

UNITED NATIONS NELSON MANDELA INTERNATIONAL DAY
**SOUTH AFRICA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE INTERNATIONAL
SEABED AUTHORITY**
**ADDRESS TO THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY'S 28TH SESSION,
PART II**

18 JULY 2023

Thank you, Mr President!

South Africa takes the floor to remind you, nations of the world, of the birth of a remarkable statesman, Isithwalandwe, Dr Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

In recognition of the values and dedication of the former President of South Africa and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Nelson Mandela to the service of humanity, in conflict resolution; race relations; promotion and protection of human rights; reconciliation, gender equality; and the rights of children and other vulnerable groups, in 2009, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution declaring 18 July, his birthday, Nelson Mandela International Day, to be observed annually, effective from 2010.

Nelson Mandela particularly fought for the rights of his fellow men and women to live in dignity, equality, fairness, peace, and prosperity. In later life, and relevant to the work of the International Seabed Authority, former President Nelson Mandela advocated for sustainable development, embracing the ideal of a society living in harmony with the natural environment. I would venture to say, he envisioned sustainable development as integrating economic development, environmental protection, and human rights, and recognized their interdependence. He would have regarded inter-generational equity as an inherent and essential element of sustainable development, as it demands that development be sustainable for generations to come.

I am not sure if Nelson Mandela ever thought deeply about the common heritage of humankind, but he might as well have been thinking about it when he said, and I QUOTE *“One of the challenges of our time, without being pietistic or moralistic, is to re-instill in the consciousness of our people that sense of human solidarity, of being in the world for one another and because and through others.”* UNQUOTE

It is my hope that the work on the Mining Code will take into account the solidarity implied by the common heritage of humankind. Benefit-sharing under the payment regime should be understood as benefit to humankind as a whole. This itself has a number of implications: (i) benefit-sharing should be aimed at the upliftment of those most disadvantaged and marginalized; (ii) capacity-building of developing countries should be key for benefit sharing (iii); for monetary benefits, the amounts or revenue paid to ISA by contractors should be sufficient to achieve the objectives of ensuring the solidarity called for by the common heritage of humankind i.e. inter-and intra-generational equity.

In the face of disagreement, Mandela chose negotiations and was himself a fierce negotiator. He would therefore have been deeply encouraged by the robustness of the negotiations at the 28th Session of the International Seabed Authority, to find a balance between the exploitation of minerals in the deep seabed, in areas beyond national jurisdiction, and the protection and preservation of the marine environment.

May the spirit of Madiba, as he was popularly known by his clan name, live on and his ideals bequeathed to posterity.

I Thank You Mr President!