

**Statement by Ms. Sabita Nakarmi, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Nepal to the United Nations at the general debate of the 24<sup>th</sup> session of the International Seabed Authority for the Assembly on Agenda Item- 8  
24 July 2018, Kingston, Jamaica**

*(As delivered)*

Mr. President

At the outset, my delegation wishes to congratulate you for your election as the President of the Assembly and all the Vice-Presidents on their respective elections and pledges its full support to your leadership in efficiently steering the Assembly of this session.

Since this is the first time Nepal is participating in the Assembly of the Authority, on behalf of the Government of Nepal, my delegation extends its appreciation to the Government of Jamaica for its continued support in hosting the meeting of the ISA as well as extending warm hospitality to us.

My delegation also wishes to thank the Secretary General for his comprehensive report on the activities of the Seabed Authority of the past year.

As defined in the Article 1 of the UNCLOS, the Area is the seabed and subsoil thereof beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. Nepal attaches great importance to the role of the International Seabed Authority in administering the resources of the Area by organizing and controlling activities therein. We commend the development of rules, regulations and code on mining that highlight the need of preservation of the marine environment from harmful effects of activities in the Area.

Mr. President,

As a State Party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and a least developed, mountainous and a landlocked developing country, Nepal reaffirms that the UNCLOS is the Constitution to the oceans activities, in fact, an overarching legal framework of all activities carried out in oceans and seas. Although situated far from sea-coasts, land-locked countries have great value towards oceans and seas, particularly for transit and transportation issues. The UNCLOS has been instrumental for providing access of transit to and from the seas and oceans to the land-locked states and thereby enabling them to head towards the world of economic bloom based on oceans and seas. Besides, as we all know that oceans are lifeblood to the entire humankind for providing us food, oxygen, freshwater and others.

Nepal joins others in stating that oceans and marine resources are the common heritage of mankind and the benefits from the oceans should be shared among Member States in fair and equitable manner, in accordance with article 82, paragraph 4 of the UNCLOS.

Mr. President,

As Nepal has been expressing in other fora, we take this opportunity to reiterate the fact about organic linkage existing between the mountains and the seas, particularly regarding climate change -- when the glaciers melt due to global warming causing sea-level rise, the livelihood and

habitat of coastal areas and mountains likewise are severely affected. Similarly, our activities in land adversely damage the health, ecosystem of marine world and marine resources.

In this regard, it is our shared responsibility to take care of the health, productivity, sustainability and resilience of oceans, preserve the marine biodiversity and marine environment. We highlight the mandated responsibility of the Authority to ascertain that mining, prospecting, exploration and exploitation are undertaken considering the concern of the fragile marine environment, its biodiversity, flora and fauna.

Nepal also underscores the importance of collaborative efforts and partnership among governments, private sector, academia, youth, women and civil society to protect the oceans and the marine resources while commercializing mining. In this context, my delegation expresses solidarity with the Authority in its advocacy for the protection and sustainable use of oceans, in particular, SDG 14 in collaboration with UN- Oceans, ITLOS, IOC-UNESCO, IMO, among others. Nepal believes that all these efforts will pave a way to a more holistic implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Mr. President

Nepal reaffirms that capacity-building lies at the centre of States' abilities, particularly for developing countries, to benefit fully from the oceans and their resources. Nepal appreciates the Authority for organizing technical workshops, seminars and training, marine scientific research, internship, scholarship, capacity building activities, technical assistance for the developing countries and encourages the Authority to continue such practices.

Meanwhile, it would be useful when relevant data from their prospecting and exploration are made readily and publicly available for the benefit of scientific research. Also, the results from research should be disseminated among contractors and the international scientific community. The interface between the contractors and the scientific research communities need to be further enhanced for better studies. Additionally, the website of the Authority has been useful for easy access of relevant information and official documentation.

We also congratulate Ms. Diva Amon of Trinidad and Tobago for receiving the Secretary-General's Excellence Award on deep sea research yesterday. As a young female researcher from a small developing country, Dr. Diva is an inspiration to all women to strive for achieving high in various field like deep sea mining.

Likewise, Nepal values the important role of the Authority in the upcoming intergovernmental Conference to develop an international legally binding instrument to conserve and sustainably use the marine resources in the areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ). We extend our full support to the ISA's involvement in the BBNJ treaty process.

In addition, we wish to draw attention to the need of providing the travel assistance to all developing States of the International Seabed Authority for Assembly session, in particular the least developed, small island states and landlocked developing countries. This would further increase the participation of Member States in the Assembly.

Mr. President,

I wish to assure you of Nepal's continued support to the important work of the Authority regarding the common goal of exploitation of the resources in the Area for the common benefit of mankind.

I thank you.