



**Inaugural Ceremony of 3rd IORA Blue Economy Ministerial Conference chaired by H.E Sheikh Hasina, Honourable Prime Minister of the Government of the People of the Republic of Bangladesh**

Dhaka, Bangladesh

**Thursday, 5 September 2019**

STATEMENT

by

Mr. Michael W. Lodge,  
Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority

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Honorable Prime Minister,

Honorable Foreign Minister,

Your Excellency Dr Nomvuyo Nokwe, Secretary-General of IORA,

Your Excellency Makhotso Soty, Chair of IORA,

Rear Admiral Khurshed Alam, Secretary of the Maritime Unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

Honorable Ministers,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the International Seabed Authority let me say what an honor it is to be invited to attend this third IORA ministerial conference on the Blue Economy.

I would like to thank the Government of Bangladesh for the successful organization of this conference and moreover to acknowledge the long-standing and consistent support of Bangladesh for the work of the International Seabed Authority.

As a member of the Council, and a past President of the Assembly of the Authority, Bangladesh has provided strong and wise leadership on ocean affairs since the entry into force of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea twenty-five years ago. I commend you for your commitment to the rule of law in the ocean.

Today, as the world focuses on the implementation of Agenda 2030 and particularly on accelerating progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 14 - the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources - two considerations need to be foremost in our minds.

First, the importance of the implementation of international law through the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

And second, the importance of international cooperation, particularly concerning marine areas beyond national jurisdiction.

In this connection, the regime established by the Convention is of critical importance. Not only does it provide the best example we have of a legal regime for the shared management of global public goods, but also it establishes a coherent platform for international cooperation.

As we begin to understand better the way in which the ocean is of fundamental importance to life on earth, including its role in regulating the climate as well as providing the fundamental ecosystem services to support human life, effective international cooperation in collecting and sharing knowledge of ocean resources becomes ever more critical.

As far as the deep ocean is concerned, it is clear that the benefits to humanity of deep seabed exploration extend far beyond knowledge of the mineral resources and shared financial benefits from future mining, but also include scientific knowledge of the marine environment that will be critical to realizing all aspects of the Blue Economy, including knowledge of marine biodiversity.

The Authority is pleased to be in dialogue with IORA towards establishing a closer relationship that will be of direct benefit to the member States of IORA and enable the Authority to fulfill its mandate in this region to promote and encourage marine scientific research in the deep seabed whilst at the same time building capacity among developing States in the region.

I look forward to increased cooperation with the States of this region and I assure you of the support of the Authority for IORA and its work in the coming years.

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