

**‘Statement on behalf of Antigua and Barbuda at the 24th Session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority on 23rd July 2018, Kingston, Jamaica’**

**Presented by HE Mr. Dwight C.R. Gardiner, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative to the International Seabed Authority’**

**Mr. President,** On behalf of the delegation of Antigua and Barbuda, I wish to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election at this 24th Session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority and further extend our support for your exemplary leadership in the conduct and fruitful conclusion of this meeting.

In addition, I would like to wholeheartedly express appreciation to the host country Jamaica for their usual warm and excellent hospitality.

**Mr. President,** my delegation would like to thank the Secretary General for his very comprehensive and informative report on the progress of the Authority in the past year. We unequivocally express our appreciation for the substantial and considerable progress that is underway concerning Article 154 Periodic Review and Strategic Plan, the Regional Environmental Management Plans and draft Mining Code. The Authority’s current work programme serves to crystallize its objectives and raise its profile internationally. We note under this new dispensation, the high level of commitment with which the Authority continues to discharge its administrative and legal obligations in the management of the deep seabed and its resources that are the common heritage of mankind.

**Mr. President,** we embrace and look forward to the recommendations being implemented which will lead to the improvement of the operation of the regime pursuant to Article 154.

**Mr. President,** Antigua and Barbuda takes note of the relationships between the Authority and a variety of other intergovernmental organizations which are relevant to the work of the Authority. Indeed, we welcome the continued engagement of the Authority with these agencies as a way of ensuring that the work of the Authority continues to be engaged in a manner which takes into account other related international activities, particularly where they highlight and redound to the benefit of Lesser Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island

Developing States (SIDs) and support the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**Mr. President,** Concerning the Draft Strategic Plan, and the consultations which have decidedly enriched the drafting process, we acknowledge the action-oriented approach and inherent pragmatism. We wholeheartedly endorse the identification of the highest priorities for the Authority during the period of 2019-2023. We further commend the Authority's efforts to supplement the Strategic Plan with success metrics coupled with the periodic oversight by the Assembly. Antigua and Barbuda endorses the Authority's efforts to employ key guiding principles for the promotion of orderly, safe and rational management of the resources of the Area to the benefit of mankind as a whole.

**Mr. President,** We further recognize the Authority's adherence to development initiatives to expand the number of REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLANS (REMPS) in key provinces (in the Area) where exploration activities are being undertaken. We note that this programme is contemplated as the most important vehicle for the conveyance of the Authority's environmental intentions.

**Mr. President,** With respect to the development of the Mining Code, Antigua and Barbuda lauds the Secretariat's priority to incorporate provisions in the revised text of the draft regulations to protect and preserve the marine environment and regulatory measures to calculate and administer royalty liability, and further the contracting of experts from Massachusetts Institute Technology (MIT) to develop models for future exploitation agreements.

**Mr. President,** We share in the momentum that continues to build towards the full inclusion of SDG 14 goals within the revised draft Strategic plan along with the comprehensive and unmitigated progress being executed during this period.

Antigua and Barbuda seeks to further contribute to the work of the Authority and remains encouraged by the level of progress and the key initiatives being undertaken to re-energize the Authority.

**Thank you.**