



WMU Global Ocean Conference 2018 *Building Transformative Partnerships for Ocean Sustainability*

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Statement

By

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I wish to thank the World Maritime University for inviting the International Seabed Authority to contribute to this important conference on building transformative partnerships for ocean sustainability. I also congratulate you on the launch of the Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute, which is clearly a significant contribution to the future development of the international law of the sea. I look forward to working more closely both with the University and with the Institute.

Today I want to talk about some of the efforts being undertaken by the Authority to develop such partnerships.

As one of the institutions created by the Law of the Sea Convention, the Authority has a critical role to play in international ocean governance. The concept that the deep seabed and its resources are the common heritage of mankind underpins the legal regime for the management of all marine space. What is not under the exclusive jurisdiction of States is managed by all States through the Authority, based on principles of equality and equity in access to and allocation of resources and with a view to promoting the economic and social advancement of all peoples of the world.

The Authority fully embraces the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda and in particular those of SDG14 to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. In the case of the deep seabed, the Convention requires that this is done for the benefit of mankind as a whole.

The core business of the Authority is to regulate for the exploration and exploitation of marine minerals: to set the conditions for access to those minerals, the financial terms for

exploitation, equitable sharing criteria for distributing the financial benefits, and measures to ensure the protection of the marine environment from harmful effects.

Today, however, I want to talk about the related, but equally important, mandates of the Authority to promote and encourage marine scientific research in the deep seabed, and build capacity to help realize the benefits of the Convention. It is in these areas that the Authority is interested in building inclusive, innovative and transformative partnerships to meet our strategic objectives.

Let me take marine scientific research to start with. This is critical to better understanding of the ocean and is fundamental to effective management of ocean resources as well as environmental protection. The Convention specifically recognizes that sharing the results of scientific research with developing countries, that lack the capacity to carry out such research, is one of the core tasks of the Authority.

To that end, one of the priority objectives of the Authority in 2018 is to launch a new public-facing database containing all the data and information collected by deep sea mineral exploration contractors over many decades, as well as the results of other marine scientific research programmes. This has involved intense collaboration with stakeholders, including member States, the private sector, other international organisations, scientific institutions, academia and civil society, and the results will benefit all users of the ocean.

Since I took up office in January 2017, we have also significantly enhanced our cooperation with colleagues from IOC-UNESCO, notably in the context of the design and implementation of the UN Decade for Ocean Science. Through this partnership between organizations we aim to exploit synergies to work towards common scientific objectives, including, for example, improved mapping of the seabed and enhancing ocean observing networks.

The most transformative event in recent years was the 2017 United Nations Oceans Conference, which produced a radically creative road map, in the form of more than 1400 voluntary commitments, for achieving the implementation of SDG14.

The Authority was pleased to register seven voluntary commitments during that conference. Each one of these carefully thought out commitments involves the establishment of action-oriented transformative partnerships aimed at achieving one or more goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda.

For instance, in the area of marine science we have pledged to work with partner organisations and institutions to increase knowledge of deep sea biodiversity and ecological processes and functions. These efforts include the publication of online taxonomic atlases as well as the development of long-term monitoring systems for the deep ocean.

We have also committed to concrete actions to enhance the role of women in marine scientific research, particularly women from developing countries. This effort was launched by a very successful side event at the Commission on the Status of Women in March this year.

In July 2018, I will announce the winner of the first ever Secretary-General's award for excellence in deep sea research, aimed specifically at young scientists and researchers under 35 from developing countries.

The Authority is also working jointly with UN-DESA to increase the socio-economic benefits for Small Island developing States through responsible development of deep sea mineral resources as part of their Blue Economy.

And we have established a partnership with the African Minerals Development Centre of UNECA and the African Union to help improve governance of Africa's deep seabed resources.

Our targets are ambitious, and we cannot do this alone. So we invite all of you to join us in these initiatives.

One of the core themes of the 2030 Agenda is to ensure that 'nobody is left behind'.

This is equally important when it comes to ensuring the effective implementation of international law through the Law of the Sea Convention. I am honoured that, along with the Legal Counsel of the United Nations, Mr Miguel de Serpa Soares, I have been appointed to act as co-facilitator of the Community of Ocean Action dedicated to this topic.

167 States and the European Union have ratified the Law of the Sea Convention and this is a cause for celebration. But one of my concerns is that the half of the remaining non-parties to the Convention are least developed and land-locked developing States. Together we are talking about 14 countries and 268 million people. The Convention contains specific provisions aimed at enabling these countries to benefit from the sustainable use of ocean resources and indeed this is one of the fundamental objectives behind the common heritage principle. I believe that it is essential that we all reach out to these States to encourage them to join the Convention and participate fully in decision-making processes as well as share in the benefits to mankind of greater scientific knowledge in the ocean.

I thank you for your attention.