

It is my honor to deliver these brief remarks as we all reflect on the 40th anniversary of arguably one of the most effective and respected conventions in the international legal regime. Over the last 40 years, this convention has provided an effective framework for the governance of the oceans and its resources.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) holds particular importance for the Antigua and Barbuda and most other Small Island developing states considering our jurisdiction over vast swaths of the oceans and the importance of the marine environment to our economies.

Over the past 40 years, the UNCLOS regime has formed the basis for, among other things, the conduct of maritime commerce, freedom of navigation, protection of the marine environment, and the very maritime entitlements that are so essential to us. This Agreement has provided the international community with the stability, security, certainty and predictability necessary for the orderly development of the oceans.

UNCLOS also assisted with securing the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity via national, regional and international cooperation and in conclusion, I wish to reiterate Antigua and Barbuda's full and unwavering support in the work of the United Nations as it relates to UNCLOS and its organs (ISA/ITLOS etc).