



**Special Commemorative Session of the
Assembly of the International Seabed Authority,
convened to celebrate the Twenty-fifth anniversary of the entry into force
of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Establishment of the
International Seabed Authority**

Information for participants

I. Background

1. The International Seabed Authority was formally established when the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea entered into force on 16 November 1994. This year marks the 25th Anniversary of the Authority.
2. In order to take advantage of the presence of the delegates who will be attending the 25th Session of the Assembly of the Authority, a special commemorative event will be held on 25 July 2019, from 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., including a special commemorative session of the Assembly. The event will include three segments. The first two segments, held in the morning, from 09.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m., will include the 2019 Edition of the Secretary-General's Award for Excellence in Deep Sea Research, from 10:00 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.) and a high-level panel on capacity-building, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

II. Opening of the Special Commemorative Session

3. The event will commence at 9:40 a.m. on Thursday, 25 July 2019, in The Kenneth Rattray Conference Room of the Jamaican Conference Centre, with a ceremonial opening by the Jamaican Combined Cadets Force. For security reasons all delegates and accredited participants should be seated by 09:30 a.m.

III. Agenda, list of speakers and other relevant information

4. The annotated agenda for the commemorative session is presented in Annex I whilst the concept note for the high-level panel (item 2) that includes the programme is presented in Annex II.

Item 1: 2019 Edition of the Secretary-General's Award for Excellence in Deep Sea Research

5. The master of ceremony will attend the opening, and will then give the floor to the Secretary-General for an introduction of the Award. The Head of the Delegation of Monaco, as sponsor of the Award, will then be invited to deliver a statement which will be followed by a statement by the 2018 Awardee. The Secretary-General will announce the name of the 2019 Award recipient, who will be invited to address the Assembly before comments from the floor be invited. The 2019 Edition of the ISA's SG Award ceremony will end at 10:50 a.m.

Item 2: High-level panel: strengthening capacity-building opportunities and initiatives for developing States

6. This high-level panel, convened as part of the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the entry into force of UNCLOS and of the establishment of the Authority, aims to open a discussion on how the Authority can implement its strategic directions in such a way as to best meet the needs of developing States. More detailed information on the structure and content of the panel can be found in annex II.

7. The high-level panel will open with some introductory remarks by the Secretary-General, followed by a short video presentation featuring former trainees of the Authority. The Chair will be invited to make opening comments before the moderated panel discussion begins. Twenty minutes will be allocated to an interactive session where delegations will be invited to make comments or ask questions. The order of speakers for the interactive session will be determined on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given to Members of the Authority according to the level of representation, followed by other participants. In order to provide for maximum participation, interventions should not exceed three minutes. To end, five minutes will be allocated to the co-chairs to summarise the main points of the discussion before the Secretary-General provides closing remarks.

Item 3: Commemoration of ISA's 25th Anniversary

8. The formal ceremony of the commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Authority will start at 3:00 p.m., when the Assembly will convene in formal session. The opening ceremony will be led by the President of the Assembly. The Secretary-General will then deliver an opening address that will be followed by a message from the Prime Minister of Jamaica, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and Legal Counsel, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and Secretary-General for the United Nations Oceans Conference in 2020, and the President of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.

9. Delegations will then be invited to deliver statements. It is proposed that regional groups be first offered the possibility to make a statement and then Member States. In view of the time constraints, a strict time limit of three minutes has been established for each statement. Observers will also be invited to make a statement with a limit of two minutes each. The list of speakers for the commemorative ceremony will be established on a first-come, first-served basis, with the customary protocol: Heads of State or Government speak first, followed by other heads of delegation. The list of speakers is open as of Monday 1 July 2019. All States wishing to register names on the list of speakers are invited to send a request to secretary-general@isa.org.jm. Observers are invited to indicate their interest in speaking during the commemorative session by contacting the protocol services of the Authority not later than Monday 22 July 2019.

