

Deep Sea Conservation Coalition

Intervention Assembly Item 9 Secretary-General Report

23 July 2019 afternoon

Thank you Madame President

We have some brief observations to make on the Secretary-General's report, for which we join other delegates in thanking the Secretary-General and the other hard working members of the Secretariat. We also thank Jamaica for its hospitality, for lending us the President, and for its observations today on the BBNJ negotiations and the importance of them for the work we do here.

We also join Algeria for the African Group in their observations on BBNJ, including on the important environmental principles and the principles on the sharing of benefits, together with the Holy See, as well as in calling for contracts to be made public and we again thank them for their paper submitted to Council on the important issue of liability. We would also suggest that the Secretariat places links to the excellent liability papers by the Legal Working Group on the ISA website for ease of access. And we also join the observations of Monaco with respect to BBNJ and the tireless and inestimable work of President Rena Lee, whom we are fortunate to have amongst us. We also associate ourselves with observations of Sri Lanka and Australia for CANZ on the draft regulations and particularly the importance of getting them right, and building in flexibility and the precautionary principle and transparency, and with Chile on the need to make reports public. We also thank Cameroon for raising the importance of the deep sea as a carbon sink, and the Holy See for its encouragement of transparency in the draft regulations.

Firstly, on Communication and Outreach, we welcome the live streaming of the Council and Assembly meetings, and we note and associate ourselves with suggestions made in Council that workshops where possible be livestreamed. This would save carbon footprint and costs for delegates and observers and enhance the transparency, visibility and outreach of the workshops. We also associate ourselves with suggestions made in Council for transparency in workshops, including invitations and also call for transparency and participation in drafting the reports of the workshops.

Also on Communication and Outreach, we have noted the practice in the last year of the Secretariat to promote, including in side events and social media, as well as in the Oslo meeting of the Global Compact Action Platform, as reflected in an ISA press release of June 12,[1] the idea that seabed mining is somehow preferable to terrestrial mining. We believe that to argue this is inconsistent with those parts of the Convention that is protective of land-based mining economies, such as Art 150(h) of the Convention, which requires that developing countries must be protected from adverse effects on their economies caused by reduction in the price of a mineral that they produce or export from land-based sources because of a new supply from the Area.

We suggest that not only is this not the role of the secretariat to make this argument, but that it is fundamentally misconceived to suggest that we know that seabed mining will be somehow less environmentally damaging than terrestrial mining, and we are happy to direct the secretariat and delegates to reports showing that it is not necessary for a renewable economy. We suggest that it is also inconsistent with the United Nations Environment's International Resource Panel's Global Resources Outlook, Sustainable Development Goal 12 and last month's G20 Osaka's Leaders Declaration, all saying that we must transform our economies as well as our practices towards a circular economy, in recognition of the climate and biodiversity emergencies.

Thank you Madame President