

**Remarks by Ambassador Sheila Sealy Monteith, Head of Jamaica's Delegation
to Part II, 27th Session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority
Opening Plenary of the Assembly**

August 1, 2022

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Session

Mr President,

I wish to extend warm congratulations to you on your election to the presidency of the 27th Session of the Assembly of the Authority and express my full confidence in your leadership.

I wish to use this opportunity to warmly welcome all members of this Assembly to Kingston and specifically to the Knutsford Court Hotel, that has been provided as sterile and dedicated meeting venue for the *Legal and Technical Commission*, the *Finance Committee* and the *Council* over the past three weeks. The Government of Jamaica is making every effort to complete the current phase of renovation works at the *Jamaica Conference Centre* to transform it into a premier venue for international conferences. This, we hope, will improve the experience of delegates attending ISA meetings. We, therefore, ask for your understanding and patience.

As you might be aware, today Jamaica celebrates Emancipation Day, and then August 6, will mark our 60th anniversary of Independence. Without a doubt, among Jamaica's proudest contributions to multilateralism has been our indelible contribution to the development and eventual adoption of the Montego Bay Convention. As Host to the Authority, we are also the first developing country to host the headquarters of a major intergovernmental UN organisation.

In this context, I wish to reaffirm the Government of Jamaica's continued commitment to supporting the work of the Authority, through close collaboration with the Secretariat, and fellow Members States of this noble organisation.

I look forward to the discussions that are to follow over the next few days and trust that we will have a most productive session.

I thank you.

Agenda Item 8: Statement by the President of the Council on the Work of the Council

Mr President,

I wish to extend my profound appreciation to the President of the Council for his stewardship over the 27th Session and for his report on the work of the Council.

Draft Regulations on the Exploitation of Mineral Resources

Jamaica is pleased to note the progress of the various Informal and Open-Ended Working Groups of Council, in advancing work on several critical sections of the draft *Regulations on the exploitation of mineral resources in the Area* over the course of the 27th Session, in line with the *2022-2023 Roadmap*. In this regard, we wish to thank the Facilitators of the various Working Groups (WGs) for their hard work.

The Enterprise

Mr. President

Jamaica's has repeatedly emphasised that the operationalisation of the Enterprise is critical to ensuring the full and substantive participation of developing countries, like Jamaica, in activities in the Area.

We support the operationalisation of the Enterprise, as recommended by the LTC, in line with the "evolutionary approach" envisaged by the 1994 Implementing Agreement. This would be through a step by step process based on the functional needs of the Enterprise. This has become timely, particularly as we steadily advance work on the development of draft regulations on the exploitation of mineral resources in the Area, including financial terms of contracts. These are deliberations in which the interim Director General of the Enterprise should have meaningful input.

In this regard, we maintain the view that for the critical functions of the Enterprise, contemplated within Article 153 (2)(a) of UNCLOS and the 1994 Implementation Agreement to be effectively discharged, we must ensure that an interim Director General is appointed, as a matter of priority. We are mindful of the budgetary constraints of the Secretariat and the reduced fiscal space of many members of the Authority. Thus, we note, with appreciation, that the indicative cost for the appointment of an interim Director-General of the Enterprise has been included in the Secretariat budget for the financial period 2023–2024.

ISA Budget

Lastly, Jamaica notes the indicative scale of assessed contributions for the financial period 2023–2024, in line with the changes to the scale used for the regular budget of the United Nations for the period 2022 to 2024.

While we should endeavour to minimise the implications for the Authority, particularly as many members are extremely constrained in terms of their fiscal spaces in the current international environment, we understand that some increase is inevitable. In this regard, we very much appreciate the efforts of the Finance Committee to curtail the increase in the proposed budget by less than 10%, despite the expanded work programme of the Authority and the increased schedule of meetings to complete the important work on the draft exploitation regulations of mineral resources in the Area, in line with the Roadmap.

We look forward to the long-term options to be identified by the Secretariat in terms of the sustainable financing of the organization and the recommendation for the establishment of the International Seabed Authority Partnership Fund.

I thank you.