

Statement on behalf of Guyana at the 25th Session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority in February, 2019, Kingston, Jamaica

Presented by Ms. Barbara Haley, Director of the Frontiers Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Madam President, On behalf of the delegation of Guyana, I would like to congratulate you and the other members of the Council on your election at this 25th Session of the Council of the International Seabed Authority. We welcome the appointment of Ms. Jihyun Lee as the new Director of Environmental Management and Mineral Resources in the Secretariat. I would also like to express sincere appreciation to the Government and people of Jamaica for the customary warm hospitality and excellent organization.

My delegation would like to thank the Secretary General for his very informative and thorough report which provides an update on the implementation of the decision of the Council relating to the reports of the Chair of the Legal and Technical Commission in 2018. I would also like to express appreciation for the useful and detailed documents and papers prepared to guide the discussions at the meeting. We note the advances towards the development of regulations on the exploitation of mineral resources in the Area, which is of primary concern for the International Seabed Authority. We are likewise appreciative of the work undertaken by the Authority for the development of the regional environmental management plans for the Area.

The exploration and exploitation of the mineral resources of the Area; the emphasis on environmental concerns and capacity building in marine scientific technologies and the management of marine ecosystems and marine protected areas, are extremely important to Small Island Developing and Coastal States and Guyana acknowledges the role of the Authority in developing policies for the effective management of the Area for the benefit of all mankind and future generations. The discussions in which States are currently engaged aimed at achieving an International Agreement under the Law of the Sea, with respect to Biological Diversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction is likewise an indication of the emphasis which is being placed at the international level on the sustainable use of marine biodiversity.

With respect to the development of the standards and guidelines for activities in the Area under the Authority's regulatory framework, Guyana notes the need for more attention to be placed on enforceability measures, with a view to ensuring that companies comply with the guidelines and regulations.

Madam President, the principles and objectives of the International Seabed Authority are fully endorsed by Guyana. At the national level Guyana is committed to developing a Green State and has formulated a Green State Development Strategy which is aimed at establishing the

foundations for inclusive green economic and social growth. The Green State Strategy embraces the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals including Sustainable Development Goal 14, which is to conserve and sustainably use our oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Guyana is soon expected to become an oil producer and we are accordingly engaged in implementing safeguards to ensure the protection of our marine environment, which include environmental impact studies to examine potential risks to marine life and coastal livelihoods, especially of local artisanal Fishers, in the event of oil spills.

In this regard Guyana has sought to incorporate the goals and targets of Agenda 2030 including Goal 14 in our national development strategies and plans. Guyana is in the process of developing services to better manage its coastal ecosystem, including data gathering, social mobilization and capacity development as well as comprehensive visual spatial data to enable informed decision-making regarding marine protection and management.

In conclusion, Madam President, I wish to commend the Authority for the initiatives on which it has embarked and to assure of Guyana's continued commitment to the achievement of the goals of the Authority.

I thank you