



## PHILIPPINE STATEMENT

Agenda Item 9: Report of the Secretary-General

Delivered by

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New York

25<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Seabed Authority (Assembly)

23 July 2019

Kingston, Jamaica

Thank you Madame President.

The Philippines extends its deep appreciation to Jamaica for its warm welcome and hospitality. We also congratulate you on your election, and thank the Secretary-General for his report.

As we commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the International Seabed Authority, the Philippines reaffirms the normative and operational importance of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and of the work of the International Seabed Authority. It is imperative that as we proceed with sustainable management of the Area, environmental and social impact considerations, as well as the needs of all stakeholders especially developing countries remain paramount.

Integral to the normative authority of UNCLOS is the fulfillment of Member States' obligations. Among these is the obligation of coastal states, under Article 84, paragraph 2 of the UNCLOS, to give due publicity to charts or lists of geographical coordinates of points and in case of those indicating the outer limits of the continental shelf, to deposit a copy of such charts or lists with the Secretary General of the Authority. We call on states that have not done so to do so and we urge the Presidency and the Secretariat to make this a continuing priority.

On financial matters, we note with continuing concern that quite a number of members are still in arrears for two years or more. The fulfillment of these contributions is necessary to ensure the effective functioning of the Authority.

We commend the efforts of the Secretariat in pursuing the implementation of the Database Management Strategy. As the guardian of the Common Heritage of Mankind, it is incumbent upon the Authority to keep not only a quality-controlled, but also a secure data base of all information generated by contractors and by all other entities engaged in exploration activities in the Area.

We join others who strongly support a comprehensive environmental policy, integral to which is the development of Regional Environmental Management Plans. The series of workshops on this is critical.

Transparency is also a critical obligation of contractors and must be reflected in the regulations. Sponsoring states should conduct thorough consultations especially on the environmental aspects of their activities, and coastal states should be adequately informed of the result of environmental baseline studies made and their impacts, for their acceptability. We also need a mechanism to strengthen regulatory functions especially in relation to non-compliant contractors.

We are pleased that the Authority does not work in a vacuum, as shown by the enhanced cooperation of the Authority with the UN and other entities. As such, we appreciate the progress in the fulfillment of the Authority's voluntary commitments at the UN Oceans Conference to support the implementation of the SDG14, particularly on improving access for women to and enhancing their role in deep-sea scientific research, including through the Secretary-General's Award for Excellence in Deep Sea Research.

In this regard, we welcome the enhanced cooperation and coordination between the Authority and other UN and relevant organizations and bodies, including UN DESA, UNESCO-IOC and the IMO. Such enhanced coordination is particularly important as we prepare for the 2020 Oceans Conference, plan for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and inch closer towards 2030 and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The follow-up process to the UN Oceans Conference is critical to maintaining the momentum generated by it. We welcome the Secretary-General's update on his work as a focal point for the Community of Action for supporting implementation of SDG14, on "Implementation of international law as reflected in the UNCLOS."

We have noted the Authority's active participation in the BBNJ negotiations, and look forward to its participation in the third session of which will be held in August.

As a developing state, the Philippines places high importance on capacity development and training. We look forward to the anticipated availability by contractors of 270 training places between 2019 and 2023. It is critical that these are targeted training programs that address the needs of developing countries, while ensuring gender parity. We note with concern that of the 98 trainees from 2013-2018, only 39 were women. This gender ratio must be improved. We also call for increased support to the Endowment Fund for Marine Scientific Research in the Area, which is essential for the participation of scientists and personnel from developing countries in MSR programs. Early notification of workshops and trainings is necessary to allow for broader dissemination and maximization of applications.

Thank you.