

STATEMENT BY GRAHAM LEUNG,

HEAD OF THE NAURU DELEGATION AT MEETING OF 24TH ISA ASSEMBLY, KINGSTON, JAMAICA

WEDNESDAY 25th JULY 2018.

Mr President

Nauru congratulates the Secretary General on the comprehensive and practical revised draft strategic plan which is opportune. We express our broad support for the plan.

Its release comes at important moment in the work of the ISA.

We are pleased to hear the Secretary General's assurance that the plan is consistent with UNCLOS and the 1994 Agreement.

We note that the 'Context and Challenges' section III provides background but appears to contain little about the strategy to be adopted, or the proposed way forward. This could be expanded, and more details provided.

Nauru reiterates the observations of some other delegations that the Strategic Plan does not appear to acknowledge the ongoing negotiation by member countries of the Authority of a new international instrument to protect biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction ('BBNJ'). This is likely to gain significant traction during the Strategic Plan period. We therefore suggest that inclusion (e.g. in Strategic Direction 1) of wording as to the linkage and coordination between the Authority and the BBNJ process would be helpful.

Nauru strongly recommends that the principle of the Common Heritage of Mankind should be given a dedicated and standalone section in the draft Strategic Plan, to signify its importance as underpinning every Strategic Direction of the Authority. The plan should also indicate how CHM will be operationalized by the Authority.

In this regard, we consider that the Common Heritage of Mankind should be repositioned and expanded upon in the draft Strategic Plan as the fundamental principle governing the regime of the Area and the Authority's mandate, underpinning every Strategic Direction and the entire governance regime and decision-making.

The development of a payment regime for exploitation is not included in the 'Context and Challenges' or any other part of the Strategic Plan. A financial regime, based on the Common Heritage of Mankind principle, will clearly be a crucial component of the Exploitation Regulations.

Strategic Direction 1 speaks of 'align[ment of] its programmes and initiatives towards the realization of the SDGs relevant to its mandate.' We think this stops short of an actual commitment by the Authority to work towards the SDGs and could benefit from strengthening.

We share Tonga's observation of the value of a mid-term review of the draft plan.

On paragraph 20 (page 7), the section entitled 'Facilitating the participation of developing States in activities in the Area', my delegation suggests that this could be further expounded to address increasing representation by developing States, including SIDS in:

- Annual Sessions of the Authority,
- The personnel, and organs of the Authority,
- Workshops, working groups, and other events of the Authority,
- Accessing funding mechanisms and training programmes of or via the Authority,
- Involvement in marine scientific research conducted or overseen by the Authority,
- Revenue and other benefit-sharing.

Nauru supports the adoption of the Draft Decision contained in Annex II.

Thank you, Mr President.