



MYANMAR

*please check against delivery**

**Statement by H.E. U Hau Do Suan,
Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
to the United Nations in New York and Head of Myanmar Delegation
to the 24nd Session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority
(Kingston, 24th July 2018)***

Mr. President,

As I take the floor for the first time, allow me to congratulate you on your election to the Presidency of the 24nd Session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority. Our congratulations also go to other members of the Bureau. Myanmar appreciates Mr. Eugenio Joao Muianga of Mozambique, for his stewardship of the previous Session of the Assembly, and Mr. Olav Myklebust of Norway, for his able leadership in steering the Council to its successful conclusion.

I would also like to express our appreciations to the Government and the people of Jamaica for the warm welcome and hospitality provided to our delegation.

Mr. President,

My delegation wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive annual report. We fully support the endeavor of the Secretary-General in keeping the momentum of the work of the Authority and in introducing future oriented initiatives to further enhance the work. In this regard, we commend the Secretary General and the Legal and Technical Commission for the revised version of the Draft Regulations on Exploitation of Mineral Resources in the Area as contained in ISBA 24/LTC/WP.1/Rev.1. We are confident that the draft will be improved more comprehensively with appropriate technical inputs following a fruitful debate we had in the Council last week. My delegation appreciates the work of the Legal and Technical Commission which is fundamental and essential for conservation and sustainable use of the marine resources.

Myanmar believes that it is important to keep the Authority strengthened and efficient with adequate financial support. In this regard, my delegation commends the work of the Finance Committee in ensuring the financial regime to be competent. The Authority must be equipped with adequate qualified scientific and technical personnel and supporting staff to meet the new challenges.

My delegation welcomes the first joint meeting between the LTC and Finance Committee held on 13th of this month. The joint meeting discussed the roles and responsibilities of each body with respect to the draft regulations and future exploitation, as well as on possibility of profit sharing mechanism. Myanmar supports the agreement to establish an informal inter-sessional group on benefit-sharing rules, regulations and procedures which will include necessary experts. We would like to encourage such meetings to take place regularly as required.

We welcome the revised draft strategic plan for the Authority for the five year period 2019-2023, which will take into account the suggestions and comments of the members of the Authority and other stakeholders. We hope that the plan would be adopted by the Assembly.

Mr. President,

The ultimate mining code would need to contain comprehensive set of rules, regulations and procedures to effectively regulate the prospecting, exploration and exploitation of minerals in the Area. In this connection, we are glad to note that the Secretariat has engaged the experts at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to develop a working financial and economic model for the Authority in anticipation for the phase of exploitation.

Adequate financial resources and improved capacity are essential for the Authority to successfully address its expanding workload and responsibilities. In this context Myanmar welcomes the creation of 4 additional posts at the ISA and the proposed budget of \$ 18,470,900 which was thoroughly prepared.

We support the use of remote interpretation service for the Commission and Committee meetings which is proved to be cost effective and efficient, and contribute to overall savings on conference servicing costs.

As regards contributions in 2018, Myanmar would like to commend Argentina, China and the United Kingdom for their contributions. We thank Norway for the recent announcement on contribution of US\$60,000 to the Voluntary Trust Fund and intended contribution of US\$500,000 to support the ISA's voluntary commitment on Africa's blue economy. Our appreciation also go to Pew Charitable Trusts for its contribution of US\$ 10,000. My delegation also welcomes the Council's decision to introduce "**optional contribution by contractors**" to ameliorate the recurrent shortfall in the Voluntary Trust Fund.

Endowment fund for marine scientific research in the Area promotes and encourages the conduct of marine scientific research in the Area. The Fund, in particular, supports the participation of qualified scientists and technical personnel from developing countries in marine scientific research programmes. My delegation encourages members of the Authority and other supporters to continue to contribute to the Fund.

In the spirit of sharing the knowledge on the common heritage of mankind, we would like to express our appreciation to the organizers of the various side events, particularly held during the Sessions, providing valuable technical knowledge in the area of marine science and marine environment. These workshops bring together perspectives of different stakeholders and generate creative discussions.

Mr. President,

My delegation is glad to note that the Satya Nandan Library remains the main information resource. We recommend that the Secretariat continue to modernize and improve library technologies, and services, strengthen infrastructure and lower the cost. We are thankful for the generous donations from organizations and individuals in improving the function of the Library.

Public information dissemination using the Authority's website, including the mobile app, has proved its utmost efficiency. Digital platform will remain our partner and we should explore further the use of information communication technology.

We congratulate the Secretary-General for launching the first live streaming for the Council and Assembly meetings. This is a perfect example of transparency in real time, which the Authority has been advocating.

Myanmar believes that the exchange of information and engagement with the United Nations and relevant international organizations and bodies are essential. We recognize that the Authority has been actively contributing to the work of the United Nations to support the implementation of SDG Goal 14; conserve and sustainable use of marine resources for sustainable development and other relevant targets. We are pleased to learn that the Authority has already taken implementation measures to fulfilling the voluntary commitments made during the Ocean Conference in New York last year. We encourage the Authority to continue such important undertakings and engage in further collaboration with the United Nations.

Mr. President,

Myanmar attaches great importance to the work of the International Seabed Authority in conservation and sustainable use of the marine resources which is the common heritage of mankind. Myanmar, as a committed and responsible member of the Authority, has always been making its own share of modest financial contribution in full and on time. Currently, relevant legal entities in Myanmar are actively engaged in the domestic process to become a party to the Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Seabed Authority.

Myanmar's scientific community especially in the area of marine science is very keen to engage with the Authority for the prospect of capacity building through training, seminar and participation in scientific research programmes. We will work closely with the Secretary-General in this regard.

My delegation wishes to commend the Secretary-General for initiating the *Secretary-General's Award for Excellence in Deep-sea Research* to encourage and celebrate the participation of young scientists from developing countries in deep sea research. In this respect, I would like to congratulate Dr. Diva Amon of Trinidad and Tobago for winning the inaugural award.

Mr. President,

We are confident that the Authority will be able to overcome all challenges under the able leadership of the Secretary-General, through collaboration and with the collective support of all its members and relevant stake holders. I assure you of Myanmar's continued support and active contribution to the work of the Authority.

I thank you.
