



## **KIRIBATI STATEMENT TO THE 29<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY**

Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Secretary General,  
Distinguished delegates,

### **Mr President**

Since this is the first time, Kiribati takes the floor, please allow me to convey warm greetings and blessings from our President, the Government and the people of Kiribati.

Kam na bane n mauri !!!

It is indeed a great honor for me and my delegation, to represent our country here today, to address this esteemed assembly.

Kiribati acknowledges the presence of distinguished leaders from the Pacific region, including the President of Palau, President of Nauru, Honorable Ministers of the Cook Islands, Palau and Vanuatu.

**Mr. President**

We align our statement with the statement delivered by the Honorable Assistant Minister of Cook Islands on behalf of Australia, the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and my country Kiribati.

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to you Mr. President and the bureau for your excellent leadership in guiding our work for this 29 Session. Kiribati assures you of our full support.

**Mr. President**

It would be a remiss of us not to also express our heartfelt appreciation to Jamaica, the host country of the ISA for its warm hospitality, unwavering support, and commitment to provide a conducive environment for the ISA's mission.

As a nation that spread across the vast expanse of the central Pacific Ocean, Kiribati is well aware of the significance of the ocean to our livelihoods, culture and environment. The health of our marine ecosystem is intrinsically linked to our countries' well-being and to the prosperity of our future generations.

With a large revenue base derived from tuna fishing, the health of the marine environment and the tuna stock cannot be overstated.

Mineral-related operation in the Area, whether it be exploration or exploitation, must therefore ensure that they do not harm the tuna stock from which many Pacific SIDS received up to 60% of their government revenues from.

**Mr. President.**

The ISA's work in responsibly managing the seabed and its resources is therefore of significantly important. We believe that benefits derived from these resources should contribute to the development and prosperity of all humankind, particularly for Small Island developing States like Kiribati.

Now turning to the heart of the matter, Mr. President, Kiribati welcomes the comprehensive Secretary General Report 2024.

We express our sincere gratitude to the Secretary General and his team at the Secretariat, for his great leadership, dedication and hard work in producing this detailed account of the ISA's activities and achievements over the past year.

Kiribati notes with appreciation the ISA's substantial contributions towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We applaud the ISA's effort to integrate sustainable development principles into seabed mineral activities, ensuring that economic benefits contribute to the well-being of all member states, especially Small Island Developing States.

The independent review commissioned in 2021, which acknowledges ISA's contributions to SDG12 - Sustainable consumption and production, highlights the Authority's pivotal role. The interlinkages between the Strategic Directions of the ISA Strategic Plan and the SDGs are evident and commendable.

We also appreciate the increasing number of initiatives aimed at building capacity and transferring technology to developing states, including advancing women empowerment and leadership in ocean affairs and scientific research.

**Mr. President**

Kiribati has engaged in and benefited from projects such as the Contractor's Training Program and the Deep Dive. These initiatives empower countries like Kiribati to participate effectively in seabed activities.

Ongoing research is crucial for enhancing our understanding of deep-sea ecosystems. In this connection, my delegation would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Dr. Periasamy from India for his achievements and being awarded the 2024 Secretary-General's Award for Excellence in Deep Sea Research.

**Mr. President**

Kiribati welcomes the advancements made to protect the marine environment which included the development of the regulatory framework, environmental standards, guidelines for exploration activities including the recent development of the environmental threshold values for future exploitation activities.

As one of the countries closest to the CCZ, we would welcome further deliberations that would ensure the effective protection of the marine environment as well as measures to effectively address implications in the event of transboundary and cumulative harm to the marine environment of national jurisdictions.

Now, with regard to the Finance Committee, Kiribati commends the work and efforts made by the Finance Committee.

We note that it has begun to develop rules, regulations and procedures for the equitable sharing of financial and other economic benefits derived from activities in the Area.

**Mr. President.**

We are fully supportive of the establishment of clear guidelines and frameworks that would promote transparency, accountability and fairness in the means of sharing the benefits derived from the Area.

We recognize specific efforts made in advancing deep-sea literacy and note the quality of publications and research papers produced by the Secretariat to support critical discussions under development.

With respect to the technical study published during this reporting period, we take note of the special study contained in the Technical Study 33. This study focused on potential interactions between fishing and mineral resources related activities in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

We recognize the Council's obligation under section 1, para 15 to the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part 11 of the Convention.

In this same spirit, we shared the view with many others regarding the need to advance negotiations to ensure that a sound and robust regulatory framework are put in place as well as other necessary frameworks such as the REMP, appropriate inspection compliance and enforcement mechanisms and fiscal regime for equitable benefit sharing before the commencement of mining operations

**Mr. President**

The sustainable development of Deep-Sea Minerals aligns well with the Kiribati Vision for 20 Years (KV20) which places significant emphasis on impactful development strategies.

Let me conclude my remarks by bestowing us all with our traditional Kiribati blessings of:

Te Mauri, Te Raoi, ao Te Tabomoa, meaning “Good Health, Peace and Prosperity”

I thank you Mr. President