



## **Federal Republic of Nigeria**

**Statement delivered**

**By**

**Dr. Tiwatope Adeleye Elias-Fatile,  
Head, International Law Section, First United Nations Division,  
International Organisations Department,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,  
Abuja**

**At the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the International Seabed Authority (ISA),  
ISA Headquarters, Kingston, Jamaica**

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2017

**Mr. President,**

Once again, my delegation congratulates you on your election as President of this 23<sup>rd</sup> Session and we commend you for the excellent way you have been steering the affairs of this meeting.

2. Nigeria equally congratulates Messrs. Michael Lodge and Ascencio-Herrera Alfonso who were recently appointed as Secretary-General and Legal Counsel/Deputy Secretary-General respectively.

3. We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his very first report tabled before us for consideration, which was succinctly summarized and eloquently delivered. We have noted the key issues raised in the comprehensive report. I like to assure you that as we look forward to benefitting immensely from our membership of the Authority, Nigeria would support the efforts to strengthen the organisation for maximum proficiency and we shall continue to play our part effectively in its activities.

4. In the course of the meeting, we shall make further comments on some of the issues raised in the Secretary-General's report. However, we like to quickly note some points:

**Mr. President,**

5. Nigeria commends the Authority for its participation in the just concluded World Oceans Conference held at the United Nations Headquarters, New York

from 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> June 2017, and the unanimous agreement by Member States of the United Nations to a set of measures that will begin the reversal of the decline of the ocean's health. In particular, my delegation commends the Secretary-General for the brilliant contribution of the Authority to discussions on SDG 14 – “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.” We believe that the outcome document, together with more than 1,300 commitments to action, marks the foundation of the global initiatives to the management and conservation of the ocean. The Authority should be active in these processes, especially in the preservation of the health of the Area.

**Mr. President,**

6. We like to encourage members of the Authority who became parties to the Convention before the expiration of the 1994 Agreement but are yet to become parties to the Agreement to please do so. In the same vein, we commend Ghana and Senegal that acceded to the Protocol within the past 2 years and we encourage other States who are yet to do so to follow the footsteps of these two Africa countries.

**Mr. President,**

7. My delegation commends the Secretariat for the development of the Satya N. Nandan Library as a good source of information gathering. We are

particularly happy that the Library has been upgraded, modernized and digitalized. That is highly commendable. We also noted that the Authority now has a strong online presence and we commend the Secretariat for this milestone attainment, which is very important in this Information Age.

8. Furthermore, we noted that the Authority is making good success in improving in its relationship with the United Nations and other relevant international organisations and bodies. However, it is evident that we need to do more in sensitization and reaching out to different sectors of the societies across the world that are yet to fully understand and appreciate the importance of the work of the ISA. In this respect, we like to suggest that the Authority should consider the need to work very closely with the Advisory Committee of the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law. This is with the aim of ensuring that they integrate issues concerning the ISA richly in the content of the Programme.

9. In addition, we like to underline the need for the Authority to strengthen international cooperation in marine scientific research and other specialized fields with mandates that could enhance the work of the organisation. We shall raise more points on this during the discussion on agenda item no 9.

**Mr. President,**

10. My delegation encourages Member States and relevant stakeholders to make robust financial contributions to the Endowment Fund. This would go a long way to assist in building capacities, especially in developing nations. Indeed, building capacities among developing countries will reduce areas of friction during discussions at meetings such as this, among developed and developing countries.

**Mr. President,**

11. In conclusion, my delegation is grateful to Jamaica for hosting the Authority and for hosting us at this 23<sup>rd</sup> Session.

12. I thank you for listening.