



**25th Annual Ministerial Meeting of Foreign Ministers of
Landlocked Developing Countries**

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

**New York
24 September 2026**

Excellencies,
Distinguished ministers,
Dear friends,

My warm thanks to Bolivia, as Chair of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, and to the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States for bringing us together.

The Awaza Programme of Action sets a clear ambition: to overcome structural barriers through stronger partnerships and concrete support. Our task as the International Seabed Authority is to make this ambition felt in the opportunities available to your countries and your people.

This responsibility extends to both the high-seas and the international seabed.

A country's distance from the ocean must not determine its ability to help shape the decisions that govern it.

Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the international seabed beyond national jurisdiction and its mineral resources are the common heritage of humankind. This promise must be meaningful for every country, in who participates, who has access to knowledge, and how benefits are shared.

Universality in principle must become universality in practice.

As I reiterated during the latest Session of the ISA Council, strengthening engagement with developing countries is a priority for me, particularly landlocked developing countries and other groups to which the Convention gives special consideration.

You bring perspectives that ocean governance needs: on equity, development, the fair distribution of benefits and justice between generations. Your participation strengthens the legitimacy of our institutions and the quality of their decisions.

Important discussions are under way within the Authority on the rules governing mineral exploitation activities and the mechanisms through which benefits will be shared. Together with opportunities for scientific cooperation, capacity development and access to technology, this work has direct significance for landlocked developing countries.

Excellencies,

A vision in which is the purpose of the workshop “on the Participation of Land-Locked Developing Countries in the Regime of the Area and the Benefit-Sharing Mechanism under UNCLOS” we are convening this October in Santa Cruz de la Sierra: to strengthen understanding on the opportunities UNCLOS offers on blue economy and finance for LLDCs. You are all invited to participate.

Our ambition extends beyond the workshop itself. We want it to help establish structured and sustained cooperation roadmap, guided by your priorities.

We are here to listen to the challenges your countries face and understand where the Authority can make a practical contribution. In Santa Cruz, we can build on those priorities to identify concrete steps in training, scientific cooperation and participation in the Authority’s work.

Dear friends,

The common heritage of humankind carries a promise of inclusion. Our responsibility is to give that promise practical effect.

Let us make this the measure of our partnership, and the purpose of the work ahead.

Thank you.