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Statement by the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States

1. The Group of Latin American and Caribbean States emphasizes that Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea applies to the Area, by which is meant the seabed and ocean floor and subsoil thereof beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, and that the Authority exercises powers and control over marine scientific research and protection of the marine environment in the Area.

2. The last sentence of paragraph 58 of the Secretary-General's report¹ states that "the rights and obligations of the contractor arise from the terms of its contract with the Authority". While these words are understandable in the context, the Group would point out that the concept is incomplete since, as was discussed at length at previous sessions and as is stated in regulation 14 of the regulations on prospecting, the applicant must comply with "the applicable obligations created by the provisions of the Convention and the rules, regulations and procedures of the Authority, the decisions of the relevant organs of the Authority and the terms of its contracts with the Authority".²

3. As to the activities on the continental shelf, the Group noted what the Secretary-General said when introducing his report³ to the effect that the sole competence of the Authority in relation to the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles was that provided for in article 82, paragraph 4, and that it is premature to begin the consideration of the question of contributions for exploitation of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles. The Group would therefore like paragraph 62 of the Secretary-General's report to be clarified. It is gratified to learn from the Finance Committee that the workshop to be held in 2004 will have a different objective from the one stated in document ISBA/8/A/6-ISBA/8/C/2, with priority being given to the continuation of the work currently being carried out with respect to minerals in the Area.

4. The Group of Latin American and Caribbean States requests the Secretary-General to prepare the agendas for the sessions of the Authority in such a way as to permit the efficient interaction of all its organs on the basis of the planned programme of work, such documents to be approved every year at the first meeting of the Assembly.

5. The agendas should allow the Finance Committee and the Legal and Technical Committee to carry out their advisory responsibilities fully and in a timely manner, in such a way that the Council and the Assembly are able to adopt their decisions on the basis not only of the suggestions in the reports prepared at the end of their annual meetings but also of the responses to the consultations, the reconsidered versions of proposals or the pronouncements on new questions submitted by the Council or the Assembly throughout the session.

Notes

¹ ISBA/8/A/5.

² ISBA/6/A/18, annex, regulation 14 (a).

³ ISBA/8/A/5, paras. 59 to 62.
