

STATEMENT OF INDIA

On Item 9 (Dated 23.7.2019)

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL, INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY AT ITS 25th SESSION

Madam President,

1. As my delegation is taking the floor first time during this Assembly, we congratulate you for your election as the President of this Assembly during this 25th year of the International Seabed Authority. We also take this opportunity in congratulating other members of the Bureau on their election. We assure you our fullest cooperation for effective and smooth conduct of the Assembly.
2. My delegation congratulates the Secretary General for bringing out a very comprehensive report covering various diverse issues.
3. The Secretary General's report indicates that out of the 168 parties to the 1982 Convention, there are still 18 parties who are members of the 1982 Convention but are not party to the 1994 Agreement and Secretariat is taking steps to encourage these Countries to be party to the Agreement. As stated, the provisions of the 1982 Convention and 1994 Agreement are to be interpreted and applied together as a single instrument.
4. My delegation notes with concern the large amount of outstanding contributions by the Parties and that 54 member parties have not paid their contributions for two years or more.
5. It is noteworthy to mention here that promotion of marine scientific research in the Area is a key focus of the Authority. Conducting a workshop by the Authority along with Interoceanmetal Joint Organisation and the Polish Ministry of Environment on the topic of 'Processing technologies, metal recoveries and their impact on the economic feasibility of deep-sea mining' in Poland is well appreciated. Our delegation expects that the outcome of the workshop would lead to development of processing technologies from resource to ore to metal. We are happy to note that the Authority have planned several workshops during 2019 and 2020 on development and review of regional environmental management plans. India expressed its intent in the Council to hold a REMPs workshop for Indian Ocean in 2020 and we reiterate in this Assembly that we would continue to consult with the Secretariat for the finalisation of the workshop.
6. Madam President, We are happy to see the draft high-level action plan identifying the actions required under the nine strategic directions and hope that the same will be finalised during this meeting.

7. Authority's progress in communication, outreach and development of a new website is commendable. The online access to information, digital publications and official documents through Authority website, as well as mobile application, Twitter and Facebook accounts of the Authority provides greater awareness of Authorities' work. The efforts of the secretariat in development of a new website to better present and disseminate the various aspects of the work of the Authority in a consistent format deserves appreciation.
8. My delegation takes this opportunity to congratulate Beijing Pioneer Hi-Tech Development Corporation of China for the approval of its application for plan of work for polymetallic nodules in the area of Western Pacific Ocean.
9. My delegation also noted with interest the details as provided in the Secretary General's report regarding the ISA relationship with United Nations and other relevant international organisations, and its participation in global and regional conferences such as BBNJ, Sustainable Blue Economy.
10. Madam President, Promoting and encouragement of marine scientific research in the Area and Capacity development and training of developing states is one of the mandate of the Authority and is of paramount importance. We are happy to note that during 2013-19, a total of 134 candidates have been trained under the Contractor training program and around 270 additional training places are likely to be available during 2019-2023.
11. My delegation would like to avail this opportunity to inform distinguished delegates that India has hosted a 8-week on-land training program under its contract on polymetallic sulphides during Dec 2018-Jan 2019. Five participants from Sri Lanka, Brazil, Somalia, Mauritius and Cameroon as selected by ISA attended the training program which was conducted at various institutes of Ministry of Earth Sciences across the country. These trainees have sent their letters of appreciation mentioning the knowledge and experience they derived during the training and greeted the warmth hospitality that our fellow country men extended.
12. Madam President, as we taking an arduous journey to formulate exploitation code for the seabed mineral resources that can pave way to sustainable harvesting of ocean resources which we call as 'Responsible Mining of the Seabed'. I am sure we all realise it is a tall order issue of 21st century. In this context, let get inspired by the fact that we are celebrating the 50th year of first man landing on the Moon. As you may be aware, India launched its second Moon mission a day before, called

'Chandrayan-2'. Let me explain to the benefit of this august gathering of what it means. Chandra in sanskrit is 'Moon' and Yaan is means 'Journey'. By this feat, India is joining the elite club of three other countries that have achieved landing on the moon. Our first mission to Moon was successful and reported for the first time the presence of water on its surface, which was applauded by the world. These achievements and lessons learnt suggest that, nothing is impossible if we put our heads together, use our knowledge and wisdom to realise our common goal as described in UNCLOS III 'the Common Heritage of Mankind, while making robust environmental regulations to ensure sustainable development of seabed and meeting the aspirations of human kind.

13. We take this opportunity in Assembly to thank the Chairman of LTC, Finance Committee and its Members for excellent work, and appreciate the efforts of the President of Council who skilfully conducted the proceedings.

14. Finally, my delegation takes this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to the Government of Jamaica for its kind hospitality extended for this important annual event particularly the 25th Year of the establishment of ISA and making our stay comfortable. We would also take this opportunity to acknowledge the intellectual contributions of the Jamaican delegation in the Council and in Assembly under your able leadership.

Thank you Madam President.