

International Seabed Authority (ISA) side-event “Leveraging the power of science, technology and innovation in the deep-seabed to build prosperous and resilient LDC economies through the Doha Programme of Action”.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I wish to begin by thanking H.E. Mr. Michael W. Lodge, Secretary-General, at the International Seabed Authority for inviting me to take part in this important side at the 5th UN conference on the least developed countries.

I would also like to congratulate ISA on the organization of this important side event with the purpose of gathering LDCs and their development partners to raise awareness on important issues crucial for building prosperous and resilient LDC economies through the Doha Programme of Action.

I believe that the discussions today will provide a unique opportunity to examine key areas where concrete and meaningful action could be taken to support the needs of LDCs in relation to the sustainable development of their blue economies.

Capacity building measures and international cooperation remain a main priority for Norway. We participate in relevant international forums regarding the Law of the Sea, and we contribute to capacity building by supporting relevant development projects to contribute to a more sustainable and equitable management of the marine resources of the oceans.

The Law of the Sea Convention, states that the Area, consisting of the seabed beyond national jurisdiction, and its resources are the *common heritage of mankind*.

It follows from this that all activities in the Area must be carried out for the benefit of mankind as a whole. This must be done irrespective of different states’ geographical location, or their respective capacities and capabilities. Particular consideration must be given to the interests and needs of different developing states, such as LDCs, which are the focus of today’s side-event.

The International Seabed Authority is the organization through which the States parties organize and control activities in the Area. One of the most important tasks for ISA is to promote and encourage marine scientific research, the transfer of technology and scientific knowledge to developing states.

For ISA to achieve the tasks set out in it’s mandate, it is paramount that States cooperate and contribute to the funding and sharing of knowledge to further strengthen the capacity of developing countries. In this regard I am concerned that the funding of the capacity development for LDCs through official development assistance (ODA) has not reached the targeted level. Private investment flows are not well aligned with sustainable development, there is a significant digital divide, and there are on-going trade tensions.

This means that a revitalizing of global partnerships for sustainable development is crucial for developing countries to be able to exercise their rights in relation to the Area. Norway

gives strong support to ISA's ongoing work to promote international cooperation and funding for capacity building for LDC's in this regard. I am positive that the conversations today will lead to the furthering of our cooperation with the aim to collectively deliver practical solutions to secure a better future for LDCs.

In closing, please allow me to take this opportunity to reaffirm that Norway remains a dedicated member of the International Seabed Authority and supports the Authority's endeavors under all the pillars of its law of the sea convention mandate to promote international cooperation regarding capacity building for the LDCs in the Area. We are ready to continue to assist in building capacity and competence in areas where Norway has specific expertise and experience.