



Statement by the Delegation of the State of Palestine before the International Seabed Authority (ISA) 22nd Annual Session on agenda item 9: Annual report of the Secretary-General, 11-22 July 2016, Kingston, Jamaica:

Thank you Mr. President.

The State of Palestine would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election as President and congratulate the members of the bureau. We are appreciative of your successful efforts in steering the proceedings of the Assembly thus far and offer our full support and cooperation for its successful conclusion.

Mr. President,

The State of Palestine has a very special history with the Law of the Sea. Some 40 years ago the Palestine Liberation Organization was invited to participate in the meetings on the Law of the Sea. As the President of the Second Session of the Third Conference on the Law of the Sea stated, *“as a part of mankind, they [referring to national liberation movements] had a right to share in the common heritage of mankind, and that in the future they would be the masters of the destinies of their respective countries.”* (Mr. H. S. Amerasinghe (Sri Lanka), 40th Meeting, 17 July 1974)

Following the change of Palestine’s status in the UN system as an observer State, the State of Palestine’s accession to multiple treaties and conventions has allowed it to pursue and enhance its role, as a member of the international community, in furthering the implementation of international law and ensuring the achievement of the universally beneficial aspects of instruments. In 2015, the State of Palestine acceded to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the 1994 Agreement proudly becoming the 167th State Party to UNCLOS and the International Seabed Authority. It is in this spirit that we are honoured to have our flag present here at the International Seabed Authority Assembly room and to be participating at this Session as a State Party for the first time.

As a State under occupation that strives to allow its people to exercise their right to self-determination and other rights, enshrined in international law, we value the principle of common heritage of mankind so that the benefits and responsibilities the law of the sea carries may be shared by all. In this regard, we are grateful for the Secretary-General report which provides a comprehensive summary of the work of the Authority during the July 2015 to June 2016 period.

Finally, the State of Palestine reiterates its pledge to remain committed to our responsibilities in the work of the International Seabed Authority and the Law of the Sea with a mind to ensure fairness and justness for all of mankind and that no one is left behind.

Thank you Mr. President.