

Madam President  
Secretary-General  
Excellencies  
Distinguished delegates and observers

May I begin by thanking the Government and people of Jamaica for their exceptional hospitality and congratulate the ISA on its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We also associate with the statement by the distinguished representative of Germany on behalf of WEOG.

Australia has a unique oceanic perspective. We look out upon the Indian, Pacific and Southern Oceans. We are steadfast in our support for the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the ISA which is a key part of the system of international norms, rules and institutions established in the 'constitution for the oceans' that underpins enterprise, trade and sustainable development.

In the last twenty-five years, significant advances in science, technology and knowledge about the deep seabed have brought the reality of deep sea mining much closer. Still, much remains unknown about the fragile deep sea environment, future impacts and future opportunities for deep sea resources.

The ISA is now faced with the difficult task of developing a Mining Code for the development of resources of the Area providing for the protection of the marine environment. In our view, the Mining Code is heading in the right direction. But it's not without hard work and sustained effort.

In marking the twenty-fifth year of the ISA, we would like to recognise the high level of participation and engagement of members states and observers in the Assembly and Council, particularly on the development of exploitation regulations; the Legal and Technical Commission for its hard work on development of the Mining Code; the important work of the Finance Committee, including in relation to the equitable sharing of benefits; and the Secretary-General and secretariat for their work to transform the ISA, introducing measures that increase public confidence in its capacity to fulfil its mandate, as highlighted by the introduction of the ISA's Strategic Plan this year.

Australia looks forward to continuing to work closely with the ISA in the years ahead.

Thank you