

**OPENING REMARKS DELIVERED ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP  
TO THE COUNCIL OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY AT  
THE FIRST PART OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH SESSION**

**16<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2023**

***Mr. President,***

I would like on behalf of the delegation of Ghana and the African Group to thank you and the Bureau for your leadership under which significant work has been done in the past session.

Allow me also to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Michael Lodge for his opening remarks. The African Group welcomes the milestone conclusion of the negotiation of an internationally legally binding instrument on the conservation and sustained use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

We agree that the focus now turns to the work of the International Seabed Authority on the development of a robust mining code for deep seabed mining. The African Group takes keen interest in the ongoing work of the Council in this regard, and, remains open to working with all delegations in addressing the issues before it.

We reaffirm the United Nations Convention on the law of the Sea as the legal framework for addressing all matters in the Area. We also reaffirm the importance of a robust mining code that ensures marine protection and preservation and which also provides the needed institutional framework for governance of deep seabed mining.

We hope to continuing advancing our work in relation to the Enterprise and the Economic Planning Commission and look forward the support and cooperation of all delegations. We remain open to constructive dialogue in this session and intersessionally to advance our shared values for the ocean and the Common Heritage of Mankind.

In closing, we extend our appreciation to the Government of Jamaica for their hosting facilities.

***I thank you.***