



**Reception during part I of the thirtieth session of the
International Seabed Authority**

Kingston, Jamaica

26 March 2025

STATEMENT

by

Madam Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority,
Leticia Carvalho

.....

Excellencies, esteemed delegates, distinguished representatives, colleagues and friends,

Good evening, and welcome. It is a pleasure to be here with you all tonight.

This gathering provides an opportunity to step away—if only briefly—from the intensity of negotiations and discussions that have filled our days for the past two weeks. It is a moment to acknowledge the dedication, hard work and good faith that each of you brings to the Council’s deliberations.

This marks my first Council meetings as Secretary-General, and over these past weeks, I have listened, learned and observed the unwavering commitment that all of you bring to the governance of the Area.

Your efforts are a testament to the strength of multilateralism, the rule of law and the collective responsibility we share in stewarding the common heritage of humankind. I am particularly glad to witness a growing sentiment that this is a Member States-driven process.

The Authority’s role is to provide the platform for deliberations, ensuring that the voices of all Member States are heard and respected. The Secretariat stands ready to support you, offering technical, legal and administrative assistance to facilitate your work.

The work we do together is not always easy—nor should it be. As representatives of Member States and Observers, you engage in discussions that shape the future of deep-sea governance. I have seen firsthand the spirit of cooperation and consensus-building that defines this institution. I am grateful for your willingness to seek common ground and uphold the principles enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

At the heart of these discussions lies one priority: finalizing the Mining Code. I remain firmly committed to carrying out the mandate of the Authority to regulate and oversee all activities related to mineral

resources in the Area, in accordance with international law, ensuring that such activities are conducted for the benefit of all humankind. Finalizing the Mining Code will provide the necessary legal, environmental and operational framework to govern seabed activities in a sustainable manner. It is a task that requires both diligence and collaboration, and I appreciate your steadfast commitment to this goal.

However, let us also be clear: while we must ensure progress, we will not rush the process. It is legitimate to explore ways to improve efficiency and make it more agile, but thorough and thoughtful deliberation is essential.

We must ask ourselves what are the risks of not having a Mining Code?

Without a robust and enforceable framework, we risk legal uncertainty and a governance vacuum that could undermine the principles of the Convention. The mandate of the Authority is a beautiful one—to safeguard the common heritage of humankind. This is not merely a legal construct; it is a call to action, a commitment to equity, sustainability and shared prosperity.

As Arvid Pardo, whose vision helped shape the very foundation of the Law of the Sea, once said: “The seabed and the ocean floor beyond the limits of national jurisdiction should be reserved exclusively for peaceful purposes and should be administered in the interests of mankind as a whole.” His words remind us of the responsibility we bear. We must change any misperception that the Authority’s work is about unchecked exploitation.

On the contrary, it is about ensuring responsible stewardship and securing a legacy of ocean governance that future generations will look upon with pride. As we move forward, I remain fully committed to fostering open and constructive engagement.

I also wish to reaffirm the Secretariat’s neutrality. Our role is to engage with all relevant stakeholders to ensure that decision-making is informed, inclusive and balanced. Only through such engagement can we ensure that the framework we develop is robust and equitable.

So tonight, let us take a moment to appreciate the dedication and perseverance that each of you brings to this process. Thank you for your hard work and your trust in this institution. I look forward to continuing our collaboration in the days, months and years ahead.

Enjoy the evening and thank you once again.