

29th Session of the International Seabed Authority – Assembly

Farewell Remarks by Ambassador Helmut Tuerk (Austria) on 2 August 2024

Mr. President, distinguished delegates,

let me at the close of this session of the Assembly thank you, Mr. President, once again for your most efficient guidance at the current session, the most challenging one I have ever witnessed.

I have been an active participant in law of the sea negotiations and meetings for the past 51 years, starting with the UN Seabed Committee in 1973, followed by the Third UN Conference on the Law of the Sea, the informal consultations of the UN Secretary- General leading to the 1994 Implementation Agreement, then chairing a Meeting of States Parties to the Convention and attending sessions of the International Seabed Authority, presiding over a session of its Assembly and chairing the first Review Committee – as well as serving as a Judge and Vice-President of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.

However, time comes for every captain of a ship to go below deck. I therefore wish to take this opportunity to bid farewell to all of you, sincerely thanking the outgoing Secretary-General for the many years of excellent cooperation and wishing him all the best for future assignments. I further express my sincere gratitude to the highly devoted members of the staff of the Authority for the great support they have always given me. My very best wishes go to the newly elected Secretary-General for coping with the challenging tasks that are awaiting her at the helm of the Authority at this crucial period in the history of this organization.

Mr. President, let me now bid farewell to all my friends and colleagues gathered at this Assembly. I will certainly miss you in the years to come. I can, however, assure you that while

no longer performing an active role, I will continue to follow the developments in the law of the sea and, in particular, how the common heritage of humankind will fare in the future.

Thank you, Mr. President.