

Statement by Ms. Sabita Nakarmi, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Nepal to the United Nations during the 24th session of the International Seabed Authority for the Assembly on Agenda Item- 9, Strategic Plan for deep sea-bed mining 25 July 2018, Kingston, Jamaica

(As Delivered)

Mr. President,

At the outset, my delegation wishes to express our sincere gratitude to the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority Mr. Michael Lodge for his hard work in developing the revised strategic plan for the period 2019-2023, as per the decision of the Authority of 18 August 2017. We commend this first ever effort of the Authority to develop strategic plan on exploitation of minerals and resources in the Area in its nearly 25-year long history.

Mr. President,

My delegation wishes to present the following points on the Strategic Plan:

Firstly, taking note of the transition from exploration to exploitation phase, as a least developed, land-locked developing country, Nepal reiterates that marine resources and biodiversity in the Area are common heritage of mankind as stipulated in the Article 136 of the Convention. We also reaffirm that resources in the Area should be exploited for the benefit of mankind. Nepal expresses its satisfaction that the Strategic Plan has incorporated the ideas of common heritage of mankind and exploitation of resources for the benefit of mankind. Here we join Jamaican delegate that the strategic direction should clearly indicate the Article 136 of the Convention regarding the issue of the Area and its resources as the common heritage of mankind.

Secondly, Nepal is of the view that the environment-- whether marine or terrestrial—needs to be protected and preserved even in the world of rapid globalization. In this regard, my delegation stresses that the exploitation and commercialization of deep seabed mining of marine resources should occur without putting the sustainability of environment at risk. We stress that while implementing the Strategic Plan, it must ensure that the commercial deep sea-bed mining is conducted bearing in mind the protection of the marine environment as a priority as well as emphasizing the need to create a balance in the three pillars of the sustainable development.

Thirdly, Nepal attaches great importance to the guiding principles incorporated in the Strategic Plan including promotion of orderly, safe and rational management of the resources of the Area for the benefit of mankind, exchange of best practices, information sharing, among others. In addition, my delegation underscores that various other approaches including inclusive approach, ecosystem-based approach, 'polluter-pays' principle, precautionary approach and transparency theory, monitoring and evaluation strategy as well as developing responsibility and liability mechanism can be further useful for the Strategic Plan.

Fourthly, as indicated in introduction, we are confident that the Strategic Plan will provide a uniform basis for the strengthening of the existing working practices of the Authority since it is based on the Convention and 1994 Agreement that constitute a unitary system of rights, obligations, duties and responsibilities for broad stakeholders including States Parties, flag states, coastal states, enterprises, private investors and intergovernmental organizations. All these

stakeholders must work in coordination and partnership with each other, accommodating each other's interests and concerns, to implement the Plan for the benefit of mankind and the implementation of 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, particularly the SDG 14.

Lastly, we appreciate that the Strategic Plan also includes the Article 140 of the UNCLOS that the ISA shall fairly share the benefits from any activities in the Area as well as qualitative and quantitative data obtained through researches, to Member States, through any appropriate mechanism, on a non-discriminatory basis. The implementation in this direction can bring concrete result.

My delegation highlights that ISA is mandated not only to regulate seabed mining, but also to promote research and capacity building and ensure increased participation of developing countries in the workshops and seminars organized by the Authority. We look forward to more delivery of capacity building programs that are more meaningful, effective and targeted at the needs of developing states, particularly of SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs and other geographically disadvantaged States. We also wish to have more details on the approaches for integrated participation, joining the remarks given by the African group.

In closing, I wish to reiterate my delegation's full support to the adoption of the Strategic Plan for the Authority.

I thank you, Mr. President.