



# PHILIPPINES

## STATEMENT

### **Agenda Item 9: Annual Report of the Secretary-General**

Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the United Nations New York  
27th Session of the International Seabed Authority (Assembly)  
1-5 August 2022, Kingston, Jamaica

Thank you, Mr. Acting President.

We thank the Secretary General and the Secretariat for ISBA/27/A/2 and the supplementary documents under this Agenda Item. We wish to commend the Secretary General and his team for the well-organized contents and readability of the printed “2022 Secretary-General’s Annual Report.”

The Philippines wishes to share the following views on the Report, particularly on Chapter III, on status of the Implementation of the Strategic Plan 2019-2023.

First, on *realizing the role of the Authority in the global context*, the Report highlights that ISA contributes to 12 of the 17 SDGs, based on the Report commissioned by the Secretary General in 2021, the outcomes of which were presented at the high-level side event during the High-Level Political Forum and subsequently launched in a webinar. We urge continued outreach work and dissemination of these findings, as states continue to carefully consider the inclusion of deep seabed mining in their national development plans.

The ISA’s visibility and engagement at the recent UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon, Portugal is well-noted, including the ISA’s active participation in the plenary, four interactive dialogues, and its organization of five side events with partners. We hope that this circle of partnerships continues to expand and deepen.

We note the Secretary General's contributions at the IGC4, which focused on, *inter alia*, consistency with UNCLOS and the 1994 Agreement, possible modalities for equitable sharing of benefits in the Area, and initiatives on capacity building and training. Efforts to ensure that the outcome of the BBNJ process is consistent with UNCLOS and the 1994 Agreement should be sustained. The Philippines consistently upholds the principle of the common heritage of mankind to guide the new legal regime for BBNJ.

The initiatives towards gender equality and women's empowerment, as highlighted in the Report, are noteworthy and should be sustained.

Second, on *strengthening the regulatory framework for activities in the Area*, the Report outlines that progress on the draft regulations continues according to the Roadmap adopted in 2021. Yesterday, the President of the Council also gave us updates, including on the status of work of the four working groups. As the Council proceeds to do its stock-take during the third and last part of this session, amidst the voices we have heard in this room both at the Council and the Assembly, the need to balance interests in resource extraction and the preservation of the marine environment resonates stronger.

In this regard, we emphasize the importance of Article 142 of UNCLOS on the rights and legitimate interests of coastal states, and of operationalizing this in the Regulations.

We would encourage enhancing transparency, certainty, and inclusiveness in the selection of the members of Legal and Technical Commission and in the Council, which play critical roles in this process.

We note the information on texts of relevant legislation from 37 states available in the ISA's online database. Interstate cooperation in the development of such legal frameworks, facilitated by the Authority, would be of value. We hope that technical and targeted workshops, including virtual ones, could resume to support interested member States.

Third, on *the protection of the marine environment*, we welcome the development, implementation and review of rules, regulations and procedures based on the best available science, the precautionary principle, and best environmental practices for the environmentally responsible management of activities in the Area.

Fourth, the Philippines' supports the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and notes the adoption of the ISA's MSR Action Plan to maximize its contribution to the UN Decade as well as the various initiatives and partnerships established to promote cooperation and coordinate MSR efforts among stakeholders. On the developments related to ocean observation and monitoring, the Co-Chairs' summary of the 22nd Meeting of the UN Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea could yield significant insights, including on capacity building for states.

Finally, on ensuring the fully integrated participation by developing States in the work of the Authority, this is inextricably intertwined with building capacities of developing states and the mechanism on equitable sharing of financial and other economic benefits. We continue to anticipate further progress on these, as we welcome developments on the Capacity Development Strategy. We look forward to discussion of Agenda 19 and to working closely with the ISA on the Strategy and its implementation, moving forward.

As we commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Philippines reaffirms the normative and operational importance of the Convention in the work of the International Seabed Authority. Deep seabed minerals' contribution to sustainable development is premised on the sustainable management of the Area, the due consideration of environmental and social impacts of its exploitation, and the needs of all stakeholders, particularly developing countries.

Thank you, Mr. Acting President. END