IV. Protocol accreditation

10. All accreditation requests, including request for VIP passes, should be submitted to Ms Christine Griffiths on cgriffiths@isa.org.jm by Monday 22 July 2019 at the very latest. Delegates and observers should note that enhanced security measures will be in place and no person can be admitted without proper accreditation.

11. Heads of State or Government, Vice-Presidents, Deputy Prime Ministers, and cabinet-level ministers will be offered VIP passes without photographs.

12. Accreditation of security personnel and media personnel, will be handled by the Communications Unit (kelles@isa.org.jm).

V. Gala reception

13. A gala reception will be hosted by the Senator the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, on the evening of 25 July 2019. The event will take place in the courtyard of the new offices of the Foreign Ministry on Port Royal Street.

Annex I:

PROGRAMME FOR THE COMMEMORATION OF THE 25th ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY

Thursday 25 July 2019

9:40 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Ceremonial opening by the Jamaica Combined Cadets Force (20 mins)

Item 1 -2019 Edition of the ISA's SG Award for Excellence in Deep Sea Research (10.00 a.m.– 10.50 a.m.)

1. Opening of the ceremony by Master of Ceremony (5 mins)
2. Introduction by the Secretary-General (5 mins)
3. Statement by Head of Delegation of Monaco (5 mins)
4. Presentation of the Award by the Secretary-General (5 mins)
- 5- 2019 Award Recipient: short statement (5 mins)
- 6- Comments from the floor (20 mins)

Item 2 – High Level Panel: Strengthening capacity-building opportunities and initiatives for developing States (11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.)

1. Introductory remarks by the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority (5 mins)
2. Video presentation: ISA trainees (5 mins)
3. Opening comments by Chair (5 min)
4. Moderated panel discussion (40 mins)
5. Interactive session (20 mins)
5. Co-chairs wrap-up (5 mins)
6. Closing remarks by the Secretary-General (5 mins)

Lunch (12: 30 p.m. -1: 30 p.m.)

Launching of ISA's database (DeepData) (13:10-14:10) – Conference room 2

3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Item 3 - Commemoration of ISA's 25th Anniversary

1. Opening of the ceremony by President of the Assembly (5 mins)
2. Opening address by the Secretary-General (7 mins)
3. Message from the Prime Minister of Jamaica (5 mins)
4. Message from the Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, the Legal Counsel of the United Nations (7 mins)
5. Message from the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Conference Secretary-General for the United Nations Oceans Conference in 2020 (7 mins)
6. Message from the President of ITLOS (7 mins)
7. Video presentation (15 mins)
8. Statements by the Regional Groups (5 mins each) and Members of the Authority (3 mins each)
9. Statements by Observers (2 mins each)
10. Closing (5 mins)

GALA RECEPTION

Annex II:

Special Commemorative Session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority, convened to celebrate the Twenty-fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Establishment of the International Seabed Authority

25 July 2019
(11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.)

High-Level Panel on Capacity-Building: Strengthening capacity-building opportunities and initiatives for developing States

- Concept Note -

Chair:

H.E. Baron Waqa, President of Nauru

I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

1. It is widely acknowledged that both capacity-building and technology transfer are critical conditions to ensure effective implementation of international law by developing States. Mindful of the need to address such needs, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) sets out specific requirements on these matters to organize the fulfilment of capacity-building and technology transfer obligations in favour of the less economically developed and less technologically advanced States.

2. In the context of the implementation of Part XI of UNCLOS (*the Area*), the International Seabed Authority (Authority) is thereby required to take measures to acquire technology and scientific knowledge relating to activities in the Area (UNCLOS, art. 144 (1) (a)) and to ensure the establishment of a variety of both capacity-building and technology transfer mechanisms for developing States (UNCLOS, art. 274). In line with this, States are required by UNCLOS to cooperate actively with competent international organisations and the Authority to encourage and facilitate the transfer to developing States, their nationals and the Enterprise of skills and marine technology with regard to activities in the Area (UNCLOS, art. 273).

