



Contribution to the Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on oceans and the law of the sea, pursuant to UNGA resolution 74/19 of 10 December 2019, entitled “Oceans and the law of the sea”

18 June 2020

Postponement of the 26th session of the Authority

1. The second part of the 26th session of the International Seabed Authority initially scheduled to be held in July 2020 was postponed due to the COVID-19 epidemic. The session will instead take place in a reduced format in Kingston, Jamaica from 7 to 16 October 2020, with meetings of the Legal and Technical Commission (LTC) and the Finance Committee (FC) convened remotely starting from July 2020. The decision has been taken in consultation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica, Senator the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith, who is also the incumbent President of the ISA Assembly, with all parties in agreement on this course of action.

Implementation of the strategic plan for the Authority for the five-year period 2019–2023

2. In the light of the outcome of the first periodic review of the international regime of the Area pursuant to article 154 of the Convention, the Assembly adopted in 2018, the first strategic plan of the Authority for the period 2019-2023¹. The strategic plan embodies the vision of and provides direction for the development and implementation of the Authority’s mandate under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (“the Convention”) and the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 (“the 1994 Agreement”), taking into consideration the current and projected workload, resources and capacity as well as other relevant international agreements, processes, principles and objectives, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The strategic plan was completed by the adoption by the Assembly, at its twenty-fifth session, in July 2019, of the high-level action plan for the Authority for the period 2019-2023². The Assembly also adopted, in the same document, a set of performance indicators to assess the performance of the Authority towards implementing the strategic directions set out in the strategic plan. The first assessment of performance indicators for 2019 and 2020 (as of June 2020) has been compiled by the secretariat and is made available on the website of the Authority.

New application for approval of a plan of work for exploration

3. On 4 June 2020, Blue Minerals Jamaica Limited (“BMJ”) submitted an application for approval of a plan of work for exploration for polymetallic nodules in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone (“CCZ”) in the Pacific Ocean to the Secretary-General of the Authority, pursuant to the Regulations on Prospecting and Exploration for Polymetallic Nodules in the Area. This application is sponsored by the Government

¹ ISBA/24/A/10.

² ISBA/25/A/15 and ISBA/25/A/15/Corr.1.

of Jamaica and covers a total area of 74,916 km² comprising parts of reserved areas contributed by UK Seabed Resources Ltd. (UKSRL II), the Republic of Korea and Interoceanmetal Joint Organization (IOM) in the CCZ.³ Pursuant to relevant provisions of the Exploration Regulations, the application has been placed on the agenda of the LTC and will be considered by LTC at its July session.

Development of the Mining Code

4. The Draft regulations on exploitation of mineral resources in the Area have been considered by the Council as a priority matter. Following consideration of the Draft Regulations at the second part of the 25th session in July 2019, the Council agreed to open a further round of stakeholders' consultation on the draft.⁴ In response, 39 submissions were received from members of the Council, other members of the Authority, observers and other stakeholders.⁵ The Council continued its consideration of the Draft regulations at the first part of the 26th session, in February 2020, and agreed on a working method to move the process forward, consisting of the establishment of three informal working groups on: protection and preservation of the marine environment; inspection, compliance and enforcement; and institutional matters (including the role and responsibilities of the various organs of the International Seabed Authority, timelines, recourse to independent expertise and stakeholder participation).⁶ Also during the first part of the 26th session, the LTC considered outstanding issues with respect to the Draft regulations and decided to recommend to the Council a draft of annex VI of the Draft regulations containing a draft health and safety plan and a draft maritime security plan.⁷

5. In response to the request of the Council, the LTC also undertook work on standards and guidelines as a priority matter, on the basis of the process and schedule it had recommended at the second part of its 25th session.⁸ The standards and guidelines will aim to elaborate on the requirements of the exploitation regulations with a view to providing further guidance for contractors and Sponsoring States in implementing the regulations. Focus is currently placed on the standards and guidelines deemed necessary to be in place by the time of adoption of the draft regulations on exploitation, those to be initiated immediately but completed after July 2020, and those requiring that the secretariat advance certain studies before drafting work may commence.⁹

