



Ministero degli Affari Esteri  
e della Cooperazione Internazionale

## **28<sup>a</sup> Session of the International Seabed Authority**

### **Third part**

#### **Statement of Italy (November 9, 2023)**

Thank you Mr. President.

let me join the distinguished colleagues that took the floor before me in thanking you for the excellent guide you provided to the work of the Council. I also thank the IWG and especially their facilitators as well as the participants to the intersessional working groups and their own facilitators for the extremely valuable work they performed. All of them allowed to make dramatic progress in the negotiations towards the adoption of the Regulations on the exploitation of the mineral resources of the area.

Allow me to reiterate the Italian position on the development of the regulations for the exploitation of mineral resources of the Area. We underline the importance of ensuring a high and ambitious level of environmental protection of the deep sea from activities in the Area.

In line with this principle, Italy has consistently maintained that deep-sea mining should be based on science-based policy and decision-making, on the precautionary principle and on the ecosystem approach. Deep-sea mining should not be authorized until after the adoption of a strong and adequate regulatory framework, which prevents harmful effects to the marine environment, creates effective tools of risk mitigation, provides adequate inspection and monitoring mechanisms and ensures transparency in processes and outcomes of deep-sea activities. In the absence of such strong and adequate regulatory framework, Italy will not support the approval of any plan of work for the exploitation of mineral resources in the Area.

At the same time, Italy is convinced of the need to fully uphold UNCLOS provisions, without undermining the overall consistency of its legal and institutional architecture.

Italy is persuaded that UNCLOS and the 1994 Agreement contain an obligation to negotiate and adopt the Regulation on the exploitation of the mineral resources of the Area. These documents also include the founding principles that should guide the Authority in this process. We believe that UNCLOS and the 1994 Agreement together with the ISA current and future rules, regulations and procedures can provide the tools to prevent the exploitation of the Area from being carried out without respecting the highest standards of environmental protection.

We therefore strongly support the need to continue negotiating in good faith on the text of the Exploitation Regulation in view of reaching a consensus, along the targets set up in the agreed roadmap.

In this context, we support the way forward for the future work of this Council based on a consolidated text and through “formal informals” and intersessional work. We believe it will give us the possibility to approach the Draft Regulation with a comprehensive vision and to better prioritize issue of major concern with a view to solve all outstanding issues.