

**Kingdom of Tonga Intervention**  
**on Agenda Item 8: Annual Report of the Secretary-General**  
**30<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority**  
**21-25 July 2025, Kingston, Jamaica**

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Mr. President  
Madam Secretary-General  
His Excellency the President of Palau  
Hon. Minister(s)  
Distinguished delegates

The delegation of the Kingdom of Tonga extends our sincere thanks to the Government and the people of Jamaica for your warm hospitality.

As it pertains to Agenda Item 8, the Kingdom of Tonga wishes to provide some remarks regarding the Secretary-General's Annual Report, contained in ISBA/30/A/2. We commend the professionalism and transparency with which the Secretariat continues to discharge its responsibilities under Article 166, paragraph 4, of the Convention.

**Mr. President,**

In regards to Part VII, we acknowledge the voluntary contributions made by members to the various Funds. This has enabled the effective participation of delegations in the different Committee's and processes of the Authority, particularly delegations from developing countries. In addition, we also stress the importance of members complying with their assessed contributions, as this will enable the Authority to meet its administrative expenses.

On Part XI, we note with appreciation, the ongoing work towards the operationalization of the Enterprise, which is crucial for developing countries like Tonga. We express our thanks to the Interim Director General of the Enterprise, Mr. Eden Charles for his continued dedication towards ensuring the Enterprise is fit for purpose for such a time when it operates independently from the Authority.

On Part XII, we commend the active participation of the Secretariat in global forums and partnerships, and the emphasis on ensuring equitable representation, including gender balance and training for nationals of small island developing States.

**Mr. President,**

We also make reference to the related report on the restructuring of the Secretariat, contained in ISBA/30/A/7/Rev.1 and wish to provide our general views,

Tonga notes with appreciation the progress in improving institutional efficiency and alignment with the Authority's evolving mandate. The restructuring of the Secretariat—achieved within the approved budget—is a welcome effort to ensure cost-effectiveness, transparency, and enhanced coordination. In particular, we support the establishment of the new **Office of Contracts Management and Capacity-Building**, which strengthens regulatory oversight and monitoring of contractors, while also ensuring a more structured and centered approach to capacity-building efforts for developing States.

The Kingdom of Tonga also values the reinforcement of the **Office of Stewardship, Environment and Resources**, especially the emphasis on stewardship of the ISA's scientific data systems. As a small island developing State, Tonga supports efforts that ensure knowledge generation and stewardship are core institutional priorities.

We commend the Authority's commitment to strategic staffing and a modernized Secretariat will contribute to a stronger, more effective institution, capable of managing the complex responsibilities entrusted to it.

As a sponsoring State, The Kingdom of Tonga emphasizes the importance of continuity and accountability in Secretariat functions. We encourage the continued evaluation of staffing needs in accordance with the evolution of the Authority's work, particularly in anticipation of future regulatory responsibilities.

**Mr. President,**

In closing, we support the recommendations outlined in the Secretary-General's report and reaffirm Tonga's commitment to a well-resourced and effective International Seabed Authority that reflects the priorities of all members.

Thank you, Mr. President.