

STATEMENT BY GRAHAM LEUNG,

HEAD OF THE NAURU DELEGATION AT MEETING OF 24TH ISA ASSEMBLY, KINGSTON, JAMAICA

TUESDAY 24th JULY 2018.

Mr President

The Nauru delegation would like to express its deep appreciation to the Government of Jamaica for their continued hosting of the ISA.

We noted with appreciation the statement at lunch today of Senator the Honourable Pearnel Charles, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, that Jamaica will continue its support and long-term commitment to the ISA.

I also wish in advance to congratulate the Government and people Jamaica on the imminent occasion of its 56th year of Independence in August.

As a developing country Sponsoring State, Nauru recognizes the importance of continuing to strengthen its engagement with the International Seabed Authority and related processes.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Nauru commends the Secretary General for his wide ranging report on the work of the ISA.

We are impressed with the output and achievements of the secretariat outlined in the report and have a sense that its work has gathered traction in recent months. The staff of the secretariat do so much with so little and my delegation wishes to acknowledge their diligence.

My delegation supports the Secretary General's observations and encourage those members who are in arrears of their assessed contributions to consider clearing the arrears as soon as possible. The important work of the ISA is dependent on stable and predictable funding.

We encourage especially developed countries to consider making contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund for the members of the Legal and Technical Commission & Council. The work of the ISA is at an important crossroads as traction builds towards negotiating and finalizing the mining regulations. Replenishment of the fund will enable the important work of both bodies to continue without hinderance or interruption.

In this regard, we join the United Kingdom in welcoming the recent announcement by Germany of a substantial contribution to the Voluntary Trust Fund for the LTC.

We urge the Secretary General to continue and conclude his review of staffing requirements within the Secretariat.

Nauru supports enhanced staffing requirements where required, to keep abreast with the volume and complexity of work that is currently being undertaken. This work is likely to increase in the near term

and the Secretariat must have the resources to carry out its responsibilities to the highest level of efficiency. We welcome the announcement by the Secretary General that he is on the verge of appointing a communications officer for the first time. This will contribute to the growing transparency of the work and activities of the Authority.

We commend the recent cost saving measures taken by the Secretary General and encourage him to continue this process, but not in a manner that would compromise the efficiency of the secretariat and the services it provides to member states.

We appreciate the work done by the LTC and the secretariat in producing a revised further draft of the exploitation regulations and are hopeful of being able to make written submissions on the draft by the end of September. In this context I am reminded of the observations of Ambassador Arvid Pardo that we should be careful that the Common Heritage of Mankind not be whittled down to "a few fish and a little seaweed"

The Enterprise

Nauru would like to see the establishment of the Enterprise as an independent organ of the ISA as soon as possible. The Enterprise has a crucial role for realizing the core principles of UNCLOS Part XI (the Area). It is also an important pathway to enable developing countries including SIDS to benefit from the CHM. Nauru supports calls for the appointment of an interim Director General as soon as possible.

We welcome the announcement yesterday by the Secretary General of a workshop in Tonga in November 2018 on Blue Growth to advance SDG14 for the promotion of socioeconomic benefits especially for SIDS in the Pacific region.

Nauru supports the Secretary General's call for greater support for the Authority's Internship program. We consider the program to be valuable and a relatively inexpensive way of building capacity in DSM issues especially in developing countries and urge both developed countries and philanthropic foundations to contribute funds to sustain the program.

We welcome the statement by Singapore's Permanent Representative to the United Nations of the provision of up to ten internships for developing countries and look forward to the details of the program.

Finally, as incoming Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, Nauru looks forward to welcoming Michael Lodge, the Secretary-General of the ISA to the 49th Pacific Islands Forum meeting to take place in Nauru in September this year.

The presence of the Secretary General Michael Lodge at the Nauru Forum will lift the profile of the ISA where at least 18 Heads of Government are expected to attend.

This event will provide an excellent opportunity to raise the awareness of Pacific Forum Leaders on the potential benefits that could be derived from increased participation in the work of the Authority and in the activities undertaken in the Area.

During the Forum meeting there will be a side event hosted conjointly by the Government of Nauru, the International Seabed Authority and NORI, Nauru Ocean Resources Inc.

The side event will acknowledge the:

- the importance of the current work of the ISA to develop mining regulations which will allow for the development of commercial exploitation of the Area in an environmentally sound way;
- the important role that seafloor minerals can play in the future of the world as part of the Common Heritage of Mankind;
- the importance of ensuring that the expertise and experience that the Pacific Islands States have in this industry is part of the ISA discussions.

Thank you, Mr President.