



## **Annual Ministerial Meeting of Landlocked Developing Countries' Foreign Ministers**

**23 September 2020**

REMARKS

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

Honourable Minister Tleuberdi,  
Ambassador Umarov,  
Secretary-General Gutierrez,  
Under-Secretary General 'Utoikamanu,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished colleagues,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you very much for this opportunity to intervene on behalf of the International Seabed Authority. Established 26 years ago by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, our mandate is to ensure the sustainable management of deep-seabed minerals located beyond national jurisdiction for the benefit of all humanity.

In doing so, ISA is under a positive obligation to promote the effective participation of developing States and recognize the special needs of developing landlocked States. This is the direct result of the strong engagement of the group of landlocked States during the negotiation that led to the adoption of UNCLOS. It is today, more than ever, of utmost importance to recall that such opportunities exist as these rights formerly recognized in the Convention are fundamentals to achieving the outcomes of the Vienna Programme of Action and ensuring that all can benefit from the promises of the Blue Economy.

As far as ISA is concerned, the rights of developing landlocked States are even more explicit. They have the right to participate in deep sea mineral exploration and marine scientific research as well as to share the financial and economic benefits from deep-sea minerals.

This is why since I took office I have taken a particularly active interest in the work of the UNHORLLS and continue to urge landlocked developing States, who make up 10% of the membership of ISA, to take full advantage of the opportunities available to them. I also urge the remaining 12 landlocked developing States who are not yet party to UNCLOS to become parties as soon as possible.

I would like to end this short intervention by reiterating the commitment of ISA to supporting the Vienna Programme of Action and the roadmap for accelerated intervention. In particular, we would like to work with each and everyone of you, through our partnership with UNHORLLS, to support your needs in terms of capacity development in marine science, especially for women. This has the potential to provide new opportunities for economic and social development and with your help and engagement, we will thrive to ensure that these opportunities are also available to landlocked developing countries.

I thank you.