



**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
AND FOREIGN TRADE  
JAMAICA**

5<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Excellencies,

Further to the proposal contained in my letter dated 17 September 2020, to which no objection was received as per my letter dated 23 September 2020, as well as the Note Verbale of the Secretary-General dated 28 September 2020 concerning opening of the Twenty-sixth Session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority, I hereby declare, in my capacity as President of the Twenty-fifth Session of the Assembly, that the Twenty-sixth Session of the Assembly opens as of today.

Furthermore, I am pleased to attach a draft decision on the Procedure for adoption of decisions by the Assembly during the twenty-sixth session of the International Seabed Authority owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which would allow the adoption of decisions by the Assembly by the silence procedure similar to that contained in General Assembly decision 74/544 of 27 March 2020 entitled "Procedure for taking decisions of the General Assembly during the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic".

As indicated in my letter of 17 September 2020, I wish to recall in this regard that: (i) decisions taken by the Assembly by the silence procedure would relate, in particular, to the election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the twenty-sixth session, the appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee and the adoption of the agenda and the organization of work; and (ii) the adoption of the proposed silence procedure would not constitute an amendment to the relevant rules of procedure of the Assembly (ISBA/A/6). All decisions adopted by the silence procedure would be taken note of by the Assembly at its first face-to-face meeting.

**Members of the International Seabed Authority**

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5<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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The draft decision will be deemed to have been adopted by the Assembly if no objections are received by the Secretariat by 17:00 on 8 October 2020 (Jamaica time). Objections to the draft decision should be done in a letter or a Note Verbale addressed to the President of the twenty-fifth session of the Assembly. Such correspondence should be sent in an email to [ola@isa.org.jm](mailto:ola@isa.org.jm).

I seize this opportunity to also recall that, in accordance with the proposal contained in my letter of 17 September 2020, if the attached draft decision is adopted on 8 October 2020, I will circulate another letter relating to the election of the President of the twenty-sixth session of the Assembly.

Member States are also reminded to complete their consultations and submit the required nominations concerning the Vice-Presidents and members of the Credentials Committee for the twenty-sixth session of the Assembly as expeditiously as possible.

Please accept, Excellencies, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kamina Johnson Smith'.

Kamina Johnson Smith

President of the Twenty-fifth Session of the Assembly  
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

Annex

**Draft Decision on the Procedure for adoption of decisions by the Assembly during the twenty-sixth session of the International Seabed Authority owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic**

*The Assembly of the International Seabed Authority,*

*Noting with concern* the situation related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the guidance provided by the World Health Organization Key Planning Recommendations for Mass Gatherings in the context of COVID-19<sup>1</sup> aimed at containing risks of transmission;

*Authorizes* the President of the twenty-fifth Session of the Assembly and the President of the twenty-sixth session of the Assembly to circulate draft decisions of the Assembly under a silence procedure of at least 72 hours regarding matters of a procedural nature, such as the election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the twenty-sixth session of the Assembly, the appointment of the Credentials Committee, the adoption of the agenda and the organization of work;

*Decides* that, if the silence is not broken, the decision shall be considered adopted, and the twenty-sixth session of the Assembly shall take note of the decision at its first face-to-face meeting convened as soon as the circumstances allow, and that this decision on the procedure for adoption of decisions by the Assembly shall be in effect until the first face-to-face meeting of the twenty-sixth session of the Assembly;

*Decides* further that during the twenty-sixth session of the Assembly, the Credentials Committee may apply *mutatis mutandis* the procedure set out above.

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<sup>1</sup> Interim guidance, 29 May 2020, available at <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/10665-332235> .