

**Workshop**  
**on "Interactions between the International Seabed Authority**  
**and the BBNJ",**  
**organized by the International Seabed Authority,**  
**in cooperation with the Permanent Mission of the Republic of**  
**Fiji to the United Nations, the Government of Jamaica, the**  
**Permanent Mission of the Republic of Malta to the United**  
**Nations, and the Permanent Mission of the Republic of**  
**Singapore to the United Nations**

**Keynote remarks by Ms. Elinor Hammar-skjöld,  
Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and  
United Nations Legal Counsel**

Wednesday 5 November 2025, 9:00am

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Singapore  
to the United Nations, 318 E48th Street, New York

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to join you today at this workshop on the interactions between the International Seabed Authority and the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction, known as the BBNJ Agreement.

Allow me first to convey the greetings of Ms. Elinor Hammar-skjöld, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and

United Nations Legal Counsel, on whose behalf I will deliver the keynote remarks.

This workshop comes at a crucial time.

As many of you are aware, on 19 September 2025, the conditions for the entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement were met. The Agreement will now enter into force on 17 January 2026. As it currently stands, the Agreement has 145 signatories and 75 parties. The number of parties is expected to continue to grow.

The Agreement is therefore rapidly advancing toward the next critical phase, namely its implementation.

The BBNJ Agreement is the third implementing agreement to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and it shares similar foundation as the Part XI Agreement.

Over the past three decades, the International Seabed Authority, as the organization mandated to organize and control activities in the Area, has been pivotal in efforts to ensure the sustainability of ocean activities. In furtherance of its mandate under Part XI of the Convention and the Part XI Agreement, the Authority has undertaken significant work in relation to the protection of the marine environment from harmful effects which may arise from activities in the Area. It has also contributed to promoting marine scientific research in the Area.

Soon and working in tandem with the BBNJ Agreement, this mandate can make essential contributions in efforts to conserve and sustainably use deep-sea ecosystems and biodiversity.

In this respect, let me recall that enhanced cooperation is at the heart of the BBNJ Agreement and part of its general objective.

Parties to the BBNJ Agreement are under the general obligation to cooperate, including through strengthening and enhancing cooperation with and among relevant instruments, frameworks and bodies, in achieving the objectives of the Agreement. Parties are also required to endeavour to promote, as appropriate, the objectives of this Agreement when participating in decision-making under other relevant instruments, frameworks or bodies.

The institutions established under the BBNJ Agreement will play a critical role in implementing these provisions.

With the impending entry into force of the Agreement, work is already underway across various forums, both within and beyond the United Nations system, to explore interlinkages and identify avenues for enhanced collaboration and coordination.

This workshop serves as a tangible example of such efforts.

Notably, the Preparatory Commission, established by General Assembly resolution 78/272, to prepare for the entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement and the convening of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Agreement, is currently considering arrangements to enhance cooperation with relevant instruments, frameworks and bodies. Needless to say, this includes the Authority.

Once adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Agreement, such cooperative arrangements will provide a concrete avenue for

fostering partnerships and synergies, and for harnessing the experience and expertise of relevant instruments, frameworks and bodies.

In performing the interim secretariat functions in relation to the Agreement, the Office of Legal Affairs, through DOALOS, looks forward to further strengthening cooperation and coordination within the UN System, including through UN-Oceans of which ISA is also a member, in furtherance of the objectives of the Agreement.

I wish you fruitful exchanges. Thank you.