



# PHILIPPINES

## OPENING REMARKS

**H.E. ANTONIO M. LAGDAMEO**

**Ambassador and Permanent Representative**

**ISA-Philippines national capacity development workshop on deep-sea related matters**

9-11 October 2023

Diamond Hotel

Manila, Philippines

Acting Secretary of Foreign Affairs Charles C. Jose,  
Secretary General Michael Lodge,  
Excellencies, colleagues.

A little over three months ago, I had the honor of presenting my credentials to Secretary General Michael Lodge in Kingston, Jamaica, as the Philippines' Permanent Representative to the International Seabed Authority (ISA).

With my accreditation, the Philippines joins the few states that maintain a permanent mission to the Authority.

I conveyed the Philippines' commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Flying into Jamaica, where the UNCLOS opened for signature more than 40 years ago (in Montego Bay), was a concrete testament to that commitment.

In the capital, Kingston, where the ISA is headquartered, I attended the Assembly—the principal organ of the ISA, composed of all its members and empowered to establish its general policies.

There, I highlighted the Philippines' status as an archipelagic state and reaffirmed our strong support for the Authority and its critical role under the UNCLOS. The Authority fulfills its mandate to organize and control all mineral-resources-related activities in the Area for the benefit of all of mankind, proceeding within the framework of sustainable development.

In line with the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, I also expressed the Philippines' interest in the implementation of the ISA's Action Plan to maximize its contribution to the UN Decade as well as the various initiatives and partnerships established to promote cooperation and coordinate marine scientific research efforts.

The visit to Jamaica was also an opportunity to talk with Secretary General Lodge and his team about enhancing Philippine cooperation with ISA.

PHILIPPINE MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

556 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 10036 • TEL. (212) 764-1300 • FAX (212) 840-8602

I lauded ISA's efforts towards meeting the capacity-building needs of developing countries like the Philippines, while noting that all the Filipino scientists that had taken part in ISA capacity building activities during the relevant period were female. I thanked him for walking the talk: for ISA's efforts to enhance deep sea literacy while empowering women.

We continued this conversation in New York, this time with Secretary of Foreign Affairs Enrique A. Manalo and Undersecretary Jose at the sidelines of the High Level Week and the Sustainable Development Goals Summit.

Building capacities is essential to ensure the full and integrated participation of developing states in the ISA's work and to support its critical mandate under UNCLOS. This mandate has become even more relevant as we anticipate the entry into force of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea concerning the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, also known as the BBNJ Treaty. This Agreement recognizes the unique mandate of the ISA concerning the Area.

Therefore, I am glad that our discussions in Kingston, Jamaica and in New York have come full circle here in Manila. I am pleased to open this substantive workshop, welcome Secretary General Michael Lodge and his team, among them Dr. Marie Bourrel-McKinnon, and to thank them for their support for the Philippines.

This workshop represents another concrete step toward enhancing the Philippines' participation in the work of the Authority. Your presence here, coupled with the active participation of our vital stakeholders in the coming days, will provide insights that will shape the Philippines' future involvement in matters related to the Area. I look forward to these discussions.

Finally, I would like to express appreciation to the Maritime and Ocean Affairs Office (MOAO), especially Assistant Secretary Maria Angela Ponce and her team, for shepherding this process.

My role as Permanent Representative to the ISA becomes even more significant when it leads to tangible outcomes that benefit our country, like this consultation workshop. I would like to express my gratitude to Assec. Ponce and her team, guided by the leadership of SFA Manalo and represented by Acting SFA Jose, for making this partnership project with the ISA a reality.

Thank you and good morning. **END**