



One Ocean Summit

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STATEMENT

by

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Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority

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I wish first to thank the Government of France for inviting me to contribute to this discussion on behalf of the International Seabed Authority.

The deep seabed, covering 54% of the global ocean, is the only example that we have of a global commons that has been set aside to be managed internationally for the common good.

Today, this space is the frontier for cutting-edge marine science, technological innovation, and deep-sea exploration.

The prospects offered by this new frontier, which is the common heritage of all mankind, are enormous. The research being undertaken will enable us to better understand our planet and further develop a sustainable future. The rich mineral deposits found on the sea floor and the biodiversity associated with them also create exciting opportunities for sustainable development.

At the same time, we need to acknowledge that the pressures on the marine environment created because of our dependence on the resources provided by the ocean are real. They also present a challenge for effective governance and management.

In this context, the Authority represents a unique experiment in civilization. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea established the Authority as the organization responsible for managing this vast area of ocean space.

The regime for the deep seabed lies at the heart of the entire system of global ocean governance under the Convention.

It could easily have failed. However, today, this comprehensive governance system has the full and active support of 168 States parties, as well as the participation of 94 observers. The fact that the members of the

Authority came together in December 2021 in Kingston, Jamaica, amply demonstrated their trust in this governance system and its resilience.

Without the Authority, we could easily have seen rampant unrestrained exploitation of the deep seabed. Instead, we have the benefit of 40 years of carefully managed deep-sea exploration which has massively expanded our collective understanding and knowledge of the ocean at large.

We have also seen the progressive development of a sophisticated and balanced legal regime, open to equal participation by developed and developing States, anchored in the precautionary approach, transparency, and equity, and fully aligned with the Agenda 2030. A recent independent report issued a few months ago after extensive multistakeholder consultation determined that the Authority makes a meaningful contribution to 12 of the 17 SDGs.

This year, we will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Convention, which gives us an opportunity to reflect on how much has been achieved so far as well as to look forward to shape future discussions on ocean governance and the sustainable development of the ocean and its resources.

The Convention remains the foundation for all human activity relating to the ocean and its resources and is the best guarantee for peace and good order in the ocean.

What is important now is to reinforce our collective action to ensure that this framework is respected and reinforced and that the institutions created for its implementation are respected, strengthened, and not undermined.

Thank you very much.
