



## Assembly

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## Request for observer status in the Assembly

### Note by the Secretariat

1. In accordance with rule 82, paragraph 1 (d) of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, “the United Nations, its specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other intergovernmental organizations invited by the Assembly” may participate as observers in the Assembly. Under rule 82, paragraph 3, such observers may participate in the deliberations of the Assembly upon the invitation of the President on questions within the scope of their competence.

2. In accordance with those rules, 29 intergovernmental organizations currently have observer status. They are listed on page 19 of the International Seabed Authority Handbook 2009. Most of them, including the United Nations and its specialized agencies, were also observers to the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea and the Preparatory Commission and automatically became observers to the Authority upon its establishment. Since the Authority was established, the following intergovernmental organizations have been given observer status: secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, World Conservation Union, Permanent Commission for the South Pacific and the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission.

3. Unlike the situation with non-governmental organizations, which have to demonstrate that they have an interest in a particular aspect of the Authority’s work, intergovernmental organizations, since they are generally comprised of member States of the Authority, are not required to demonstrate such interest nor to otherwise justify their status.

4. On 20 March 2009, Joshua Brien, Adviser (Legal), Special Advisory Services Division, Economic and Legal Section, of the Commonwealth secretariat, wrote to the secretariat of the International Seabed Authority, requesting observer status with the Assembly of the Authority, in order to “contribute to and benefit from [the Authority’s] work on seabed mining issues”.

5. The Commonwealth of Nations, known as the Commonwealth, is an intergovernmental organization of 53 independent member States, of which 50 are

members of the International Seabed Authority. They cooperate within a framework of common values and goals including, inter alia, the promotion of the rule of law, free trade, and sustainable economic and social development. The activities of the Commonwealth are carried out through the London-based permanent Commonwealth Secretariat headed by a Secretary-General.

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