

**Speaker: Mr Daniele Bosio**

**Item 12 – Report of the Secretary General**

Good morning colleagues and thank you, Mr Chair.

As I take the floor for the first time, allow me to congratulate once again the Government of Jamaica for its always warm hospitality and the Secretariat for their efforts in finding an alternative location for our meeting of the Council and the Assembly, while we wait for an even more comfortable and efficient Conference Center.

I also honor Nelson Mandela Day, as a hero of our time, an inspiration for all of us.

I express support and full agreement to the statement made early this morning of the distinguished delegate of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and other delegations in regards to the unjustified unprovoked aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

We wish as well to express gratitude for the hybrid meeting given the circumstances and we agree that these conditions should remain exceptional.

We understand the complaints by observers but we acknowledge that the Authority went to any length to accommodate all delegations in this temporary venue and to allow that all voices are heard.

Relating to item 12 of the agenda, Italy welcomes the report of the Secretary General providing with a summary of the activities carried out since March and is looking forward to the report of chair of the LTC, especially regarding considerations on the new plan of work submitted by Circular Metals Tuvalu Ltd. pursuant to the regulations on prospecting and exploration for polymetallic nodules in the CCZ.

Italy welcomed the draft regional environmental management plan for the area of the northern Mid-Atlantic Ridge with a focus on polymetallic sulphide deposits, when it was released for stakeholder consultation on April. We are looking forward to see how the Commission will consider and incorporate the various stakeholders' comments including ours and how this will be used to implement the general

template for the development and review of regional environmental management plans.

On the Data management strategy, we are pleased to see the continued effort by the Secretary General, the Commission and the Secretariat to work on templates for standardization of data reported by contractors and on their plans of work and to make them accessible to the wider public online on the Deep Data portal. Italy encourages all contractors to release their data to the public and to engage with the scientific community with an open science and innovation approach, as ocean observations are crucial to drive the advancing of fundamental knowledge of marine systems for science and ocean economy.

Italy, which is currently serving as vice-chair of the General Bathymetric Chart of the Ocean (GEBCO), is thrilled to see that the Secretariat continues its collaboration with the International Hydrographic Organization to develop the compilation of the bathymetric data collected by contractors in the Area. This compilation will directly contribute to the GEBCO Nippon Foundation Seabed20030 project, which aims at achieving the complete map of the ocean seafloor by 2030. Italy takes this opportunity to reinforce among Member States of the ISA that bathymetric data are the baseline for the knowledge of marine systems and yet the 80% of the ocean depths remain unmeasured by modern techniques. The Area represents the largest domain of this uncharted 80% of the ocean depths and to fill this knowledge gap requires an international effort to identify and consolidate existing data and to launch mapping and exploration campaigns with public-private partnerships.