



# MYANMAR

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Statement by Ambassador U Hau Do Suan, Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United Nations, and Leader of Myanmar Delegation

at

25<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority on

Agenda Item-9

“Report of the Secretary-General”

Kingston, 23 July 2019

**Madam President,**

Allow me once again to extend my warmest congratulations for your election as President of the 25<sup>th</sup> session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority. I assure you of our full support and cooperation.

I would also like to express our appreciations to your predecessor Mr. Mariuz Orion Jedrysek for his stewardship of the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly. Our congratulations also go to the Vice Presidents and other members of the Bureau. We thank Ambassador Lumka Yengeni of South Africa for her commendable leadership of the Council.

Let me also thank the Government and people of Jamaica for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to us during our stay in the beautiful city of Kingston.

**Madam President,**

My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his comprehensive annual report on the work of the Authority. Myanmar fully supports the Authority’s efforts in implementing its mandate. My delegation acknowledges with high appreciations the hard work of the Secretariat under the leadership of Secretary-General Mr. Michael Lodge.

**Madam President,**

This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Seabed Authority. The Authority was established under the Convention and the 1994 Agreement to organize and control activities in the Area, particularly to administer the resources of the Area. Throughout the years, the Authority had been able to fulfill many parts of its mandate. The successful conclusion of legal codes for prospecting and exploration of polymetallic nodules, polymetallic sulphides and ferromanganese cobalt crusts, as well as the formulation of mining regulations are among the most significant achievements of the Authority in the past 25 years.

As we celebrate 25 years of the Authority's success, it is also fitting that we look forward to the future that would bring more challenges to the work of the Authority. As we are now about to take further steps to embark on implementing new levels of the mandate, it is crucial that we clearly define our future direction, taking into account the lessons that we have learned during the past 25 years. We must always remind ourselves that we shall at all time act strictly in accordance with the mandate under the provisions of the Convention and the 1994 Agreement.

In this connection, my delegation welcomes the draft high-level action plan, and the draft performance indicators for the implementation of the strategic plan of the International Seabed Authority for the period 2019-2023. Under your able leadership, Madam President, my delegation is confident that we will be able to successfully adopt the two draft decisions which will serve as our road map for the next 4 years.

**Madam President,**

My delegation commends the Legal and Technical Commission (LTC) for finalizing the revised version of the draft Regulations on Exploitation of Mineral Resources in the Area. My delegation supports action to proceed with the development of standards and guidelines in parallel with the exploitation regulations. Therefore, we urge the Council to find a way forward in order to speed up implementation of the mandate of the Authority.

My delegation wishes to underscore the importance of making arrangements to protect possible environmental harms particularly adoption of the Regional Environmental Management Plans (REMPs) prior to granting permissions of exploitation. In this regard, we support the idea to set up an environmental fund.

**Madam President,**

On matter relating to compliance of the contractors, we noticed that the majority of the contractors have followed the regulations of the Authority including submitting reports in accordance with the reporting template and conduct their activities in line with the approved scheduled programmes.

However, there are some contractors who failed to follow the regulations. Therefore, my delegation welcomes the three approaches presented by the LTC to deal with the issue of contractors' non-compliance. We would like to strongly encourage the Secretary-General to deal effectively with the issues of non-compliance in accordance with the LTC's recommendations.

**Madam President,**

My delegation would like to commend the work of the Finance Committee and the Secretariat in ensuring the financial regime to be competent. However, it is alarming to note that 54 countries (about 33 percent of all members of the Authority) are in arrears of their assessed financial contribution. Therefore, my delegation welcomes the Finance Committee's recommendations for the Secretary-General to deal with the issue in more effective ways.

We are also greatly concern over the negative balance of the Voluntary Trust Fund. My delegation would like to thank countries and business enterprises that are contributing to the Fund. We wish to urge other members and observers to follow suit to enable effective participation of members from the developing countries at the Commission and Committee meetings.

**Madam President,**

Capacity-building plays a critical role in States' abilities, particularly developing countries, to access marine resources in the Area. We highly appreciate the Authority for organizing technical workshops, seminars and training, marine scientific research, scholarship, and capacity building activities for deep-sea research for the developing countries.

In this regard, I would like to take this opportunity to express my Government's deep appreciations to the Secretary-General for initiating to hold ISA capacity building workshop in in Nay Pyi Taw in September this year. The workshop will be the first of its kind in the region. It is envisioned to bring various relevant stake holders, academicians, and government officials to exchange views for strengthening regional cooperation including capacity building in the field of marine mineral research. The workshop is also aiming to raise awareness in the region especially amongst ASEAN and BIMSTEC member states on activities in "the AREA".

**Madam President,**

Endowment fund for Marine Scientific Research in the Area plays a crucial role in promoting marine scientific research in the Area for the benefit of mankind. My delegation is pleased to learn that as of 31 May 2019, a total of 145 young scientists or government officials, from 50 countries have benefited from the Fund and able to do their research in the Area. My delegation would like to thank the contributors, and encourages others also to contribute for the benefit of our future generation.

The outcome of marine scientific research should be disseminated amongst contractors and the international scientific community through ISA website. The interface between the contractors and the scientific research communities need to be further enhanced for better studies.

Finally, madam President, my delegation would like to stress the need to focus on SDG Goal 14 of the 2030 Agenda and the principles of Common Heritage of Mankind and equitable distribution of the benefit in the finalization and implementation of a regulation for exploitation of mineral resources in the Area.

I would like to reiterate Myanmar's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and 1994 Agreement relating to the implementation of part XI of the Convention. My delegation assures you of Myanmar's continued support and contribution to the Authority in the years to come.

I thank you.