



Ministero degli Affari Esteri  
e della Cooperazione Internazionale

## **29<sup>^</sup> Session of the International Seabed Authority**

### **Meeting of the Council**

#### **Second part**

#### **Statement of Italy**

##### *Item 14 – Report of the Chair of the LTC at the second part of the 29th session*

Thank you, Mr. President.

Italy thanks the Chair of the LTC and all its members for their intense work performed so far, even under the pressure of Hurricane Beryl, and for the support it is providing to the activities of the Council.

We recognize, in particular, the considerable work carried out under the contractor training program, and we welcome the launch of the iCAN network as a tool to foster synergies with other programs and initiatives implemented by the Authority.

We took note of the call by contractors that the continued absence of a regulatory framework for exploitation require adjustments of plans of work, highlighting that this practice is detrimental to the stability and predictability of investments. As we underlined in other occasions in this Council, the UNCLOS and the 1994 Agreement establish an obligation to adopt the Regulations. We therefore reiterate our encouragement to multiply efforts in finalizing such a comprehensive, clear and robust legal framework allowing a sustainable and science-based exploitation of seabed mineral resources and avoid any legal vacuum that would be detrimental to our common purposes of a highly protected marine environment.

In this same context, we welcome the development of environmental threshold values by the subgroups of the intersessional expert group and we look forward to the Commission's considerations on its draft report at the thirtieth session of the Council.

We also welcome the increase in reported expenditures by some contractors as an indication of ongoing update of exploration work. This will indeed ultimately benefit the international community through advancement of knowledge of the ocean.

We acknowledge the significant progress made in the utilization and quality of data provided by various contractors and call on contractors that have not been providing digital data to do so, to the general benefit of marine scientific research. For these same reasons, we are concerned for contractors that did not undertake a comprehensive evaluation across the entire environmental baseline

In particular, and in consideration of the large disparity in the degree of progress amongst contractors toward activities of test mining and research on the seabed mining areas, we welcome the proposal to consider collaboration among contractors.