6. The open-ended working group (OEWG) of the Council in respect of the development and negotiation of the financial terms of a contract, chaired by H.E. Mr. Olav Myklebust (Norway), held a third meeting in February 2020 to discuss various options and associated rates of payment. The Council decided to convene a fourth meeting of OEWG in advance of the second part of the 26th session of the Council. The secretariat has been requested to prepare a report to further refine the two-stage fixed ad valorem royalty mechanism and the two-stage progressive ad valorem royalty mechanism under consideration, as well as a comparative study of the financial aspects of seabed mining and land-based mining.¹⁰

Implementation and development of the Regional Environmental Management Plans (REMPs)

7. In line with the strategy endorsed by the Council at its 25th session, the Authority made significant progress towards a standardized approach for the development of Regional Environment Management Plans (REMPs) with the preparation in 2019 of a REMP guidance document and the

³ [ISBA/26/LTC/5](#).

⁴ [ISBA/25/C/37](#).

⁵ Compiled in two documents available as [ISBA/26/C/2](#) and [ISBA/26/C/CRP.1](#).

⁶ [ISBA/26/C/11](#).

⁷ [ISBA/26/C/12](#) and [ISBA/26/C/17](#).

⁸ [ISBA/25/C/19/Add.1](#).

⁹ [ISBA/26/C/12](#).

¹⁰ [ISBA/26/C/13](#).

organization of two workshops during October and November 2019, on deep sea biodiversity of the Clarion-Clipperton Zone and on the regional environmental management plan for the Area of the northern Mid-Atlantic Ridge.

8. During the first part of the 26th session of the Council, in February 2020, the Council adopted a decision concerning a standardized approach for the development, approval and review of REMPs in the Area.¹¹ In the decision, the Council requested the LTC, in consultation with the FC if necessary, to further develop the “Guidance to facilitate the development of regional environmental management plans”,¹² in accordance with the Convention, the 1994 Agreement, as well as the rules, regulations and procedures of the Authority, and taking into account, as appropriate, the relevant proposals¹³ with a view to recommending to the Council a standardized approach, including a template with indicative elements.

9. The LTC acknowledged, at its session in February/March 2020, the need for additional areas of particular environmental interest in the CCZ to improve representativity and to close spatial gaps in the current network of such areas, and will continue to consider this issue with a view to formulating recommendations for the consideration of the Council.

10. The Authority is also in the process of developing REMPs for the North West Pacific and the Indian Ocean. Two workshops are scheduled to be held in the form of virtual meetings in late 2020, including the additional workshop on the REMP for the Area of the northern Mid-Atlantic Ridge as well as the workshop for the REMP in the North West Pacific.

The Enterprise

11. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Enterprise, Mr. Eden Charles, has continued implementing his functions by following on the expression of interest by the Government of Poland to propose a joint venture with the Enterprise. In addition, the Special Representative participated in the third meeting of the OEWG and in the first part of the twenty-sixth session of the Council in the context of the negotiations of the draft exploitation regulation, where he played an active role by making suggestions to the draft which emphasized the role that the Enterprise is expected to play in activities in the Area consistent with the provisions of Part XI of the Convention and the 1994 Agreement.¹⁴

12. It is recalled that in 2019, the secretariat commissioned a study related to issues on the operationalization of the Enterprise, in particular legal, technical and financial implications for the Authority and for States Parties. The resulting report, which is available on the website of the Authority,¹⁵ was considered by the LTC in February 2020 and a number of recommendations were made for consideration by the Council at its next meeting in October 2020.¹⁶

Review of the environmental impact statement submitted by the Ministry of Earth Sciences of the Government of India

13. On 6 February 2020, the Secretary-General of the Authority received an environmental impact statement (EIS) from the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of the Republic of India (MoES) relating to the proposed technical trials of a pre-prototype nodule collector in the Indian contract area of the Central Indian Ocean Basin. The technical trial is scheduled to take place during 2021, as

¹¹ ISBA/26/C/10.

