

**Statement by Ambassador Alison Stone Roofe
Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the International Seabed Authority
Part I of the 28th Session of the International Seabed Authority**

**Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Session
Thursday, 16th March 2023**

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Government of Jamaica, I am pleased that the Council of the International Seabed Authority is back to business for the first part of the 28th session to discuss the very important matters related to the constitution of the Ocean. I wish to welcome the delegates assembled here in Kingston, those returning to our island as well as all delegates who are participating in these meetings for the first time. We look forward to full engagement during this session of the Council in pursuit of our common agenda.

Mr. President,

Jamaica fully appreciates the ambitious scope of work set before us for the entirety of this session, and which we begin to address today. At the forefront of our discussions is the Mining Code which, at its best, represents the potential to fulfill the realization of best practices for the global governance of the common heritage of mankind. We highlight the success achieved in terms of both adapting the working practices of the Authority to ensure continuity in our tasks as well as advancing the implementation of the Strategic Plan and the High-Level Action Plan for the period 2019-2023.

As host country of the ISA, Jamaica remains steadfast in the commitment to facilitate and advance the work of the Authority by promoting shared principles and common positions among member states, which allows us to move beyond any differences in approach.

Against this background, Mr President, I am especially pleased to note the significant advances made during the 27th Session of the Authority. We welcome what I know will be the constructive engagement of all member states as we negotiate in the coming weeks.

Mr. President,

As the work of the Authority has come under increased scrutiny in recent times, we now have an important responsibility to recall and champion one of the fundamental principles of the UN

Convention on the Law of the Sea, which is to protect the 'common heritage of humankind'. Jamaica recommits to remain true to this principle, and for that reason, we will work to ensure the effective protection of the marine environment from any harmful effects that may arise from activities undertaken in the Area, through the development of appropriate rules, regulations and procedures. This is a core component of the Authority's mandate which we fully embrace and promote.

Mr. President,

Let me end by congratulating you for assuming this role, and expressing Jamaica's full confidence in your leadership as we seek to address the critical challenges before us and complete this ambitious programme of work.

I thank you.