

Thank you Mr President,

Excellences, Heads of State and Government here present,

Honourable Ministers here present,

Distinguished Delegates

Mr President,

1. Since this is the first time my Delegation is taking the floor, I wish to congratulate you for being elected as the President of the 28th Session. We are confident that under your wise leadership and guidance, we will be able to achieve the mandate of the Authority. You can count on Zimbabwe's full support and cooperation. We, also, thank the Government of Jamaica for their usual warm welcome and generous hospitality. We want to take this opportunity to welcome the Republic of Rwanda as the newest member of the Authority. This is a welcome development for Africa and of course, for the Authority.
2. I am privileged to be the first ever Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe to the International Sea Bed Authority. This clearly testifies to the interest and commitment of Zimbabwe to the International Sea Bed Authority.
3. Zimbabwe thanks the Secretary General, Micheal Lodge for his Annual Report contained in ISBA/28/A/2 and we

acknowledge and appreciate the important work being done by the Secretariat. Mr Secretary General be assured of the support and co-operation of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

4. We associate and fully align ourselves with the statement made by Ghana on behalf of the African Group. The African Group comprises of 48 States Parties. In our national capacity, we re-affirm our commitment to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 1994 Agreement relating to the implementation of Part XI of the Convention.

Mr President,

5. Zimbabwe, as a land based mining, developing country, welcomes the initiative by the Authority to prioritise capacity building for developing countries as this will give us the opportunity to train our own people. Capacity building is critical for a country like Zimbabwe which is trying to enhance its understanding on deep seabed mining. We are ready and available to discuss any and all opportunities for capacity building.
6. We, also, want to recognize the efforts being made by the Authority to promote female scientists, and in that regard we

celebrate and congratulate Rima Brown, a young female researcher involved in deep seabed mining for the award. We welcome increased partnerships between scientific research organisations and developing States. While recognizing the progress already made, Zimbabwe requests the Secretary General to continue addressing the concerns on the equitable geographical representation within the Secretariat.

7. We applaud the Authority for accomplishing a number of its objectives in the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan.

Mr President,

8. Zimbabwe commends the progress made so far towards drafting the regulations for the exploitation of minerals on the seabed. We associate ourselves with the position echoed by several delegations before us that exploitation of the resource in the Area must not commence before requisite regulations are in place that take into account the scientific and environmental considerations. We note a number of outstanding issues which we hope will be brought to finality before any mining is carried out.
9. As a land based mining economy, the development of a fair and equitable benefit sharing mechanism is a critical component of the exploitation regulations.

10. We applaud the approval, by the Council, of the establishment of the position of Interim Director-General and the allocation of a supplementary budget for this office.

11. Once again, allow me to reiterate Zimbabwe's support and commitment to the work of the Authority. We remain available to, constructively, participate in the discussions that advance the work of the Authority.

I thank you.