



PHILIPPINES

STATEMENT BY THE PHILIPPINES

Agenda Item 9 – Annual report of the Secretary-General under article 166, paragraph 4, of the Convention

28 July 2026 ,10:00 AM – 6:00 PM, Tuesday
International Seabed Authority

Mr. President,

The Philippines thanks Secretary-General Leticia Carvalho and the Secretariat for the comprehensive reports.

We note the Authority's continued efforts to strengthen its institutional capacity, advance marine scientific research, expand capacity-building and technology transfer, and contribute to the broader framework of global ocean governance. We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the 1994 Agreement, and the mandate of the International Seabed Authority.

As an archipelagic State, the Philippines recognizes the responsibility entrusted to the international community to manage the resources of the Area as the common heritage of humankind. We therefore support an Authority that is transparent, inclusive, science-based, and firmly anchored in the Convention.

We welcome progress in implementing the ISA Action Plan in support of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, which helps ensure that decisions on activities in the Area are guided by the best available scientific evidence and contribute to the effective protection of the marine environment.

We also note the Secretariat's continued emphasis on capacity-building, technology transfer, and scientific cooperation, including through the Joint Training and Research Centres, the Partnership Fund, contractor training programmes, and the See Her Exceed initiative. We appreciate the recognition of the Philippines' continued contribution to the Partnership Fund and our participation in advancing the Authority's work.

Mr. President,

As the Authority enters an increasingly consequential phase of its work, strong institutions are as essential as sound regulations. In this regard, we look forward to discussions on Article 154

periodic review as an opportunity to strengthen transparency, accountability, institutional effectiveness, and good governance, while preserving the integrity of the Convention and the 1994 Agreement.

We recognize this Assembly's consideration of issues relating to stakeholder and observer participation and the Authority's evolving institutional arrangements. These discussions should reinforce confidence in the Authority by ensuring that its processes remain transparent and credible, and appropriately safeguarded.

The Philippines likewise notes continued efforts to strengthen cooperation across the broader ocean governance architecture. As implementation of the BBNJ Agreement advances toward its first Conference of the Parties, we see value in fostering coherence and complementarity between the two regimes, consistent with their respective mandates.

Finally, we thank Council President Mayank Joshi for his leadership during the 31st session, including in relation to the adoption of decisions in relation to relevant developments, including on responses by the Secretariat and the Legal and Technical Commission to the Orders of 18 July 2026 of the Seabed Disputes Chamber prescribing provisional measures; as well as on the preparation of a roadmap and streamlined negotiating text to guide further discussions the exploitation regulations, including clear milestones, prioritization of outstanding issues, and structured opportunities for Member States to provide intersessional input. Meanwhile, we look forward to continued work on regional environmental management plans, environmental thresholds, inspection and compliance mechanisms, the operationalization of the Economic Planning Commission, and the development of the Standards and Guidelines.

The Philippines underscores that exploitation activities in the Area should proceed only within a robust, science-based, transparent, and enforceable regulatory framework that ensures the effective protection of the marine environment and the equitable sharing of benefits derived from the common heritage of humankind. Decisions must be guided by the best available scientific evidence, the precautionary approach, ecosystem-based management, and a clear understanding of potential environmental impacts. Premature exploitation without adequate scientific knowledge, appropriate Standards and Guidelines, and effective institutional safeguards risks irreversible harm to marine ecosystems and undermines confidence in the international regime governing the Area.

As the Philippines prepares to resume membership in the Council next year – after a gap of almost thirty years – we remain committed to working constructively with all Member States to ensure that the Authority continues to evolve as a credible, effective, and forward-looking institution that advances science, protects the marine environment, promotes equitable participation by developing States, and faithfully implements the vision of the Convention for the benefit of present and future generations. Thank you, Mr. President. **END**