¹² Prepared by the secretariat and available at: https://ran-s3.s3.amazonaws.com/isa.org.jm/s3fs-public/files/documents/rem_p_guidance_.pdf.

¹³ ISBA/26/C/6 and ISBA/26/C/7.

¹⁴ ISBA/26/C/15.

¹⁵ Technical Report 1/2019, available at: https://isa.org.jm/files/files/documents/enterprise_study.pdf.

¹⁶ ISBA/26/C/12.

envisaged by the programme of activities for the period 2018 to 2022 under its contract for exploration for polymetallic nodules, which was extended for a further five years until 2022. According to the EIS, the objective of the trial is to test the capability of the machine in terms of locomotion, crushing, pumping and discharge within a limited area on the seabed. The Contractor also proposes to collect environmental data before and after the trials, and monitor the extent of impact on physico-chemical and biological conditions over a period of one year following the collector test.

14. The review of the EIS, along with any other available information provided by MoES, has been placed on the agenda of the LTC at its July 2020 session.¹⁷

Capacity-building and training programme

15. The Authority is committed to ensuring that all capacity-building programmes and measures implemented are meaningful, tangible, efficient, effective, and targeted at the needs of developing States, as identified by them. For this reason, in 2019, the secretariat commissioned a review of all capacity-building programmes and initiatives it has implemented by the Authority since 1994. The key findings of the ensuing report were discussed at the workshop on “Capacity development, resources and needs assessment” that took place from 10 to 12 February 2020 in Kingston.

16. Following up on this initiative, the secretariat circulated in April 2020, to all members of the Authority and, in particular developing States, a survey to enable the assessment of key national capacity development priorities relevant for the mandate given by the Convention to the Authority. This is considered essential to progress with the development of a dedicated strategy and ensure that all programmes and activities implemented by the Authority address the needs identified by developing States in particular geographically disadvantaged States, SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs.

Contractors training programme

17. The contractors who signed exploration contracts with the Authority have a legal obligation to provide and fund training opportunities for trainees from developing States. From 2013 to 2019, a total of 146 training places were provided by 23 contractors. The types of training included at-sea training, engineering training, fellowship training (including master’s and PhD programmes), internships, workshops and seminars. Among the selected trainees, 52 were from the African group, 48 from the Asia-Pacific group, 3 from the Eastern European group, 42 from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and one from an observer State. Sixty-three of the trainees were women.

18. As at 31 May 2020, 31 candidates have been selected for placements in 2020 pursuant to seven exploration contracts (13 from the African group, 12 from the Asia-Pacific group, 5 from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and one from an observer State). Eleven of the candidates were women. All training opportunities are advertised on the Authority’s website and social media platforms and are circulated to members of the Authority. It is noted that implementation of the contractors training programmes has been affected due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

19. If all existing contracts and approved plans of work are implemented according to the recommendations made by the LTC with respect to training programmes, approximately 270 additional training places will have been made available by contractors between 2019 and 2023.

Endowment Fund for Marine Scientific Research in the Area

20. The purposes of the Fund are to promote and encourage the conduct of marine scientific research in the Area for the benefit of mankind as a whole by supporting the participation of qualified scientists and technical personnel from developing countries in marine scientific research programmes and by providing them with opportunities to participate in international technical and scientific

¹⁷ [ISBA/26/LTC/5](#).

cooperation, including through training, technical assistance and scientific cooperation programmes. Contributions to the Fund may be made by the Authority, members of the Authority, other States, relevant international organizations, academic, scientific and technical institutions, philanthropic organizations, corporations and private persons. The Secretary-General would welcome any contributions to the Fund.

21. As of 31 May 2020, the Fund has provided financial support to a total of 150 scientific and technical personnel from over 45 developing countries. Among the beneficiaries 55 were from the African group, 62 from the Asia-Pacific group, 26 from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and seven from Observer States. Fifty-eight of them were women.

The Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Seabed Authority

22. The Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the Authority was adopted by the Assembly on 27 March 1998 and entered into force on 31 March 2003. The total number of parties to the Protocol remains at 47. Members of the Authority that are not yet parties are strongly encouraged to take the necessary steps to become parties to the Protocol at their earliest convenience. The secretariat circulated a note verbale to that effect on 16 March 2020.

Implementation of article 84, paragraph 2 of the Convention

23. Pursuant to article 84, paragraph 2, of the Convention, coastal States are obliged to give due publicity to charts or lists of geographical coordinates and, in the case of those showing the outer limit lines of the continental shelf, to deposit a copy of each such chart or list with the Secretary-General of the Authority. As at 31 May 2020, 10 members of the Authority have deposited such charts and lists with the Secretary-General, namely: Australia, Bahrain, France (with respect to Martinique, Guadeloupe, Guyana, New Caledonia and the Kerguelen islands), Ireland, Mauritius, Mexico, Niue, Pakistan, the Philippines and Tuvalu. The Secretary-General urges all coastal States to deposit such charts or lists of coordinates as soon as possible after the establishment of the outer limit lines of their continental shelf, up to and beyond 200 nautical miles, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention. The secretariat circulated a note verbale on 16 March 2020 requesting the deposit of such charts or lists of coordinates.

Budget and status of contributions

24. At its twenty-fourth session, the Assembly adopted the budget for the financial period 2019–2020 in the amount of \$18,235,850¹⁸. As at 31 May 2020, 62 per cent of the value of contributions to the 2019 budget due from member States and the European Union had been received. Only 29 per cent of the membership of the Authority had fully paid their 2019 assessed contributions.

25. Contributions outstanding from member States for prior periods (1998–2019) amounted to \$805,026 as at 31 May 2019. As at 31 May 2019, the following 56 members of the Authority had been in arrears for two years or more: Angola, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Eswatini, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Lithuania, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mongolia, Namibia, Niger, North Macedonia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, State of Palestine, Sudan, Suriname, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Uganda, Vanuatu, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

26. As at 31 May 2020, the balance of the working capital fund stood at \$655,556 against an approved level of \$660,000.

¹⁸ see [ISBA/24/A/11](#) and [ISBA/24/A/6–ISBA/24/C/19](#).

Status of the voluntary trust funds

27. As of 31 May 2020 (same deadline for other funds mentioned below), the capital of the Endowment Fund for Marine Scientific Research in the Area stood at \$3,513,567. The available fund stands at \$212,066.

28. As for the voluntary trust fund for the purpose of defraying the cost of participation of members of the Legal and Technical Commission from developing countries and members of the Finance Committee from developing countries in the meetings of the Commission and of the Committee, the cumulative total of contributions to the fund amounted to \$1,135,362, including latest contribution made by Global Sea Mineral (\$10,000) and five contractors \$6,000 each. The fund's total expenditure amounted to \$1,129,350, while expenditure from 1 January to 1 May 2020 came to \$21,679 and bank charges during the period, leaving an available balance of \$5,984.

29. As for the voluntary trust fund to support the participation of members of the Council of the International Seabed Authority from developing States in the meetings of the Council, the fund had received contributions totaling \$87,502 from Global Sea Mineral Resources NV (\$20,000), Nauru Ocean Resources Inc. (\$20,000), Ocean Mineral Singapore Pte. Ltd. (\$20,000) and UK Seabed Resources Ltd. (\$27,502). There have been no new contributions since December 2019. The total available fund stands at \$20,579.

30. As for the voluntary trust fund for the purpose of providing the requisite funds related to the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Enterprise, a total of four contributions had been made to the voluntary trust fund, totaling \$31,816, of which \$25,848 had been spent to date. The balance stood at \$5,968.

Relationship with the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea

31. In December 2019, the Secretary-General met informally with the President of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, Judge Jin-Hyun Paik in New York. Both sides exchanged information on recent activities and exchanged views on possible joint seminars and workshops, Staff Regulations and Rules issues, capacity-building programmes, budgetary and financial issues and cost-saving measures, as well as administration cooperation, including implementation of an Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP) system and the INSPIRA system, JPO programme, UN Volunteer programme and other matters.