3. The challenge for the Authority is to ensure that capacity-building and technology transfer measures are developed and implemented effectively, subject to all legitimate interests, including the rights and duties of holders, suppliers and recipients of technology (UNCLOS, art. 274) and that they reflect the needs of developing States, identified through transparent processes in which developing States are full participants.

4. As embedded in its Strategic Plan adopted for the period 2019-2023¹ and more specifically in relation to the Strategic Direction 5 (*Build capacity of developing States*), the Authority's strategic directions for the period 2019-2023 will be to:

- a) Ensure that all capacity-building programmes and measures and their delivery are meaningful, tangible, efficient, effective and targeted at the needs of developing States, as identified by developing States (SD 5.1);

¹ See ISBA/24/A/10.

- b) Seek and maximize funding opportunities for the Endowment Fund for Marine Scientific Research in the Area and its beneficiaries, together with participation in global financing mechanisms (SD 5.2);
- c) Enable capacity-building measures to be mainstreamed into relevant initiatives (SD 5.3);
- d) Build on the achievements of contractor training programmes and assess their long-term impact on capacity-building (SD 5.4).

II. HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON CAPACITY-BUILDING

5. This high-level panel, convened as part of the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the entry into force of UNCLOS and of the establishment of the Authority, aims to open a discussion as to how the Authority can implement its strategic directions in such a way as to best meet the needs of developing States. The discussion will be focused around three key questions, namely:

- I. What do developing States need in terms of capacity building and how can the Authority best engage with them in identifying these needs?*
- II. How does the Authority meet the needs of developing States?*
- III. What has worked well so far and what has been the impact?*

6. The panel will be Chaired by the President of Nauru, H.E. Baron Waqa who will be invited to present his views on the above questions, before moving into a moderated panel discussion organised around a set of questions provided to the panellists in advance. Following the panel discussion, there will be an interactive session where delegates will have the opportunity to express their views and ask questions to the panellists.

7. The panel will also provide an opportunity to reflect on the Authority's current efforts in implementing its voluntary commitments aimed at building capacity among developing countries (see <https://www.isa.org.jm/isa-voluntary-commitments>). These include the Abyssal Initiative project implemented in partnership with UNDESA (*Promoting the Blue Economy concept as a means to enable P-SIDS to benefit fully from sustainable development of their deep-sea mineral resources*)², the ADSR project implemented in partnership with the Africa Union and NORAD (*Fostering cooperation to promote the sustainable development of Africa's deep seabed resources in support of Africa's Blue Economy*)³; and the Authority's efforts to *Enhance the role of women in marine scientific research*⁴.

8. Although the panel is not expected to produce an agreed outcome or reach a conclusion on the issues under discussion, it is expected that the views and ideas expressed will provide rich background material to help inform the agenda for the Authority's proposed workshop on capacity-building which is anticipated to be held in the first quarter of 2020.

² [#OceanAction16538](#).

³ [#OceanAction16374](#).

⁴ [#OceanAction15467](#).

III. PROGRAMME (90 minutes duration)

- a- *Introductory remarks by the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority (5 mins)*
- b- *Video presentation: ISA trainees (5 mins)*
- c- *Opening comments by co-chairs (5 mins each)*
- d- *Moderated panel discussion (40 mins)*
 - H.E Carlos Den Hartog, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the ISA
 - Ms Sonali Samarasinghe, Minister, Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the UN
 - Jens Frølich Holte, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Norway
 - Mrs Rena Lee, Ambassador for Oceans and Laws of the Sea Issues, Special Envoy of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore
 - H.E Satyendra Prasad, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Fiji to the UN
- e- *Interactive session (20 mins)*
- f- *Co-chairs wrap-up (5 mins)*
- g- *Closing remarks by the Secretary-General (5 mins)*