

Kingdom of Tonga Intervention on Draft Regulation 30 bis

– Human Health and Safety Management System,

DAY 5 - ISA Council Meeting Part I of the Council Session – 17-28 March 2025

Mr. President,

Tonga welcomes Draft Regulation 30 bis on the Human Health and Safety Management System and supports its inclusion as a vital component of the Exploitation Regulations.

We agree that all Contractors should be required to develop and maintain a robust health and safety management system that ensures the safety of personnel and promotes responsible operations in the Area. This reflects our shared regional commitment to human dignity, environmental stewardship, and the well-being of our seafarers and workforce.

Tonga also supports the references in paragraph 2 to occupational health, safety, process safety, and inclusivity, including gender equality, which are consistent with Pacific values and our national policies.

However, on paragraph 2(c) bis, while we appreciate the intention to ensure independent verification of safety systems, we encourage further discussion on the implementation of this provision. In particular, we seek clarification on the frequency, scope, and cost of such verifications. Tonga would support a more flexible, risk-based approach that considers the scale and nature of the operations, and does not place undue administrative or financial burden on Contractors or Sponsoring States.

We further support the deletion of the previous paragraph 3 linking all updates to Regulation 57. While we recognize the importance of updating safety systems, requiring the full procedure under Regulation 57 for all changes may be disproportionate, particularly for non-material adjustments.

Finally, we strongly support paragraph 4, which appropriately recognizes non-compliance with safety obligations as a breach of contract.

Tonga is committed to a regulatory regime that protects workers, promotes operational excellence, and is practical and proportionate for all stakeholders, including developing States and our Contractors.

Thank you, Mr. President.