



4th International Conference on SIDS

Plenary

St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda

27 May 2024

STATEMENT

by

H.E. Mr. Michael W. Lodge

Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority

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The International Seabed Authority is proud to be here today and to lend its support to the development aspirations of the Small Island Developing States as expressed in the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS.

For the past 30 years, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea has provided the international legal framework for the management of all human activities in the ocean. SIDS, as Big Ocean States (BOS), have taken full advantage of the provisions of the Convention to establish their maritime domains, develop their blue economies and assert their rights over living and non-living resources. In so doing they have made a remarkable contribution to multilateralism and the progressive development of international law, reflected most recently in the COSIS Advisory Opinion delivered last week.

In the context of the Authority, Big Ocean States are also making an essential contribution to the development of a rules-based order for the organisation and regulation of mineral-related activities in the deep seabed through a strict application of the precautionary approach informed by the best available science.

As the only global organization headquartered in a Small Island Developing State, the Authority is firmly committed to supporting Big Ocean States by sharing knowledge and building capacity for advanced deep-sea scientific research.

The Authority is committed to the principle that all economic activities in the deep seabed must be regulated and responsibly managed using the best available scientific evidence for the benefit of all nations of the

world. We will continue to work with Big Ocean States to enhance understanding of the rights and obligations under UNCLOS, ensure effective participation in the governance of the ocean and that your voices are heard and support you in using the provisions of UNCLOS as a catalyst for societal and economic sustainable development.
