



Statement delivered by Her Excellency Margo Deiyé, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Nauru to the International Seabed Authority (ISA)

27th session of the International Seabed Authority in Kingston, Jamaica

4 November 2022

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Mr. President,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

Excellencies and colleagues,

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the Secretariat, the Legal and Technical Commission and in particular Council members and other delegations for all their hard work and efforts in getting us to this point in textual negotiations. We acknowledge you, Mr. President and the facilitators of the respective informal working groups for their continuing leadership in our work. As we take stock of our progress on the roadmap, recognising we have a further week to discuss important matters on financial terms and institutional matters, we note the material progress made in many components of the draft exploitation regulations and the need for further work in specific areas.

Over the last 10 years, our sponsored entity Nauru Ocean Resources Inc (NORI) under its ISA exploration contract has shown significant efforts to collect the necessary resource assessment and environmental baseline data and more recently a demonstration of its technology in the collection and lifting of polymetallic nodules during its collector test campaign in the NORI-D area. We welcome NORI contracting competent independent scientific organizations such as CSIRO to assist in formulating a science-based framework that will help develop an ecosystem based environmental management and monitoring plan towards ensuring the effective protection of the marine environment. These activities and actions by NORI will contribute

fundamentally to the robust science required to inform and develop strong environmental rules as demanded by UNCLOS.

Mr. President,

As a Sponsoring State, we continue to develop our national legal and administrative framework to ensure that we maintain effective regulatory control over our Sponsored entity, NORI. To this end we have started work on what will be a comprehensive due diligence assessment of NORI in anticipation of a future application for sponsorship. As delegations are aware, the Nauru Seabed Minerals Authority placed an Observer on board the Hidden Gem vessel to monitor the collector test operations. This is a first of many.

Mr. President,

Nauru is a big ocean State, and a Small Island Developing State, however you view us, we are people of the ocean and its staunch stewards through the implementation of the Law of the Sea Convention. We, alongside all members of the Authority are particularly mindful of the requirements of Art. 145 and the need for the effective protection of the marine environment as we advance the development of the resources of the Area and of the common heritage for the benefit of humankind as a whole.

It is very pleasing to see that the Council is advancing this practically through the development of normative environmental thresholds which we see as fundamental to a results-based approach to environmental regulations. We also consider the work being advanced by NORI and independent scientists will contribute much to the work of the Legal and Technical Commission in formulating binding environmental standards.

Mr. President,

The two-year notice period expires in July 2023 and as such, Nauru as a sponsoring State in good faith will not entertain an application for a plan of work from our sponsored entity, NORI, in July 2023. To that end, Nauru does not wish to prejudice the Council's 2023 July deliberation towards its finalization and provisional adoption of the draft exploitation regulations in that session.

We will continue to work with our sponsored entity to ensure that the scientific and environmental data and knowledge required to consider an application and make an informed decision is collected.

Like the UK and others, we remain optimistic that together we can make significant progress between now and July 2023 and feel confident that by the end of our July session next year, we will be significantly advanced. Like many others, we encourage inter-sessional work on Standards & Guidelines and the Annexes.

Let us continue to work collectively and constructively to finalise a world-class ISA Mining Code.

We would also like to add our voice that Nauru fully supports the operationalization of the enterprise and the Economic Planning Commission (EPC).

We would support Fiji and others to request the Secretariat to prepare a Roadmap for 2023.

I thank you.