32. As part of the continued cooperation of the Authority with the Tribunal, the President of the Seabed Disputes Chamber attended the International conference on the legal, scientific, and economic aspects of deep seabed mining organized by the Authority in November 2019 in Kingston. In January 2020, a staff member of the secretariat delivered a lecture to the Fellows of the ITLOS-Nippon Foundation Capacity-Building and Training Programme on Dispute Settlement under the Convention, focusing on the legal regime for the Area and the current work of the Authority. A staff member of the Tribunal delivered a presentation on the training programmes of the Tribunal to the Capacity-development, Resources and Needs Assessment Workshop held by the Authority in March 2020.

Relationship with the United Nations and other relevant international organizations and bodies

United Nations

33. The Authority has continued its close and productive working relationship with the United Nations. The Secretary-General participated in the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly, addressing the agenda item on Oceans and the Law of the Sea on 10 December 2019. The secretariat

of the Authority has also maintained informal exchanges and close cooperation with the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs on a number of issues, including collaboration in the preparation of a joint publication on *Marine Mineral Resources: Scientific and Technological Advances*.

34. The secretariat of the Authority and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat have continued to cooperate actively in the implementation of the Abyssal Initiative for Blue Growth project aimed at ensuring the necessary governance structures and mechanisms be put in place in those Pacific sponsoring States through tailored capacity development activities. Two more regional workshops have been organized in August 2019 with the support of Singapore and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: one, in Nauru, from 7 to August 2019, to focus on the role and responsibilities of sponsoring States; and another one in Kiribati, from 12 to 13 August 2019, to build capacities on key elements of marine scientific research and access of the results of such research.

35. The secretariat of the Authority has continued to collaborate with the United Nations Global Compact and in particular with respect to the Global Compact Action Platform for sustainable Ocean Business. In September 2019, the Secretary-General participated in the high-level meeting for the launch of the “Sustainable Ocean Business Principles”. This initiative, developed in consultation with more than 300 stakeholders, aimed to emphasise the responsibility of the private sector to take necessary actions to secure a healthy and productive ocean. Since then the secretariat has actively been cooperating in the development of the “Ocean stewardship 2030” report launched at a high-level meeting organized remotely on 2 June 2020.

Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (IOC-UNESCO)

36. The Authority and IOC-UNESCO have continued close collaboration to advance implementation of the existing memorandum of understanding between the two organizations. Since the preliminary steps taken by IOC in 2017 to secure strategic partnerships to co-design the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, the secretariat of the Authority has been committed to contribute actively to all stages of development of the preparation phase as well as the implementation of the United Nations Decade. Ongoing dialogue and discussions have taken place between the two secretariats on that matter. Further, the secretariat of the Authority also provided comments on the draft Science Action Plan for the UN Decade in November 2019.

37. The secretariat of the Authority continued its collaboration with the secretariat of the Ocean Biogeographic Information System of IOC regarding the sharing of data on deep sea biodiversity in the Area, including reviewing the structure and format of respective databases, exchanging relevant documents, and identifying future steps to move forward. The secretariat of the Authority participated in the Workshop on data sharing between UN agencies as a contribution to the UN decade of ocean science for sustainable development held on-line by the IOC on 20 April 2020, and delivered a presentation on DeepData of the Authority. Through this workshop and upon request by the Commission, DeepData was registered in the IOC Ocean Data and Information Systems – “Catalogue of Sources”. The secretariat of the Authority will continue to collaborate in this initiative by participating in the Inter-sessional Working Group to propose Strategy on Ocean Data and Information Stewardship for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (IWG-SODIS).

38. As a contribution to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for the Sustainable Development and to implement the mandate of the Authority on marine scientific research in accordance with the Convention and the Part XI Agreement, the secretariat of the Authority has prepared a draft Action Plan

of the Authority on Marine Scientific Research, to be submitted to the Assembly for its consideration in October 2020. In this draft Action Plan, strategic priorities for marine scientific research are elaborated based on the Authority's Strategic Plan and High-level Action Plan for the period 2019-2023, respectively adopted by the Assembly in 2018 and 2019. The draft action plan was made available to IOC secretariat for comments and feedback.

