

**STATEMENT BY PAKISTAN
AT THE ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED
AUTHORITY
KINGSTON, 24 JULY 2025**

Delivered by: Second Secretary Rabia Ijaz

**Mr. President,
Madam Secretary General,
Distinguished Delegates,**

Pakistan is honored to participate in this pivotal session of the Assembly. We extend our warm congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election and commend you for successfully guiding the proceedings.

2. We also express our sincere appreciation to the Government of Jamaica for hosting this important session in their vibrant and culturally rich country, whose warmth and hospitality have greatly enriched our experience.

Mr. President,

3. We express our appreciation and congratulations to the Secretary-General of the Authority for her first comprehensive and insightful report, and commend the Secretariat for its unwavering commitment to advancing the mandate of the Authority under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

4. As we commemorate the 30th anniversary of the International Seabed Authority, we celebrate three decades of collective progress in advancing the common heritage of humankind. The regime for the Area has been strengthened through broad participation, effective diplomacy, and steadfast commitment to UNCLOS and the 1994 Agreement. Guided by its Strategic Plan 2019–2025 and High-Level Action Plan, the ISA has delivered tangible results across all pillars of its mandate.

Mr. President,

5. We reaffirm our enduring and principled commitment to the legal framework established under UNCLOS, especially the cardinal

principle that the resources of the Area constitute the **“common heritage of mankind”**. This foundational concept must remain the guiding compass for all decisions concerning the governance, use, and equitable distribution of the mineral resources of the deep seabed.

6. The Secretary- General’s report highlights the indispensable role of deep- sea ecosystems as carbon sinks, instrumental in mitigating climate change. It also underscores emerging threats — including ocean acidification, marine heatwaves, and anthropogenic noise pollution — which imperil the delicate balance of marine biodiversity. We echo the report’s call for strengthening the science- policy interface and enhancing strategic environmental assessments. Pakistan emphasizes that capacity- building, marine technology transfer, and rigorous environmental safeguards must be embedded as core pillars in any exploitation regime.

7. In light of rapid technological advancement, it is imperative to strategically leverage cutting-edge innovations—particularly artificial intelligence, machine learning, and advanced remote sensing—to enhance the precision, accountability, and environmental integrity of deep-seabed mining operations. The deployment of such transformative technologies must be pursued not merely for efficiency, but to ensure robust regulatory compliance, ecological preservation, and anticipatory risk mitigation. Equally critical is the imperative to equip developing States with equitable access to these innovations, thereby narrowing the technological divide and fostering inclusive, science-based stewardship of the Area.

Mr. President,

8. We remain gravely concerned by efforts to accelerate the activation of the exploitation regime in the absence of a comprehensive, balanced, and internationally agreed regulatory framework.

9. We reaffirm the importance of the **“precautionary approach”** and reiterate that no application for exploitation should be considered until the Authority has adopted a robust and enforceable legal, environmental, and financial framework in the exploitation rules and regulations currently being worked upon in

the Council. This regime must ensure transparency, equitable benefit-sharing, and the sustainable stewardship of the Area, in line with the collective interest of all humankind.

10. As underscored in the Secretary-General's report, the Authority's legitimacy hinges on inclusivity, transparency, and consensus-driven processes. We urge all States to uphold the collective interest of humanity and to resist expedient actions that may erode long-term governance integrity.

Mr. President,

11. This Assembly convenes at a transformative juncture in global ocean governance. The international community has achieved a major milestone with the adoption of the Agreement under UNCLOS on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction — the BBNJ Agreement. This landmark instrument represents a triumph of multilateral diplomacy and reaffirms our shared duty to safeguard the marine environment beyond national jurisdictions.

12. Pakistan is proud to be among the early signatories to the BBNJ Agreement. Very recently, on 21 July 2025, our Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, H.E. Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, signed the Agreement at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. This act reaffirms Pakistan's unwavering commitment to the law of the sea, to inclusive multilateralism, and to the sustainable and equitable governance of global commons.

13. We were actively engaged throughout the BBNJ negotiations and had the honour of chairing two important sessions of the Group of 77 and China during the final phase. We remain fully committed to contributing constructively to the Agreement's implementation, in synergy with UNCLOS and the work of the Authority.

14. We also take this opportunity to warmly congratulate Ms. Leticia Carvalho on her appointment as Secretary-General of the Authority. It is truly encouraging to see a woman assume such a leadership role. Her historic appointment as the first woman to lead the Authority is a source of inspiration, and we look forward to

working with her to advance equity, sustainability, and ocean stewardship.

15. We also thank civil society actors for their active presence and valuable contributions during this session. Their engagement—through side events, expert dialogues, and capacity-building efforts—continues to enrich discussions, promote transparency, and support inclusive participation, particularly for developing countries.

Mr. President,

16. As we reflect on the future of the Area, Pakistan urges Member States to preserve the sanctity of the UNCLOS regime. We must prioritize intergenerational equity over short-term expediency. The seabed is a trust — not merely a resource — and it belongs to all humanity, including generations yet unborn.

17. Pakistan stands ready to engage with all stakeholders to ensure that the Area and its resources are governed peacefully, equitably, and sustainably — in the true spirit of international cooperation and common heritage of mankind.

18. I thank you, Mr. President.
