Technical Commission

2. At the beginning of the resumed fourth session, the Council was informed of the resignations from the Legal and Technical Commission of Mr. Hans Amann (Germany), Mr. Marcellin Mve-Ebang (Gabon) and Mr. Toshio Sakasegawa (Japan). Following their nominations by their respective Governments and in accordance with article 163, paragraph 7, of the Convention, the Council, at its 34th meeting, on 18 August 1998, elected Mr. Helmut Beiersdorfer (Germany), Mr. Yuji Kajitani (Japan) and Mr. Nthomo Ndong (Gabon) to serve as members of the Commission for the remainder of the terms of office of Mr. Amann, Mr. Sakasegawa and Mr. Mve-Ebang, respectively.

Consideration of the draft mining code

3. The Council held informal meetings on 18, 19, 20, 21, 24 and 26 August to conduct an examination of the text proposed by the Legal and Technical Commission regulation by regulation (ISBA/4/C/4/Rev.1). In the light of the

discussions, the secretariat, together with the President, prepared an informal revision of regulations 2 to 21 (ISBA/4/C/CRP/1) for the consideration of delegations. It was not possible to complete the review of the mining code in the time available and it was therefore agreed to continue the examination of the text in informal meetings during the fifth session. The Council agreed that, in the organization of its work for the fifth session, priority should be given to the mining code.

Budget of the Authority for 1999 and assessment of contributions of members of the Authority

4. The Council considered the proposed budget for the Authority for 1999 as contained in the report of the Secretary-General (ISBA/4/C/6 and ISBA/4/C/6/Add.1). In reviewing the proposed budget, the Council took into account the recommendations of the Finance Committee as contained in its report of 20 August 1998 (ISBA/4/C/10/Rev.1).

5. The Council was unable to reach a decision by consensus on the scale of assessment of contributions of members of the Authority. All efforts at reaching a decision by consensus having been exhausted, the Council voted on an amendment to the draft decision proposed by the delegation of the Russian Federation. The proposed amendment was defeated by 26 votes to 3, with no abstentions. The Council then voted on the decision and recommendation of the Council relating to the budget of the Authority for 1998 (ISBA/4/C/11 and Corr.1). The decision and recommendation was adopted at the 41st meeting, on 27 August 1998 by 26 votes to 3, with no abstentions.

Report of the Legal and Technical Commission

6. The Legal and Technical Commission met during the second week of the session. The Chairman of the Commission, Mr. Jean-Pierre Lenoble (France), reported to the Council at its 40th meeting on the work of the Commission. The Council was informed that, during the present session, the Commission had considered the reports submitted to it by the registered pioneer investors during 1997 and 1998. In addition, the Commission had considered the implementation of the training programme submitted by the Government of the Republic of Korea and approved by the Commission during its meeting in August 1997. The Council was informed that the Commission had selected four candidates and four alternate candidates for training and that training would commence in March 1999. The report of the Legal and Technical Commission, containing the names of the candidates selected, is contained in ISBA/4/C/12 and Corr.1.

7. The Council was further informed that the Legal and Technical Commission had completed work on its rules of procedure and that they would be submitted to the Council at the fifth session of the Authority for approval in accordance with article 163, paragraph 10, of the Convention.

Financial regulations of the Authority

8. At its 40th meeting, on 27 August 1998, the Council took up the draft Financial Regulations proposed by the Finance Committee (ISBA/4/C/L.3).

Consideration of the draft Financial Regulations was deferred to the next session of the Council. In addition, the Council decided to request the Finance Committee to examine at its next meeting the question whether the scale of assessment of the Authority should be based on the scale of assessment of the United Nations for the year for which the budget had to be adopted or for the previous year, and to report to the Council on its recommendation.

Next meeting of the Council

9. The next meeting of the Council will take place at Kingston from 9 to 27 August 1999. The representative of Chile, on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group, stated that, in the view of his regional group, the decision to hold one meeting in 1999 was taken on an exceptional basis and in no way constituted a precedent for future years. Following informal consultations between the chairmen of the regional groups, it was understood that the African Group would present a candidate for the presidency of the Council in 1999.
