

Thank you, Mr. President for allowing this opportunity to enable the Trinidad and Tobago delegation to congratulate you on your election to chair this critical session of the Council of the International Seabed Authority.

My delegation also extends congratulations to the other members of the Bureau and we reaffirm our commitment to working with you and all other delegations to collectively take the decisions which are necessary for us to fulfil our mandate to manage and preserve our marine resources as the common heritage of humankind.

Permit me, Mr. President, to also thank your predecessor, Mr. Tomas Abramovic (Poland) and his Bureau for the stewardship over the last session of the Council; and who, with the invaluable assistance of our working group Facilitators and Co-Facilitators who have brought us successfully to this point.

My delegation also thanks host country Jamaica for their usual warm hospitality and courtesies. My delegation also thanks, Secretary-General, Mr. Michael Lodge, for his opening and welcoming, remarks and for the unstinting support of he and the staff of the Secretariat – their support continues to be an invaluable contribution to our work not only during each session but also intersessionally – a big thank you!

Mr. President, we cannot overstate the importance of this point in our history particularly with the impending deadline of the “two-year trigger”. It is time for “all hands on deck”; and we must find solutions now. The Trinidad and Tobago delegation is pleased that we have been able to add the voices of indigenous peoples to our deliberations. It is imperative that we embrace the view from the cultural perspective and also that of civil society entities. And, indeed, Mr. President, that of the Enterprise – an integral organ of the Authority who must also have a seat of the table, now!

The Trinidad and Tobago Delegation re-iterates our commitment to work with all colleagues here to find the necessary resolutions and Mr. President, we are confident that you will guide our deliberations to take decisions that will redound to the benefit of humankind.

Thank you.