

Statement of Indian Delegation on 22 March 24 regarding Agenda Item 20

Mr. President and distinguished delegates,

Our delegation thanks the distinguished delegations of Nauru and Netherlands and the report of the Secretary General. We understand that the actions of the Secretary General are governed by ISA's concern for the safety of the human lives at the sea.

We all are here to discuss the issues relating the common heritage of the mankind. There are no two sides here.

Our views may differ but we all value human life. For that matter all lives . we talk about saving flora and fauna and even about saving micro organisms. But human lives matter too.

As a scientist who spent hundreds of days at sea in the past 25 yeas I have witnessed several incidents and accidents some of which are very unfortunate ones. Enough to haunt us for ever. Simple tasks at land can be very risky at sea.

We all are passionate about our respective works whether it is exploration, experiment or even a protest for a cause.

We need to keep a safe distance from the scene of action at sea. Sub sea installations are not just below the mother ship. Currents and waves spread them far way from the ship. One should be very careful while being in the vicinity of the ships and installations at mid sea. Idea of the safe zone as suggested by some of the delegation is really worth discussion in this context.

It is a relief that nobody was hurt during this incident. It is heartening to see that all parties appreciate the right to peaceful protest. But it is not absolute and is not without limit. It should be in accordance with the international convention and safety norms. This could have been the case where all are right but someone is hurt.

Mr. President, we want to return to Jamaica after safe campaigns at sea. Similarly we want our observer friends to return safely after their protests.

While our delegation does not comment on court decisions, ISA's actions and national statements, we appeal for restraint from all parties. Let us ensure the safety of human life at sea under all circumstances.

Thank you Mr. President for the floor.