



Statement by

**Senator the Honourable Parnel Charles Jr.
Minister of State
in the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade
JAMAICA**

**to the Twenty-Fourth Session of the
International Seabed Authority (ISA)
on the**

Report of the Secretary General

Kingston, Jamaica

24th July 2018

It is also my pleasure to present my delegation's comments on the Report of the Secretary General, and I would like to congratulate him for the work he has completed over the last year in furtherance of the mandates established by the Authority. The tasks and the expectations are ever exceeding the resources available and we commend the efforts of the entire Secretariat in working to achieve the targets set. If you will allow me Mr President, I would like to highlight a number of issues in my intervention.

Membership

Mr. President,

We are indeed heartened by the near universal membership enjoyed by the Authority with 168 parties to the Convention, and we welcome the consistent outreach efforts of the Secretariat and ask that these efforts continue in earnest so as to bring us closer to universal acceptance of the Convention.

Secretary General's Report

Mr. President,

Let me thank Secretary-General Michael Lodge for his report on the recent activities of the Authority and for the comprehensive information he has provided on the work and achievements over the past year. We commend the Secretary-General and staff for their commitment, and we remain confident that the

The Government of Jamaica also wishes to thank the Secretariat for its on-going support and collaboration on the project to establish a UN House at Block 11 Building.

Financial Contributions

Mr. President,

As we enter another budget cycle, we note from the Secretary General's Report that less than half of the membership of the Authority has fully paid over their assessed contribution. I take this opportunity to encourage Member States who are in arrears to fulfill their obligations to the Authority as soon as possible.

We share the concern about the state of the Voluntary Trust Fund to support the participation of members of the Legal and Technical Commission and Finance Committee, from developing States. We thank the Governments of Argentina, China, the United Kingdom and most recently, the Kingdom of Norway for their generous donations to the Fund and make a special appeal to other Member States which are able to support this Fund, to do so.

We also commend member states that have made contributions to the Endowment Fund for Marine Scientific Research in the Area, having recognized that the capacity building mandate of the Authority is a major priority.

our oceans and seas as well as the blue economy. We recognise that this level of cooperation and collaboration can only redound to the benefit of the Authority.

We take note of the voluntary commitments registered by the Authority at the United Nations Ocean Conference in 2017 and offer our commendations on the actions taken to effect the implementation of these commitments.

The discussions being held by the Secretariat with the World Maritime University for a memorandum of understanding are also noted, and we encourage the building of relations with the Caribbean Maritime University here in Kingston.

Strategic Plan for the Authority for the five-year period 2019 - 2023

Mr. President,

Among the many items to be considered during this year's session, is an examination and adoption of the draft Strategic Plan of the International Seabed Authority for the period 2019-2023. We welcome the presentation of the Authority's first strategic plan which we believe adequately covers the mandates of the ISA. We thank the Secretariat for the extensive work done on the document and note with satisfaction, that most of the submissions received during the consultative process were from Member States. We acknowledge the significance of these contributions as the document will guide the work of the Authority for the next five years, and it goes without saying, that organizations do function best when their members take great interest in the activities. The

It is therefore essential that the Council, the Legal and Technical Commission and the Secretariat, continue their work, with the benefit of the contributions made during this 24th session, and we anticipate that, at its conclusion, we will have made significant strides in this critical endeavour.

As we have noted from the discussions over this last week, Jamaica is appreciative of the increasing emphasis being placed on environmental concerns and most recently the importance of Regional Environmental Management Plans (REMPs). The development of REMPs will require a collaborative and transparent approach and inclusive mechanisms under the auspices of the ISA, with the full engagement of all relevant organs. We believe this provides the required legitimacy for REMPs to be used to define contract areas and environmental measures, and to be binding on all states in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ).

You can be assured of Jamaica's support for the Authority's efforts to reach an agreement on measures to responsibly explore and exploit the mineral resources in the Area and avoid any possible negative environmental consequences that might arise from these activities.

Conclusion

In closing, Mr. President, I reiterate the commitment of the Government and People of Jamaica to the work of the International Seabed Authority and I convey my very best wishes for a successful conclusion of this Twenty-fourth Session.

I thank you.