



Council

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Kingston, Jamaica

28 July-8 August 2003

Statement of the President on the work of the Council at the ninth session

1. The ninth session of the International Seabed Authority was held at Kingston, Jamaica, from 28 July to 8 August 2003.

Adoption of the agenda

2. At its 86th meeting, on 30 July 2003, the Council adopted the agenda for the ninth session (ISBA/9/C/2).

Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the Council

3. At the 87th meeting, on 4 August 2003, Domenico da Empoli (Italy) was elected President of the Council for 2003. Subsequently, following consultations in the regional groups, the representatives of Saudi Arabia (Asian Group), Sudan (African Group), Trinidad and Tobago (Latin American and Caribbean Group) and Poland (Eastern European Group) were elected as Vice-Presidents.

Election to fill a vacancy on the Legal and Technical Commission

4. At the 87th meeting, on 4 August 2003, Yoshiaki Igarashi (Japan) was elected to fill the vacancy on the Legal and Technical Commission caused by the death of Yuji Kajitani (Japan).

Report of the Legal and Technical Commission

5. At its 87th meeting, on 4 August 2003, the Council received the report of the chairman of the Legal and Technical Commission on the work of the Commission during the ninth session (ISBA/9/C/4). The Council noted the contents of the report as well as the evaluation of the annual reports of contractors carried out by the Legal and Technical Commission (ISBA/9/LTC/2). While note was taken of the suggestion by the Commission that an opportunity might be given for contractors to meet with the Commission in order to discuss or clarify any issues arising from the annual reports, it was also noted that the annual reports of contractors were to be submitted

* Reissued for technical reasons.

in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations on Prospecting and Exploration for Polymetallic Nodules in the Area and the terms of the standard clauses of contracts for exploration.

6. The Council took note of the outcome of the Commission's discussion, in open session, of issues relating to biodiversity in the Area. Several members of the Council welcomed the Commission's suggestion to develop a proposal for a seminar on the subject of seabed and deep ocean biodiversity relevant to prospecting and exploration for mineral resources, noting that it would present a valuable opportunity for closer cooperation between relevant organizations working in the field, including scientific institutions. The Council emphasized that it was ultimately the responsibility of the Council to determine the mandate of the Authority and the Commission with respect to issues relating to biodiversity and that, accordingly, it was anticipated that the outcomes of any discussions in the Commission should be presented to the Council in due course.

Considerations relating to the regulations for prospecting and exploration for polymetallic sulphides and cobalt-rich crusts in the Area

7. The Council noted the progress that had been made with respect to the formulation of draft regulations by the Legal and Technical Commission during the ninth session and expressed appreciation for the informative report that had been provided by the Chairman of the Commission on the work that had been achieved (ISBA/9/C/4). Clarification was sought on several aspects of the Commission's work. Several members of the Council spoke in support of the working methods adopted by the Commission with respect to the formulation of new draft regulations. At the same time, the Council recalled that a request to establish regulations for the resources in question had been made in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and the Agreement and that every effort should be made to formulate and consider draft regulations in a timely manner, taking into account the need to ensure that the draft is technically sound and that the Commission is given enough time to consider fully the difficult scientific issues involved. The Council decided to keep the matter under consideration at its next session, in parallel with the ongoing formulation of draft regulations by the Commission.

Report and recommendations of the Finance Committee

8. At its 88th meeting, on 4 August 2003, the Council received the report and recommendations of the Finance Committee (ISBA/9/A/5-ISBA/9/C/5). The Council took note of the report.

9. With respect to the appointment of an auditor, the Council, in accordance with the recommendation of the Finance Committee, decided to recommend to the Assembly to appoint Deloitte and Touche as auditor of the Authority for the period 2003 and 2004.

10. With respect to the issue of the modalities for financing the participation of members of the Legal and Technical Commission and members of the Finance Committee from developing countries, the Council decided to approve and recommend to the Assembly the recommendations of the Finance Committee relating to the voluntary trust fund as contained in the annex to the report of the Committee. To supplement the voluntary contributions, the Secretary-General, for the first year of operation of the voluntary trust fund, was authorized to advance, to

the extent necessary, up to \$75,000 from such extraordinary sources of funding as may be under the custody of the Secretary-General and accrued to the Authority.

11. In discussing the recommendations, some members of the Council expressed reservations with respect to the proposed criteria for access to the voluntary fund and noted that the solution proposed by the Finance Committee should be regarded as only a temporary solution. In approving the recommendations, the Council emphasized the need to revisit the issue in order to reach a sustainable conclusion at the next session.

12. The Council appealed to all members of the Authority, as well as others in a position to do so, to make contributions to the voluntary trust fund.

Next meeting of the Council

13. The next meeting of the Council will be held in 2004 on dates to be fixed following consultations between the Secretary-General and the relevant departments of the United Nations.
