



## Council

Advance Unedited Version  
21 July 2025

English only

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### Thirtieth session

Council session, part II

Kingston, 7–18 July 2025

Agenda item 14

**Report of the Chair of the Legal and Technical Commission  
on the work of the Commission at its thirtieth session.**

## **Decision of the Council of the International Seabed Authority relating to the reports of the Chair of the Legal and Technical Commission**

*The Council of the International Seabed Authority,*

*Recalling* its decision ISBA/29/C/24,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the reports of the Chair of the Legal and Technical Commission on the work of the Commission during its 30th session,<sup>1</sup> and the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the decision of the Council in 2024 relating to the reports of the Chair of the Legal and Technical Commission<sup>2</sup>;

2. *Expresses its appreciation* for the continued hard work, dedication and considerable achievements of the Commission, but *notes with concern* that some members have not participated in the Commission's 30<sup>th</sup> session and encourages support from Member States to ensure that nominated members are provided with adequate time and resources to fully participate and engage in the work of the Commission;

3. *Welcomes* the submission by contractors of their annual reports on activities carried out in 2024 and *notes with appreciation* that the Commission assessed the performance of 30 annual reports on contractor activities during the 30th session;

4. *Recalling its decisions ISBA/27/C/44 and ISBA/29/C/24, welcomes* the Commission identifying and naming those contractors requiring further continued attention regarding their performance and alignment with their contractual obligations and the information provided regarding each of these contractors, *agrees* to consider the ongoing implementation of the criteria at its next session, specifically to ensure the timely notification of Sponsoring States and *requests* that any such contractors be named in the

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<sup>1</sup> ISBA/30/C/4 and ISBA/30/C/4/Add.1.

<sup>2</sup> ISBA/30/C/10.

annual report of the Secretary-General, while noting that some reviews may not be completed;

5. *Welcomes* the Secretary-General's continued engagement, through the Compliance Assurance and Regulatory Management Unit of the secretariat, with individual contractors on matters raised by the Commission;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue the practice of communicating the various issues identified during the Commission's review of contractors' annual reports to the relevant contractors and sponsoring States, to follow up in writing with those contractors that repeatedly perform insufficiently or incompletely against an approved plan of work, or that have indicated that the implementation of the plan of activities will be made conditional on external factors regardless of the applicable contractual requirements, to request meetings with them and to write to the respective sponsoring States to bring that issue to their attention and request a meeting with the sponsoring States to address it and to provide relevant information to the Council;

7. *Urges* the relevant sponsoring States to provide any information relating to non-compliance by its sponsored contractor and measures taken to ensure compliance under the contract, in accordance with article 139 of the Convention;

8. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue to report to the Council on an annual basis the instances of alleged non-compliance and regulatory action in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,<sup>3</sup> the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982<sup>4</sup> and the regulations on prospecting and exploration, identified by the Commission, *inter alia* taking into account the results of the Secretary-General's consultations with contractors;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to require, in accordance with section 10.3 of the Standard Clauses for Exploration Contracts, additional information from Contractors at risk of non-compliance with their contractual obligations, in particular with sections 13 and 27 of the Standard Clauses for the Exploration Contract, *further requests* the Secretary-General to forward that information to the Commission for its consideration, and *also requests* the Commission to report and make appropriate recommendations to the Council during the first part of its 31<sup>st</sup> session on the outcome of the inquiry;

10. *Urges* the Commission, with reference to paragraph 9 above and in accordance with section 27 of the Standard Clauses for Exploration Contracts, to pay specific attention to possible non-compliance of Contractors with the obligation that they, their employees, subcontractors, agents and all persons engaged in working or acting for them in the conduct of their operations under their Exploration Contracts shall observe the applicable law, in particular where such possible non-compliance may arise out of direct or indirect actions related to activities in the Area, including contractual obligations to act in accordance with the multilateral legal framework established by the Convention and the Agreement;

11. *Welcomes* the training programmes and opportunities offered by contractors pursuant to their contracts for exploration with the Authority since the 29th session and the progress being made towards achieving equitable geographic distribution, with particular attention given to the interests and needs of the least developed states and small island developing States, as well as gender parity, through the selection of candidates for training opportunities;

12. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General to the Council relating to the report of the Chair of the Legal and Technical Commission, and

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Treaty Series, vol.1833, No.31363.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., vol.1836, No.31364.

requests the Secretary-General to negotiate with Contractors robust and comprehensive capacity-building programmes covering different aspects of deep-sea minerals exploration activities, with particular emphasis on the practical and technical elements of deep-sea mineral exploration activities, and to ensure that such programmes are needs-based, transparent, and designed to facilitate the meaningful participation of developing States, including through access to data and equipment necessary for performance of such capacity- building programmes;

13. *Welcomes* the significant progress made by the Commission in developing binding environmental threshold values, pursuant to Council decision ISBA/27/C/42, and encourages the Commission to continue this work on the report and submit, after formal stakeholder consultation, its recommendations to the Council as a priority, noting that this work might further be developed as knowledge evolves;

14. *Welcomes* the progress in developing regional environmental management plans for the Area in the North-West Pacific and Indian Oceans and urges the Commission to complete this work as soon as reasonably possible;

15. *Welcomes* the informal open dialogues with the Council, reiterates the importance of transparency in the Authority, and urges the Commission to take further steps to hold open meetings, where appropriate and in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Commission, while maintaining its effective operation and recognizing the need to ensure the appropriate confidentiality of data and information, so as to allow for greater transparency in its work;

16. *Welcomes* the significant progress made in relation to data management at the Authority and the ongoing work of the secretariat and the Commission to this end and requests the Secretary-General to explore options for securing the necessary resources and mobilising support to enhance the interconnection and interoperability with relevant global databases;

17. *Welcomes* the Secretary-General's clarification of the procedures and practices, including the timing, relating to communications to members of the Authority and to the Commission regarding prospecting activities in the Area, the Commission's comments on the prospecting report submitted by Argeo Survey, and requests the Commission to continue to report to the Council on prospecting activities;

18. *Calls* for contributions to the voluntary trust funds to support participation in the meetings of the Authority by developing States, including in the Council, the Legal and Technical Commission and the Finance Committee, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to report on the amount available in each fund at the start and end of each reporting period, as well as a breakdown, by Trust Fund, of countries that have contributed and of the countries that have received support from the funds.

*339th meeting  
21 July 2025*