



Council

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Kingston, Jamaica

9-20 July 2007

Statement of the President on the work of the Council at the thirteenth session

1. The thirteenth session of the International Seabed Authority was held at Kingston from 9 to 20 July 2007.

Adoption of the agenda

2. At its 114th meeting, on 9 July 2007, the Council adopted its agenda for the thirteenth session, contained in document ISBA/13/C/1.

Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the Council

3. Also at the 114th meeting, on 9 July 2007, Raymond Wolfe (Jamaica) was elected President of the Council for 2007. Subsequently, following consultations in the regional groups, the representatives of India (Asian Group), Poland (Eastern European Group), Senegal (African Group) and Germany (Western European and other States Group) were elected as Vice-Presidents.

Report of the Secretary-General on the credentials of the members of the Council

4. The Secretary-General informed the Council that, as of 17 July 2007, credentials had been received from 35 members of the Council. The African Group had informed the Secretary-General that Senegal was the non-voting member of the Council for 2007. He invited the Asian Group to inform him, before the end of the current session, of the non-voting member of the Asian Group in the Council in 2008, when it would be the turn of the Asian Group to relinquish a seat.

Report of the Legal and Technical Commission

5. At its 118th meeting, on 11 July 2007, the Council received the report of the Chairman of the Legal and Technical Commission on the work of the Commission during the thirteenth session (ISBA/13/C/3). The Council took note of the contents of the report and thanked the newly elected members of the Commission for their contribution to the work of the Authority.

Statement of the Secretary-General on the periodic review of the implementation of plans of work for exploration by contractors

6. At the 121st meeting, on 13 July 2007, the Secretary-General made a statement to the Council on the periodic review of the implementation of plans of work for exploration by contractors (ISBA/13/C/4*). The Council took note of the statement.

Considerations relating to the future size and composition of the Legal and Technical Commission and the process for future elections

7. The Council considered the question of the future size and composition of the Legal and Technical Commission and the process for future elections, noting that at the twelfth session, it had requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report for its consideration (contained in document ISBA/13/C/2). The Council agreed that there was a need to streamline the procedures for future elections in order to avoid the difficulties that had arisen in connection with past elections to the Commission. The decision of the Council in this regard is contained in document ISBA/13/C/6.

8. The Council was not able to reach a consensus on the future size of the Legal and Technical Commission. It was agreed, however, that it was essential for the Council to reach a decision on the size of the Commission prior to the next election, which was due to be held in 2011. To facilitate its deliberations, the Council decided to request the Secretary-General, taking into account the views of the Chairs of the Commission, to prepare a report for consideration by the Council in 2010 on the functioning of the Commission, with a view to the Council's determining in 2010 the number of members of the Commission to be elected in 2011.

Draft regulations on prospecting and exploration for polymetallic sulphides in the Area

9. At its 115th meeting, on 10 July 2007, the Council resumed its consideration of the draft regulations on prospecting and exploration for polymetallic sulphides in the Area, noting that the Council had undertaken a first reading of the draft regulations during its eleventh session in 2005 and had also further considered the draft during its twelfth session in 2006. Since the last session in 2006, the secretariat had, at the request of the Council, prepared separate sets of regulations dealing with polymetallic sulphides and cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts. The revised draft regulations on prospecting and exploration for polymetallic sulphides, now

contained in document ISBA/13/WP.1, also took into account comments and suggestions made by outgoing members of the Legal and Technical Commission.

10. Following a general debate on the draft regulations, the Council was provided with a briefing by an expert, Dr. Mark Hannington, on global exploration models for polymetallic sulphide deposits in the Area. The briefing was followed by a question-and-answer session.

11. The Council then commenced a detailed examination of the revised draft regulations. By the end of the session, the Council had completed a detailed reading of regulations 1 to 43 and had agreed on revisions to some of those regulations. An informal text of the agreed revisions (ISBA/13/C/CRP.1) was provided to all delegations. The Council also agreed that the following regulations would remain pending and would be taken up by the Council at its next session in 2008: 1(3), 12, 16, 19(2)(a), 21, 24(2), 27, 28(2), 33(2), 35, 36(2) and (3), and 38(2). The Council would then proceed to consider annexes 1 to 4 to the draft regulations. Additional briefing papers would be prepared by the secretariat, as necessary, to assist in consideration of the pending issues.

12. The delegation of France, supported by those of Honduras, Germany and Spain, suggested that, in light of the inadequate scientific and technical knowledge relating to polymetallic sulphides, the regulations should contain a review clause in the light of improved knowledge. The secretariat was asked to provide a draft of such a provision, taking into account the discussions in the Council.

Next meeting of the Council

13. The next meeting of the Council will be held from 26 May to 6 June 2008. It was noted that the Western European and other States Group would, in due course, nominate a candidate for the Presidency of the Council in 2008.
