

KIRIBATI NATIONAL STATEMENT AND COMMEMORATIVE STATEMENT AT THE 25TH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY.

1. Since this is the first time for Kiribati to take the floor, I would like to begin by congratulating you Madam President for your election and your elected vice presidents.
2. I also wish to commend the work of the Secretary General and his team for the tremendous work in spearheading the work of the Authority as required by the Council and the Assembly.
3. Madam President, Kiribati believes in the potentials of deep seabed minerals and sees it as an opportunity for a quantum leap particularly for developing states like ours, and that it aligns well with the Kiribati 20 Years vision. A Vision that focuses on maximizing returns from sustainable development of marine resources to support our economic developmental needs.
4. Kiribati is also keen to participate responsibly in such development opportunity but we also acknowledge that this comes with great obligations and liabilities that may present additional barriers, challenges including disproportionate burdens for Small Islands Developing States like Kiribati.
5. We have limited technical capacities and resources to pursue our aspirations and fully participate in this deep sea minerals development opportunity, and we are grateful that these have been adequately covered in the strategy plan of the Authority under strategic direction 5 and strategic direction 6.
6. Kiribati would also like to be part of the Capacity Building programme of the Authority and its Contractors to progress with this development opportunity so we would like to take this opportunity to thank the Republic of Korea Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries for allowing Kiribati to participate in its capacity building programme that will start next month. This is the first time for Kiribati to be engaged in such an important capacity building programme and we hope to see more engagement in other similar programmes in the future.
7. Madam President, Kiribati appreciates the work of the Authority in laying out the legal frameworks not only to allow for the exploitation of the deep seabed minerals but also to ensure protection of the marine environment with the ultimate aim to equally distribute benefits derived from the common heritage of mankind.

8. We also acknowledge and appreciate the Authority's efforts invested on the development of stringent measures to ensure protection of the marine environment, albeit, there are few concerns that we would like to flag:

- (i) Firstly, and as mentioned by the Pacific Community in his intervention on Tuesday, Pacific Small Island Developing States like Kiribati are heavily dependent on fisheries as a single primary source of income and daily subsistence. Our delegation is concerned on the potential impact of the transboundary issues and especially of the cumulative impacts of potential mining in the CCZ it may cause to our economy as well as to our main source of food security. We believe that transboundary effects and cumulative impacts are not explicitly or adequately addressed in the current draft Exploitation Regulation.
- (ii) Secondly, our delegation also concerned about our security and the potential for unregulated and unreported access to resources with Kiribati's EEZ, and indeed of the disproportionate burden it may cause to ensure protection of our right as a coastal state over our internal waters and resources.

Having mentioned these key concerns, our delegation proposed to the Assembly and the Authority consideration of:

- (i) Effective and efficient monitoring strategies/mechanism to be recognized in the Regulation and the Strategic Plan.
- (ii) The need for consultation of concerned coastal states as echoed by other delegates for activities to be carried out in areas adjacent to national jurisdictions.

My Delegation would like to join other Delegations in congratulating the Authority on its 25th Anniversary and I assure the Secretary General of Kiribati's support as they embark on a challenging but exiting journey ahead.

I thank you, Madam President.