

Check against delivery!

**Statement by Shanghai Jiao Tong University Center for Polar and Deep Ocean
Development
at the 23rd Session of the International Seabed Authority**

Your Excellency, Mr President,

Thank you for giving me the floor. I am speaking on behalf of Shanghai Jiao Tong University Center for Polar and Deep Ocean Development. We are a new observer attending the proceedings of the Assembly for the first time. As a first order of business, we offer our congratulations on your election to the presidency of the 23rd session of the ISA Assembly and the election of other members of the Bureau. I would also like to register our profound respect for Secretary-General Mr Lodge and his team for their sterling work.

The Center for Polar and Deep Ocean Development benefits from the considerable advantages of Shanghai Jiao Tong University in areas like deep-sea science, technology and equipment. The Center's objective is better interaction and shared progress in deep-sea science, technology, policies and legislation by undertaking deep sea-related research projects and hosting The Deep Sea Forum and other academic exchange events. We also run an advanced international

workshop on the Theory and Practice of the Law of the Sea at regular intervals as a training opportunity for professionals in the field of oceans and seas. In July 2017, the Center organised a two-week advanced workshop under the theme, “Deep Seafloor Mining: Science, Technology and Law”. Participants came from institutions of higher learning, government agencies and front-line institutions of India, Cameroon, Brazil, Thailand, as well as China. The curriculum included theoretical studies and site visits. The workshop produced gratifying results.

The Shanghai Jiaotong University Center for Polar and Deep Ocean Development looks forward to taking an active part in the discussions and studies on the development of the international seabed regime, the sustainable use of seabed resources and environmental protection, providing support, where we can and to the extent possible, to the Authority in such areas as marine scientific research, capacity building, training of marine professionals and international cooperation.

Mr President, with your permission, we would like to venture some suggestions regarding periodic review of the Authority under Article 154 of UNCLOS:

In the Review Committee’s final report, I refer to Recommendation 17, the chapeau preceding that recommendation, i.e. para 28, reads: “The adoption of a

long-term plan defining the strategic direction and aims of the Authority would be of major importance.” (Unquote) We think this recommendation warrants particular attention, for the following reasons:

Firstly, scientific spirit, rationality and objectivity should prevail in the development of the Authority’s strategic plan, to define the Authority’s to-do list, way forward and milestones for the coming period, making sure that all the priorities are properly implemented on the ground.

Secondly, the focus of the Authority’s agenda is transitioning to a phase where exploration and exploitation are gaining equal importance, and much of its effort is invested in the development of exploitation regulations. It requires the Authority’s strategic plan to base itself on reasonable projections and studies as to the global metals market and the prospects of commercial exploitation of mineral resources in the Area, while taking into account the intentions and behaviour of contractors as regards commercial exploitation of such resources, the international supply-demand dynamics of metallic minerals, market conditions and technological advancement, so as to move the elaboration of the regulations forward step by step.

Thirdly, given the importance of the exploitation regulations that are being developed, we suggest that the Authority consider creating an expert working

group mandated to study the demand for minerals from the Area, the supply capacity, the price trend, as well as factors and trends that have an impact thereon. The results of such studies would provide a scientific basis that informs and guides the development of the exploitation regulations.

Thank you, Mr President.