

Statement by H.E. Mr. Yamazaki,
Permanent Representative of Japan
to the International Seabed Authority
On Commemoration of ISA's 25th Anniversary
Kingston, 25 July 2019

Thank you, Madame President,
Secretary General
Distinguished guests,
Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to have this opportunity today to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention and the establishment of the Authority together with you.

In 1982, the Convention concluded here in Jamaica after 9 years of negotiations at the third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. The Authority was established concurrently with the entry into force of the Convention on November 16, 1994. Since then, the Authority has made significant achievements such as adoption of exploration regulations for three mineral resources and conclusion of 29 exploration contracts.

Looking back on the past 25 years of the Authority, we realize that our activities in the Area today are built on countless efforts by our predecessors. We are responsible for succeeding their goodwill and passing it on to the next generation. In my opinion, there are three things that can make the exploitation of the mineral resources in the Area designated as Common Heritage of Mankind really serve for the benefit of mankind as a whole.

The first condition is an existence of players to exploit the deep sea bed. Without such players, there will be no benefits to share. In light of this, operators should be given proper incentives, as they get into uncharted waters to exploit deep sea mining in view of technical and economic difficulties and potential risks. When we discuss the draft regulations on the exploitation, this should be kept in mind.

The second is to create an enabling environment for every country to participate in exploitation in the Area. To this end, an emphasis should be placed on promoting capacity-building such as training programs for scientists and engineers from developing countries and also continuous effort in sharing information and knowledge obtained from marine scientific research conducted in the Area.

Thirdly, to be successful, deep sea mining requires a wide range of expertise in mining, international economics, marine environment and international law. Here, I would like to emphasize the importance of capitalizing on the highest level of expertise through collaboration with the world's top level scientists and various international organizations competent for the subjects relevant to deep sea mining. This is essential for realizing environmentally sustainable and commercially viable deep sea mining. In this respect, I commend the Authority for having led this initiative and having made concrete achievements up to today.

As we all know, for actual exploitation of the mineral resources in the Area, there are many challenges ahead. Completion of drafting the Exploitation Regulations is one of them. But I am sure we will work together in order to overcome those challenges and commence mining activities in the not too distant future.

For that purpose, it is important for member States, contractors, scientists, and observers to work together under the leadership of the Secretary-General, Mr. Lodge. I assure you that Japan always supports such efforts.

Finally, I would like to express our deep appreciation to the Secretariat of the Authority for its hospitality in hosting this session.

Thank you.

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