

**Remarks by Mr. Leonaitasi Kuluni, Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.  
Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Tonga to the United Nations  
at the Workshop on Interactions between the International Seabed Authority and the  
BBNJ Agreement  
Panel 3: Areas for further cooperation and coordination such as Environmental Impact  
Assessments (EIAs) and Capacity Building and Transfer of Marine Technology  
(CBTMT)**

**Permanent Mission of the Republic of Singapore, New York**  
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Excellencies,  
Secretary General of the International Seabed Authority,  
Distinguished Panelists,  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, please allow me to firstly express my sincere gratitude to the organizers for the kind invitation extended to the Kingdom of Tonga to participate in this important Panel. This discussion comes at a most opportune time, given the ongoing work of the Preparatory Commission and the anticipated entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement early next year.

When we think of cooperation with relevant international frameworks and bodies ('IFBs'), the first point of reference would be the existing frameworks and bodies under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea ('UNCLOS'). One of them being the International Seabed Authority established pursuant to the Part XI of UNCLOS and the 1994 Implementing Agreement.

Distinguished delegates may recall that during the Preparatory Committee meetings and even in the earlier sessions of the BBNJ Inter-Governmental Conference, reference was made to the regulatory framework and bodies of the International Seabed Authority to form some of the thinking behind parts of the BBNJ Agreement.

However, we are now at the stage of entry into force and it is imperative that we think carefully, and pragmatically, about the effective implementation of the Agreement. In this regard, strengthened **cooperation** and **coordination** will play a key and pivotal role.

When we look at the area of environmental impact assessments ('EIAs) and capacity building and transfer of marine technology ('CBTMT'), the International Seabed Authority ('ISA') has much to share.

Firstly, the ISA has experience in developing and elaborating frameworks and guidelines on EIAs and CBTMT. This is evident in the Mining Code and the relevant standards, guidelines and recommendations. This experience can be a starting point for the BBNJ Agreement in understanding applicable frameworks in existence, in areas beyond national jurisdiction and their application.

Secondly is the establishing of international bodies. The ISA's Legal and Technical Commission, as one of the bodies established, also carries out a significant amount of the technical work, which include EIAs and CBTMT. The valuable insights and experience of the LTC could therefore meaningfully assist, and inform the work of the BBNJ Bodies, rather than beginning entirely anew and starting from scratch.

In the second session of the Preparatory Commission, **many** highlighted various **modes** of cooperation which comprised of formal and informal **means**. In moving towards entry into force, it is important that whatever the mode of cooperation and coordination;

- That it is permitted by UNCLOS and the Implementing Agreement, *and that*
- It aligns with the respective mandates and objectives of the ISA and the BBNJ.

To conclude my remarks, strengthened **cooperation** and **coordination** remain as essential **pillars** in **operation-alizing** the BBNJ Agreement, and ensuring **complementarity** with existing International Frameworks and Bodies, in **areas** beyond national jurisdiction. **This** presents a **valuable** opportunity for UNCLOS bodies to work together, and **collectively**, for the **con-servation** and sustainable use of marine biological diversity, of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

I thank you.