



STATEMENT

BY

H.E. GEOFFREY ONYEAMA
HONOURABLE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

AT THE

SPECIAL SESSION

IN

COMMEMORATION OF THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
ADOPTION / OPENING FOR SIGNATURE OF THE UNITED NATIONS
CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA (UNCLOS) AND THE SIXTIETH
INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY OF JAMAICA

MONDAY, 1ST AUGUST, 2022

KINGSTON, JAMAICA

Check against delivery

President of the ISA Assembly,

Mr. Michael W. Lodge, Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of His Excellency, Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Nigerians, I felicitate with the esteemed Government and good people of Jamaica on the dual celebrations of her 60th Independence Anniversary and for hosting the International Seabed Authority (ISA), that is marking its Fortieth Anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

2. The establishment of the Convention is a significant milestone in the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, as well as the sustainable development of our oceans and seas. I wish to state explicitly that the adoption of the Convention has continued to positively impact the development of international law through the promotion of peace, security, cooperation, friendly relations among all nations, and sustainable development of the ocean and the sea. Indeed, the Convention has provided governance on all aspects related to the ocean, including maritime zones, navigational and passage rights, the protection of the marine environment, marine scientific research, and dispute settlement.

3. As we commemorate the 40th Anniversary of UNCLOS, it is pertinent to highlight the fundamental roles of ISA in the

implementation of the Convention; especially in the regulation of activities in the "AREA" for the common heritage of mankind. Nigeria commends ISA for its lofty programmes aimed at enhancing member States capacity building, as well as its determination to protect the precious natural resources of the oceans and seas. We urge Member States to renew their commitment to the principles and values of multilateralism, as well as strengthen our commitments to the protection of oceans and seas.

4. In this regard, I wish to acknowledge and commend the Secretary-General of ISA and his team for working assiduously with the African Minerals Development Centre (AMDC) of the African Union to launch the voluntary commitment to foster cooperation and promote the sustainable development of Africa's Deep Seabed Resources (ADSR) project, in support of Africa's Blue Economy.

Mr. President,

5. The Africa's Deep Seabed Resources project is raising awareness among African States about the importance and opportunities associated with the development of Africa's continental shelf, as well as the increased participation of African citizens in exploration activities undertaken in international seabed areas.

6. Consequently, as a demonstration of our commitment to the actualization of the Africa's Deep Seabed Resources project, Nigeria in collaboration with the International Seabed Authority (ISA) and support from the African Union and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), will be hosting the Fourth Sub-regional Workshop of the Africa's Deep Seabed Resources Project, in Abuja Nigeria from 5th – 7th October, 2022.

7. I wish you all fruitful deliberations.

8. I thank you all.