



International Seabed Authority – Commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the adoption and opening for signature of the Convention (UNCLOS)

Malta Statement delivered by H.E. Vanessa Frazier
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President,

Secretary-General

At the outset, I thank the Authority for organizing this commemorative event.

The celebration of the 40th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea is dear to us. Dr Arvid Pardo's quest to protect the oceans included the consideration of resources beyond national jurisdiction as "the common heritage of mankind". We are fully committed to this principle and believe that an ambitious implementing agreement on biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction, BBNJ, is an important step towards its realization. We see the work of the Authority as an integral part of this.

The Convention itself sets out *the* legal framework within which *all* activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. We believe in promoting and applying the provisions of UNCLOS as well as its implementing agreements and celebrate what is one of the most robust legal instruments to ever have been adopted.



President

On this note, allow me to thank the UN Membership for entrusting me as President of the 32nd Meeting of SPLOS last month. I am proud of my country's seminal role in launching the negotiations of the Convention through our first Permanent Representative to the UN, Arvid Pardo and we are pleased to continue this endeavour.

2022 can be considered as a vital year for our ocean: one which can plant the seed of hope. With the 'One Ocean Summit' in Brest, the 'Our Ocean Conference' in Palau and most recently, the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon these three gatherings laid out a solid foundation to our commitment to the global oceans agenda. Reflecting on the outcomes of the UN Ocean Conference, the international community came together to reiterate its commitment towards delivering concrete actions to protect our oceans through an action-oriented Political Declaration. Meeting SDG14 and its targets are vital, and in Lisbon, we recognized the important role that science, technology and innovation hold to this endeavour.

As a small island state, we are also a strong supporter of adaptation. During our tenure as Co-Chairs of the UN Steering Committee on Partnerships for SIDS in 2020 and 2021, we kept the focus where it is mostly needed and that is, to the needs and capabilities of small island states and small island developing states. While SIDS are bound by inherent challenges, adopting an inclusive sustainable Blue Economy approach can turn their most pressing challenges into development



opportunities, leading me to the point that the ocean is central to their sustainable development. As we embark on our term as an elected member of the UN Security Council, we commit to be a voice for SIDS on the Security Council and for this reason, we are placing the theme of climate and oceans, particularly rising sea-levels, as one of our principal priorities. We look forward to working with our partners on this important subject, in furtherance of today's discussion on the challenges, opportunities and best practices in ocean science and the role of partnerships to build resilience in the ocean economy.