

Ambassador Laki, Deputy Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations,

Dr Kojo Busia, Coordinator of the AMDC,

Dr Hassan Hussein, representative of the African Union Commission,

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the International Seabed Authority, welcome to the workshop on marine mineral resources of Africa's continental shelf and the international seabed.

This is the first ISA sponsored event to be held in a landlocked country. This is something that is long overdue and I am particularly pleased to be able to hold this event in Uganda, in the presence of my good friend Ambassador Duncan Laki. Ambassador Laki has been a great supporter of the work of the ISA over many years, including as a member of the Finance Committee, flying the flag for Uganda and for the developing landlocked States, and I was therefore delighted when he suggested Kampala as the venue for this event.

Let me also acknowledge the presence of Joshua Tuhumwire, who was elected as a member of the Legal and Technical Commission for 2017-2021: the first time Uganda has held a position on this body.

As well, let me recognize Dora Achapa, LTC member from Tanzania, Theohile Ngdousa, LTC member from Cameroon, and former LTC member Dr Adesina Adegbe from Nigeria.

I also wish to acknowledge the presence and support of our partners in this workshop.

AMDC, who are doing such excellent work in the region from their headquarters in Addis Ababa, together with UNECA and the African Union.

Our friends and partners from GRID-Arendal, who are providing their technical expertise and input to both AMDC and ISA.

Pew Charitable Trusts, whom I wish to especially thank for their support for this workshop. Civil society has an increasingly important role to play in development, and I wish to acknowledge Pew's constructive engagement with ISA and our work over the past several years. Your interest in and willingness to work with us in convening this workshop is I believe an important step forward in building an effective partnership to advance the aims and objectives of UNCLOS.

Also wish to acknowledge the presence of Judge Kateka from Tanzania, Judge of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, as well as a representative of DOALOS.

At first sight, it may seem strange for ISA to convene a workshop in a landlocked country in the heart of Africa. After all, we are concerned with the development of non-living resources from

the deep ocean seabed. Frontier resources in the most technologically and financially challenging environment on the planet. What possible relevance could this have to Africa?

In fact, this workshop is long overdue. As we will hear in the next two days, the resources of the deep seabed are resources that belong to us all. They are the common heritage of mankind. As such, the UNCLOS provides that all States, including the least developed, geographically disadvantaged and landlocked States, are to have access to these resources and are to benefit from their exploitation. It is a matter of concern that, so far, few if any benefits have accrued to African States from the tremendous scientific and technical advances that are being made in relation to the resources of the deep seabed and continental shelf.

In a few short weeks, the world will be meeting in New York for the United Nations conference on the implementation of SDG14 – the conservation and sustainable use of the resources of the oceans and seas. The focus of much of the conference will be on conservation: the urgent need to protect the ocean from pollution (mainly from land), the problem of plastics in the ocean, and the over-exploitation of its living resources. It should also be remembered, however, that a significant aspect of SDG14 is the recognition that the resources of the ocean, which include the mineral resources of the deep seabed, are to be used in a sustainable manner for the benefit of mankind as a whole, and they make an important contribution to the development of the blue economy.

I thank you all for your presence and look forward to constructive discussions and exchange of ideas over the next two days.

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