

**Statement by the Republic of Portugal at the session on the Commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the adoption and opening for signature of the Convention, at Assembly of the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Seabed Authority**

Thank you, Mr. President.

Portugal welcomes this session on the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the adoption and opening for signature of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea recognising it as a pivotal moment for multilateralism and the rule of law in Ocean governance.

On this occasion, we would like to stress the fundamental role of the Convention as the pillar of Ocean governance providing the overarching legal framework within which all activities in oceans and seas must be carried out and establishing, with due regard for the sovereignty of all States, a legal order that will facilitate international communication and promote the peaceful uses of the seas and oceans, the research, study, protection and prevention of the marine environment and the equitable, efficient, and sustainable utilization of their resources.

Mr. President,

Portugal has long been an intrinsically maritime nation. Our identity, our history, our present and our future are inevitably linked to the Ocean. Our relationship with the Ocean has contributed to bringing people together, globalizing trade and developing science and knowledge. That relationship also entails the great responsibility in working collectively to halt and reverse the decline in the health and productivity of our ocean and its ecosystems, as well as to protect and restore its resilience and ecological integrity. We do so recognising that the wellbeing of present and future generations is inextricably linked to the health and productivity of our Ocean.

Urgent multilateral action within the framework provided by UNCLOS is needed to ensure the health of our oceans. The recently held UN Ocean Conference and the Lisbon Declaration mark a vital step in the commitment to implement Sustainable Goal 14. We urge the international community to seize the opportunities presented by this and other multilateral meetings this year to take concrete steps in support of the conservation and sustainability of the oceans.

Portugal has always been and remains a firm supporter of the integrity and universality of the UNCLOS as the 'Constitution of the Oceans' and we call on all States to fully

and effectively implement their obligations under the Convention.

Thank you, Mr. President.