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Agenda item 9

Annual report of the Secretary-General under article 166, paragraph 4, of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

Decision of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority relating to the implementation of a programmatic approach to capacity development

The Assembly of the International Seabed Authority,

Recalling its decision of 26 July 2018, adopted at its twenty-fourth session,¹ by which it adopted the strategic plan of the Authority for the period 2019–2023,

Recalling also its decision of 24 July 2019, adopted at its twenty-fifth session,² by which it adopted the high-level action plan for the Authority for the period 2019–2023 as well as performance indicators for each of the strategic directions in the strategic plan,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General³ in which he provided the required information on the assessment of capacity-building programmes and activities undertaken by the Authority since 1994, as well as on the adjustments needed to ensure that such programmes and activities better meet the capacity-building needs of developing States,

Considering the priorities for capacity development identified by the members of the Authority,

Committed to further building the capacity of developing States, in particular geographically disadvantaged States, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and least developed countries, as well as ensuring their fully integrated participation in the activities undertaken in the Area,

Emphasizing the importance of a dedicated strategy for capacity development that addresses the needs identified by the members of the Authority,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;

* Original dates. The meeting has been postponed sine die.

¹ [ISBA/24/A/10](#).

² [ISBA/25/A/15](#) and [ISBA/25/A/15/Corr.1](#).

³ [ISBA/26/A/7](#).



2. *Requests* that the Secretary-General develop and implement a dedicated strategy for capacity development, taking into account the elements identified in paragraph 36 of his report, and to report thereon to the Assembly at its twenty-seventh session;

3. *Also requests* that the Secretary-General explore options to mobilize additional resources to provide financial support for the implementation of the dedicated strategy;

4. *Invites* members of the Authority to establish and inform the Secretary-General of national focal points in charge of liaising with the secretariat on matters relating to capacity development, taking into account the terms of reference for such focal points as set out in the annex;

5. *Encourages* members of the Authority to participate fully in the implementation of the dedicated strategy, including through development of programmes of scientific cooperation with regard to activities in the Area, as well as training, technical assistance and scientific cooperation programmes in marine science and technology and the protection and preservation of the marine environment;

6. *Invites* contractors, the private sector, civil society, academia and foundations to contribute to the implementation of the dedicated strategy in their respective areas of competence, in line with the priorities identified by developing States members of the Authority.

Annex**Terms of reference for national focal points in charge of liaising with the secretariat on matters relating to capacity development**

1. Capacity-building and capacity development are essential aspects of the mandate of the International Seabed Authority under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 1994 Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982. The duty of the Authority to ensure that a variety of capacity-building mechanisms are developed is recognized in the strategic plan of the Authority for the period 2019–2023.¹ Such mechanisms should be aimed not only at facilitating the transfer of technology to developing States² but also at ensuring the expansion of opportunities for their participation in activities in the Area.³ In the light of the foregoing, members of the Authority have identified that the challenge lies in the identification of appropriate mechanisms, including tailored programmes and initiatives, to ensure the fully integrated participation of developing States in activities in the Area at all levels. Strategic direction 5 (Build capacity for developing States) and strategic direction 6 (Ensure fully integrated participation by developing States) are aimed at accomplishing this objective.

2. Pursuant to the request by participants in the workshop on capacity development, resources and needs assessment held by the secretariat in Kingston in February 2020 to develop terms of reference for national focal points in charge of liaising with the secretariat on matters relating to capacity development, the role and responsibilities of such focal points are established as follows:

(a) To facilitate dissemination at the national level of information on capacity development programmes and activities to be implemented by the Authority;

(b) To act as point of liaison between the secretariat and the member of the Authority on any matters relating to capacity-building and capacity development;

(c) To help to identify potential partners at the national level with which the Authority could develop, in close cooperation, initiatives for training and capacity development;

(d) To raise awareness among national ministries and other relevant agencies of the mandate of the Authority under the Convention and the 1994 Agreement in relation to capacity-building and capacity development;

(e) To help to identify needs for technical assistance by the Authority in order to support national or regional initiatives relevant to the mandate of the Authority;

(f) To support the work of the secretariat in establishing a network of institutions that could contribute to the implementation of the dedicated strategy of the Authority for capacity development.

3. The secretariat shall keep national focal points up to date on activities undertaken in cooperation with national focal points for capacity-building and capacity development.

¹ ISBA/24/A/10, annex.

² United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, arts.144, 273 and 274.

³ Ibid., art. 148.