

Contribution to the report of the Secretary General on oceans and the law of the sea, pursuant to UNGA resolution 72/73 of 5 December 2017, entitled 'Oceans and the law of the sea'

Twenty fourth session of the Authority

1. The twenty fourth session of the Authority is divided into two parts: 5-23 March and 2-27 July 2018. For the first part, the Council met from 5 to 9 March, followed by the Legal and Technical Commission meetings from 12 to 23 March. For the second part, the Commission will meet from 2 to 13 July, and the Finance Committee will meet from 9 to 12 July. A joint meeting between the Legal and Technical Commission and the Finance Committee will take place on 13 July, in response to the Council's request that the Legal and Technical Commission should collaborate with the Finance Committee on matters connected to benefit sharing, as well as issues related to the draft exploitation regulations, particularly on administrative fees. The Council will meet from 16 to 20 July, followed by the Assembly

review the revised text in July 2018 with a view to preparing a working paper for consideration by the Council at the subsequent meetings. The Council and the Commission will also

7. Since 2012, the Council has repeatedly called upon the Secretariat of the Authority and the Legal and Technicalty

amount of arrears has regrettably increased from a historic low of \$438,187 to almost \$ 2.7 million. Moreover, the number of States Parties that are in arrears of two or more years is rather high and currently stands at 51. Pursuant to Article 184 of the Convention, the voting rights of

Implementation of Voluntary Commitments

19. The Authority has taken action to launch the implementation of these voluntary commitments. For instance, on 22 March 2018, in partnership with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the Authority co hosted a joint side event on the margins of the sixty second session of the Commission on the Status of Women. This side event (“Enhancing the role of women in deep sea scientific research to achieve the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development by vulnerable countries”) aimed to raise awareness and to discuss ways and means of improving access to deep sea marine scientific research for women from developing countries.

20. The Secretary General’s Award for Deep Sea Research Excellence was launched in November 2017, following the publication of guidelines for the award⁹ and the appointment in August 2017 of an advisory committee of internationally recognized experts in the field of deep sea science, social sciences and humanities with experience in the law of the sea, international law or management of marine resources. The name of the winner will be announced during the twenty fourth session of the Assembly.

21. Important progress has been made in the establishment of long term underwater oceanographic observatories in the Area and in the enhancement of deep sea marine biodiversity assessment through the creation of online taxonomic atlases. It is expected that these two distinct voluntary commitments will be implemented by 2018 or early 2019.

22. In cooperation with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the Pacific Community, the Authority will organise, in November 2018 in Tonga, a consultation workshop with officials of Pacific Small Island Developing States to progress the implementation of the “Abyssal Initiative for Blue Growth” project. The implementation of the voluntary commitment established for “Fostering cooperation to promote the sustainable development of Africa’s deep seabed resources in support to Africa’s Blue Economy”, launched in partnership with the African Minerals Development Centre of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, will