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Statement of the Kingdom of Thailand on Agenda Item 9 Consideration of the Final Report of the Committee Established by the Assembly to Carry out a Periodic Review of the International Regime of the Area Pursuant to Article 154 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, at the International Seabed Authority, Kingston, Jamaica, 16 August 2017

Mr. President,

1. Since this is the first time that my delegation takes the floor, I wish to join previous speakers in extending our sincere congratulations to you on your election as the President of the Assembly at the twenty-third session of the International Seabed Authority. I am confident that under your skillful and able leadership, the meeting of the Assembly will have a successful conclusion. I would also like to congratulate Mr. Michael Lodge on his newly appointment as the ISA Secretary-General in January this year. My delegation greatly appreciates his efforts to improve the work of the Authority since the shouldering of his duty. My delegation would also like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to the Government of Jamaica for her generosity as the host country of the Authority. We thank the Government and the people of Jamaica for their warm welcome and hospitality extended to my delegation during this session.

Mr. President,

2. My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Review Committee, established by the Assembly to carry out a periodic review of the international regime of the Area pursuant to Article 154 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, for the final report on a general and systemic review, containing 19 recommendations, which was approved by consensus. We note that the Review Committee had carefully analyzed each recommendation contained in the report and had substantially reduced their original number as well as added more precision to recommendations phrased in general terms. We thank the Secretary-General for the support rendered to the Review Committee in this regard, and for his effort in circulating copies of the final report and his comments on the recommendations to Member States in a timely manner.

3. In light of the recommendations presented before the Assembly, my delegation wishes to make the following observations. In general, we are pleased with the recommendations and to see that some of them have already been implemented or have been welcomed by the Secretary-General. Specifically, with respect to **Recommendation 3 on a clear strategy and policy for data management**, we note with appreciation that work in this regard has been ongoing, and wish to express our support to the Secretary-General in his effort to launch the requisite database and to fill the gap of data coverage. In this regard, we look forward to the full implementation of the data management strategy which is expected to be finalized by the end of October 2018.

4. Regarding **Recommendation 7 on promotion and encouragement of marine scientific research**, this issue is of importance to developing countries, including my own, which are less able in terms of technological advancement and related resources. Therefore, my delegation strongly supports the promotion and encouragement of marine scientific research in the Area, and dissemination of related knowledge for the benefit of all States Parties, particularly developing countries. Guided by the principle of common heritage of mankind, it is important to support participation of qualified scientists and technical personnel from developing countries in marine scientific research programmes and offer them opportunities to participate in training, technical assistance and scientific cooperation programmes. We, therefore, commend the Authority in its work relating to this matter, including the organization of technical workshops and sensitization seminars taken place during the reporting period. We recognize that sufficient, sustainable and predictable funding support, including from extra-budgetary funding, will be critical to the achievement of effective implementation of this recommendation, resulting in meaningful engagement with the scientific community and relevant deep-sea science projects and initiatives.

5. With respect to **Recommendation 13 on structure of and coordination within the Secretariat**, this year we have seen some changes in the organizational structure of the Secretariat with the aim of ensuring effective implementation of the objectives of the Convention and mandates entrusted with the Secretariat. In this connection, we welcome the establishment of a senior management group and new contract management unit as well as the reorganization of the executive office of the Secretary-General. We trust that this will improve the level and quality of services provided by the Secretariat. Moreover, in light of the process in moving towards

exploitation phrase and the development of draft regulations on exploitation, we believe that further reorganization of the Secretariat may be required to respond to future challenges.

Mr. President,

6. My delegation welcomes **Recommendation 17 on strategic plan for the Authority**. We believe that by having a long-term plan defining strategic direction and aims of the Authority would assist the formulation of a programme of work for the Secretariat to have clear milestones and deliverables, and will also benefit the Authority during the preparation of its budget. Therefore, we support the recommendation which requests the Secretary-General to submit a draft strategic plan to the Assembly, if possible at its twenty-fourth session, in 2018.

7. Last but not least, with respect to **Recommendation 19 on transparency of finance provisions**, my delegation concurs with this recommendation as in line with the principle of common heritage of mankind and Article 140 (2) of the Convention. This Article stipulates that the Authority shall provide for the equitable sharing of financial and other economic benefits derived from activities in the Area through any appropriate mechanism, on a non-discriminatory basis in accordance with Article 160 paragraph 2(f) (i). The importance of transparency of financial provisions cannot be overly emphasized. In order for the Authority to act on behalf of humankind, we fully support the recommendation which requires that the rules and regulations of the Authority in connection with the regime of benefit-sharing be developed with special consideration given to the needs of developing States.

Thank you Mr. President.