International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the World Maritime University (WMU)

39. Under the framework of the Cooperation Agreement signed between the Authority and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), both organizations consult each other on matters of common interest. In the course of this reporting period, technical personnel of both organizations continued their dialogue.

40. In line with the memorandum of understanding signed in November 2018 between the Authority and the World Maritime University (WMU), the secretariat of the Authority has deepened collaboration with WMU in a number of ways. The Secretary- General held an informal meeting with the President of the WMU, Dr. Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry, in August 2019, to exchange views to further mutual collaboration and joint activities, including cooperation with the World Maritime University-Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute.

41. The secretariat participated in the Second WMU Regional conference for the Americas, held in Veracruz, Mexico, in October 2019 and delivered a presentation on "Opportunities in areas beyond national jurisdiction: the role of the International Seabed Authority". The President of WMU attended the International Conference on the Legal, Scientific and Economic Aspects of Deep Seabed Mining, and chaired a panel entitled "Innovative thinking in capacity-building". Further, WMU provided technical support to the secretariat in the development of the draft exploitation regulations by assisting in the preparation of a draft health and safety plan and a draft maritime security plan. A representative of WMU participated in the capacity-development workshop organized by the Authority in February 2020 in Kingston.

International Labour Organization (ILO)

42. Based on the recommendations of the LTC¹⁹, the secretariat of the Authority has engaged discussions with the secretariat of the International Labour Organization with a view to concluding a cooperation agreement between the two organizations with a view to enhance cooperation, in particular, keeping emerging issues concerning occupational health and safety for personnel involved in exploitation in the Area under review.

International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds

43. The Director of the International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds participated at the 25th session of the Assembly held in July 2019. The secretariat of the Authority will continue to strengthen and deepen the dialogue with secretariat of the Funds.

International Cable Protection Committee (ICPC)

44. In line with the memorandum of understanding between the International Cable Protection Committee (ICPC) and the Authority, both sides have continued their dialogue and exchange of information throughout the reporting period. During the third annual meeting of contractors held in Changsha, China (11 to 13 November 2019), the representatives of ICPC were invited to deliver a presentation and discussed with the contractors on matters of mutual interest and future collaboration.

¹⁹ ISBA/26/C/12.

Sargasso Sea Commission

45. In February 2020, the secretariat of the Authority signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the secretariat of the Sargasso Sea Commission. Both the Authority and the Commission have a strong interest in the protection of the marine environment in accordance with their respective mandates. The MoU materializes the cooperation in the collection of environmental data and information as well as consultation on matters of mutual interest, where practicable.

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

46. The Secretary-General of the Authority continued to discuss potential areas of cooperation with the Secretary-General of IORA during the Third IORA Ministerial Blue Economy Conference held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in September 2019.

47. After the text of the draft (MoU) have been finalized at the secretariat levels, the necessary steps for approval have taken place first within IORA. IORA has endorsed the draft MoU on 16 April 2020. The draft MoU has been placed on the agenda of the Council of the Authority for its consideration and approval at its next meeting.

Intergovernmental Conference on an internationally legally binding instrument under the Convention on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (IGC-BBNJ)

48. The secretariat of the Authority has participated in the three substantive sessions of the BBNJ IGC. The secretariat's involvement aims to inform participants on the work and mandate of the Authority through such means as statements on thematic issues, side events and notes. The secretariat has also had the opportunity to highlight the importance of ensuring that the work and results of the BBNJ IGC are consistent with the provisions of Convention and that they do not undermine relevant legal instruments and frameworks. In this sense, the secretariat has drawn attention to the fact that Part XI of the Convention and the 1994 Agreement provide a comprehensive regime for the Area, including the need to take necessary measures to ensure effective protection for the marine environment from harmful effects which may arise from activities in the Area.

End