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INDIA

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International Seabed Authority

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Statement on the report of the Secretary General to the Assembly

Date: 27th July 2026

Thank you Mr. President, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, representatives colleagues and friends, a very good morning to you all.

My delegation extends our sincere appreciation to Madam Secretary-General and the Secretariat for the extensive efforts reflected in the two reports before us—ISBA/31/A/2 and ISBA/31/A/3. India acknowledges the sustained momentum, the analytical depth, and the continued institutional strengthening demonstrated in the work of the Authority over the reporting period.

We congratulate Madam Secretary General and Secretariat for advancing work of the Authority and achieving many milestones mentioned in these reports. We take note on several elements for the reporting period like continued progress in advancing the draft

regulations on exploitation in the Area, strengthening institutional preparedness and governance resilience by enhancing strategic partnerships including within the United Nation system, adoption of gender charter and supporting marine scientific research and capacity-building initiatives.

India is a maritime nation bordered by an Ocean, which is the only ocean in the world named after the country, the Indian Ocean, this indicate our maritime significance in the global and national level. India holds a long coastline of 11100 km and gifted with tropical coastal climate and resourceful exclusive economic zone. The conservation and sustainability of these is the main pillar of our national blue economy initiative, which is driven by our national deep Ocean mission which was launched as a motivation and contribution to the UN Ocean Decade fulfilling the vision I quote 'The science we need for the ocean we want' unquote. In the Deep sea exploration, we are the lone contractor of the Authority carrying out polymetallic nodules exploration in the Central Indian Ocean Basin and executing Poly metallic sulphide exploration in the Indian ocean along with others. We are signatory of BBNJ agreement and in the process of full-fledged joining to that agreement. India is committed to the Convention and the 1994 Agreement, and the principle of Common heritage of humankind for the seabed mineral

resources; we also strongly support to ensure the effective protection of the Maritime environment and a robust regulatory regime for the Authority in the Area.

Turning to the Madam SG's report, We recognise the progress achieved in drafting the exploitation regulations and the ongoing negotiations in the Council addressing the key outstanding issues. This progress in advancing the draft regulations on exploitation of mineral resources is achieved in a timely manner through the hard work of the Secretariat, Friends of President, working group facilitators and intersessional work.

India welcomes the joining of two new members as state parties to UNCLOS during the reporting period and takes note that seven new permanent representatives were appointed and accredited to the Authority by members with permanent missions to the Authority. This indicates the enhanced commitment of international community towards the institution building of the Authority.

We commend the structured effort with which the Authority has implemented the action plan for marine scientific research in support of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development—through expanded knowledge outputs, increased training, and flagship initiatives that strengthen the evidence base for regulation and environmental protection.

India welcomes the timely initiative of the Authority for the operationalisation of the Economic Planning Commission as outlined in the Convention and the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Recognising the initial work carried out by the Secretariat, we urge for imparting momentum to this initiative on a priority basis in the upcoming session of the council. India stands committed providing full support for making progress in this matter.

We welcome and look forward to the input of secretariat to the concept note that sets out a framework for the Common Heritage Fund as one of the possible ways to distribute revenue from activities in the Area. India believes institutional clarity on revenue distribution is essential for ensuring predictable, transparent, and equitable outcomes—while supporting capacity-building and research in developing States. India encourages continued inclusive engagement by the Secretariat and relevant bodies on these foundational elements.

India values the report's emphasis on alignment with the United Nations system and strategic partnership-building. These steps improve institutional readiness and help the Authority better mobilize expertise, data, and resources—especially for scientific and capacity-building programmes that feed into regulatory needs. We believe this improved

alignment with the United Nations system will effectively build stronger institutional partnerships, enhancing coherence, preparedness, accountability, and governance resilience.

India is fully supportive of the effective functioning of the Authority through discharging the mandates of all subsidiary organs in a timely manner through comprehensive participation of the members.

In line with the above, India thanks authority for acknowledging the contribution of India to the voluntary Trust Fund of the Authority during 2025. As a part of continued commitment in this matter, India has also contributed to the Voluntary Trust fund during the year 2026. In fulfilling the institutional building approach through inclusivity, India funded participation all the members and delegates of India for contributing to the work of the Authority. We supported Authority in successfully conducting the Authority's 8th Annual Contractors' meeting and it was hosted by India during September 2025 at Goa. The outcome of meeting was significant with very useful dialogue with the participating contractor.

The report underscores continued progress in strengthening the Authority's ability to discharge its responsibilities in a complex international environment while promoting cooperation, the rule of law, and responsible management of the Area for the benefit of humankind as a whole.

This report highlights expanded and diversified science, capacity-building, and knowledge transfer activities—consistent with the mandate of the Authority to act as a global catalyst for marine scientific research, and to strengthen capacity and technology transfer to developing States.

We appreciate the achievement in the global mentoring programme enhanced capacity building for women from developing countries (**See Her Exceed**) and support the planned SHE gender charter for expansion—building inclusive capacity and strengthening the human dimension of ocean science. India through execution of its exploration contract, is an active partner of the Authority in advancing the women empowerment in the field of ocean Science and governance and had joined the Authority in the side event for launching gender charter and bringing new dimension in this regard.

We take note on the advancement of the development of the regional environmental management plan for the Indian Ocean. We appreciate the authority in acknowledging India's contribution to this mission and our continued contribution to the partnership fund of the Authority. We offer to accommodate Authority's further initiatives in advancing Marine Scientific Research, addressing the knowledge gap in the field of Deep seabed Science and technology as well as institution building approach.

India as a partner of the Authority in the Seabed Sustainable knowledge Initiative we are hosting Authority's workshop on seabed benthic Macro fauna taxonomy during September 2026 for capacity building for the participants from Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) countries, the cooperation of the member states is earnestly requested for nomination of participants and we look forward to broader participation.

India is associated with the Authority since the time of preoperatory commission and is one of the Pioneer Investors. India presently holds three seabed mineral exploration contract and we are the only country in the Authority for running two PMS exploration contract in the Indian Ocean Ridge. With the strong commitment of active member state and Government contractor, the inaugural international Day of the Deep Seabed was celebrated in India through great enthusiasm and this reflects India's Blue Economy initiative through the implementation of the national Deep Ocean Mission. We appreciate Authority's acknowledgement on India's celebration of the day.

Finally, dear President, India reiterates its appreciation to the Secretary-General and the Secretariat for these substantial achievements. India also affirms its constructive engagement with the Authority's ongoing institution-building—through:

- advancing exploitation regulations with science-based environmental safeguards,
- strengthening economic and governance mechanisms under the Convention framework, and
- scaling knowledge generation, capacity-building, and technology transfer, including through regionally relevant initiatives in particular for the Indian Ocean.

India stands ready to continue working in partnership with all Member States and stakeholders to ensure that the International Seabed Authority remains effective, credible, and accountable—fulfilling its mandate for the benefit of humankind.

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