

**Statement by the Honourable Alando Terrelonge, MP
Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade
28th Session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority**

Tuesday 25th, July 2023

Mr. President,

Allow me to extend my congratulations to you on your election to the Presidency of the 28th Session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority, and to express full confidence in your leadership of the Session.

On behalf of the Government and people of Jamaica, I warmly welcome all Member States and participants gathered at this Assembly to Kingston, as we pursue our shared goal of responsible stewardship of the Ocean.

Mr. President,

As we convene this important session of the Assembly, we are reminded of the critical role that the Authority plays in the sustainable management and equitable administration of the resources of the seabed and ocean floor - our common heritage of humankind. In this regard, I wish to commend Member States and the Authority for the efforts, over the past few weeks, to advance the work on the regulatory framework for the exploitation of mineral resources in the Area. My delegation recognizes the progress made by the Council, in line with the roadmap for this year's deliberations, as well as the significant contribution of the inter-sessional dialogues in making consistent progress towards this common goal. I, therefore, wish to thank the facilitators for their dedicated work and critical role in moving the process forward.

As a Small Island Developing State, Jamaica remains steadfast in its commitment to the principles and objectives enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. We firmly believe in conducting our activities in the Area in the interest of the sustainable development of the deep seabed, to ensure respect for equity, transparency, and environmental responsibility.

Jamaica is committed to creating the necessary balance in the development of the regulations for deep seabed mining. Activities in the Area must protect and preserve the marine environment and deep-sea ecosystems. We know that there is general consensus that exploitation should not take place until draft regulations are adopted and agree that there should be a comprehensive regulatory framework with robust protection for the marine environment. For this reason, we

remain hopeful that this common core position will continue to drive our work forward on the Mining Code.

The adoption of the Agreement Relating to the Implementation of Part XI of UNCLOS and the subsequent regulations on the prospecting and exploration of mineral resources is a testament to our collective dedication to striking the right balance between resource extraction and environmental preservation. The deep seabed holds immense potential for scientific discoveries and the advancement of our understanding of the marine environment. It should, therefore, be within our collaborative approach to find a concerted way to move forward for the benefit of all.

Mr. President,

The work of the Authority remains critical and is strategically aligned with its mandate. As we have seen from the very comprehensive Report prepared by the Secretary General, the Authority has undertaken a wide range of activities over the past year with notable success. I commend him and encourage his continued efforts to build on this progress through the implementation of his planned initiatives and partnerships which are focused on the objectives of the Authority.

My delegation also notes the progress made with the implementation of the 2021-2023 strategic plan of the Authority. I would like to thank the Secretariat for its contributions to the *UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development* and its broader commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Let me also take this opportunity to welcome Rwanda, as the newest party to the Convention and to the 1994 Agreement, and to reiterate Jamaica's very keen interest in working with Rwanda at the Authority.

Mr. President,

The Government of Jamaica is committed to its responsibility as Host Country to the Authority and will continue to support the work in the Organization, through close collaboration with the Secretariat and fellow Member States. We welcome the partnership that has been fostered over the years.

I look forward to the fruitful deliberations over the next few days and trust that we will have a productive Session, as we undertake this engaging programme of work.

I thank you.