

WORKSHOP FOR THE PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA'S
DEEP SEABED RESOURCES IN SUPPORT OF AFRICA'S BLUE ECONOMY

REMARKS

5 October 2022

Anita Krokan, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Norway, Nigeria

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for the invitation to speak at this workshop on the sustainable development of Africa's deep seabed resources. Norway is proud to support this project, which purpose is to promote a sustainable development of Africa's seabed minerals - and a commercial development that can contribute to Africa's blue economy.

I will say a few words on the Convention on the Law of the Sea, the International Seabed Authority, and the role of projects like this one in promoting and ensuring the meaningful participation of all states in deep seabed activities.

This year, we mark the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

As you know, the Law of the Sea Convention sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out.

Among other things, the Convention promotes economic and social advancement for all peoples of the world, through just, equitable and sustainable utilization of the oceans and seas.

The Convention states that the Area - the seabed beyond national jurisdiction, and its resources, are *the common heritage of mankind*. This is a user instruction: The Area and its resources belong to us all. All activities must be carried out for the benefit of mankind as a whole.

In addition, the Convention demands that we take the necessary measures to ensure the effective protection of the marine environment from harmful effects which may arise from activities in the Area.

We know that population growth, poverty reduction and the transition towards a low carbon society means that the need for minerals and metals will increase.

As deep-sea mining activities grows as an industry, the Convention requires us to ensure that developing states will benefit. The Convention specifically requires us to consider the interests and needs of different developing states. In the international context, the International Seabed Authority has a vital role to play in this regard.

First, the Authority is well placed to work with raising awareness of the possibilities presented by deep seabed resources in general, as well as the legal framework around such activities.

Second, the Authority has proven effective in building capacity for developing states, as well as in facilitating transfer of technology, to ensure their full and meaningful participation in seabed activities.

A recent review of the Authority's contribution to the 2030 Agenda also found that its work on capacity building contributes towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, hereunder SDG 14 on life below water.

One of the purposes of the African Seabed project is to raise awareness for African countries of the potential benefits for African States from deep seabed mining activities. This includes both the national context in the form of African States' own continental shelves, and of the participation in ongoing processes and decisions within the framework of the Authority.

According to the workshop program, the organizers have secured an impressive group of experts to talk about the different aspects of the legal regime under UNCLOS for common resource management, the protection of the marine environment in this regard, as well as the current technical and scientific status of deep-sea research.

I wish you fruitful discussions on all these important topics.

Thank you.