

**STATEMENT BY THE BAHAMAS DELEGATION IN
COMMEMORATION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY**

Thank you Madam President.

As this is the first time my delegation is speaking in this 25th session of The Assembly, please permit me to congratulate you on your election to the presidency of the Assembly. My delegation wish to recall its statement made at the 24th Session of The Assembly last year, when we expressed our pride at the professional achievements of Dr. Diva Amon of Trinidad and Tobago, who, as colleagues will recall, was the recipient of the very first Secretary-General's Award for Excellence in Deep Sea Research. On that occasion, we predicted that she would be the first female from our Caribbean region to sit as President of this Body. Madam President, while our prediction was not completely accurate, we are equally proud to see you, another daughter of the Caribbean from our host country with impeccable credentials, sitting in the seat of the presidency. My delegation pledges its full support to you and your bureau as you successfully steer the work of this 25th Session to a positive conclusion.

Madam President, my delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the honourable Ambassador from Brasil on behalf of Grulac, in expressing our satisfaction and pride at the evolution of the International Seabed Authority over the 25 years of its existence.

History will recall that The Bahamas was represented and actively participated in the high level discussions which resulted in the Convention on The Law of The Sea, and the 1994 Agreement relating to Part XI, which gave rise to the Authority. In fact Madam President I am proud to say that The Bahamas was among the first group of countries to signed and ratify UNCLOS.

Madam President, the Authority came into existence in 1994, with a mandate to implement the legal regime aimed at achieving the sustainable use of marine mineral resources for the benefit of all of mankind. (And at this point) I wish to openly thank our sister Caribbean country, Jamaica, for its foresight 25 years ago, in presenting itself as the venue for the establishment of the Seat of the Authority,

and for all of its continued efforts in assisting and ensuring the smooth functioning of this great organization.

Madam President, my delegation recalls with fondness, the meetings of those early years and we must express our gratitude to those who steered the work of the Authority then. We recall men like Hasjim Djalal, Amos Wako, Satya Nandan, Nii Odonton, Lennox Ballah, Kenneth Rattray, our own George Stewart, and so many others whose names I would like to share with this Assembly, but I am constrained by both time and my inability to properly pronounce them. The debates in those years were just as spirited and just as long as they are now, but the positive results emanating from the confluence of views, have indeed redound to the benefit of all member states, and has led us to where we are today.

Madam Chair, as I conclude, The Bahamas especially congratulates Secretary-General Lodge and his staff for the work they are doing in moving the Authority's mandate forward. This body must continue in the great work it has already done. It must continue to seek that perfect balance between organizing, regulating and controlling all mineral-related activities beyond national jurisdiction.

So with these few words Madam President, I thank you for your indulgences and My delegation says Happy Twenty-Fifth Anniversary to the Authority. We pledge our continued participation and support to its work.