



**PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

STATEMENT BY

**MR. KURT DAVIS
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE**

**THIRTY-THIRD MEETING OF
STATES PARTIES
UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA**

**15th JUNE 2023
UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK**

Mr. President,

My delegation congratulates you on your election to preside over this 33rd Meeting of Parties to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and on your steady leadership over the course of the meeting.

We express gratitude to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his reports on Oceans and the Law of the Sea. We are also thankful for the respective reports and presentations from the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, the International Seabed Authority and the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf. Progress in the work of all these bodies helps to ensure that the Convention continues to support the objective of providing a coherent and global ocean governance regime. I use this opportunity to extend hearty congratulations to the newly elected judges of the ITLOS and to wish them a productive tenure.

Jamaica remains proud of the contribution of the UNCLOS as an instrument of international law that contributes to peace and development. We reaffirm that the Montego Bay Convention, as the constitution of the ocean, established the legal framework within which all activities in the ocean and seas must be carried out, including with regard to the use and conservation of the ocean and its resources. It carries universal obligations.

The work to ensure that the Convention is effective has this year attained a major and long overdue milestone – the finalization of an agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological resources of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ). The acceptance of the BBNJ Agreement, on Monday, will culminate decades of diligent work and sometimes dogged negotiations. Its adoption will demonstrate that the international community can and does work together to reconcile divergent positions and priorities in the interests of the common good. Very importantly, its signature and entry into force will close an outstanding gap in ocean governance and my delegation has the firm hope that this will significantly support the goals the world has set to ensure the health of the oceans and promote sustainability of marine resources for generations to come.

Mr. President,

As an archipelagic island nation with a significant maritime territory, Jamaica recognizes the importance of UNCLOS in promoting stability, cooperation, and sustainable

development in the oceans. We are proud to host the Secretariat of the International Seabed Authority and welcome the active participation of delegations from around the world in its important ongoing deliberations. We join the Secretary-General in encouraging parties to fulfil their respective obligations to ensure the full and effective functioning of the Secretariat.

We look forward to the convening of Part II of the Twenty-Eighth Session of the ISA in July to continue implementation of the roadmap for 2023 and to build on the progress made in the March 2023 session on the draft regulations on exploitation of mineral resources in the Area. These deliberations will advance our responsibility to protect the ocean and its resources, and foster the implementation of the objectives outlined in UNCLOS.

Jamaica actively participates in the work of the ISA and bodies such as the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to collaborate with other states to address emerging issues related to maritime law, promote sustainable ocean governance, and ensure the responsible management of marine resources. The ocean is more than just a valuable resource. It is a thread that connects and sustains the whole planet. As a Small Island Developing State, we will therefore continue to champion and advocate for strong and effective measures to safeguard the common heritage of humankind and ensure that all exploitation of resources is done in a sustainable way.

In closing, we recall with pride the marking of the 40th anniversary since the opening for signature of the Convention in Montego Bay in December 1982. We take note as well, that next year will mark 30 years since its entry into force. Jamaica therefore looks forward to continuing to partner with all states to further strengthen the applicability of the Convention and ensure its universalization and effective implementation. We firmly believe that the UNCLOS will thus continue to make a crucial contribution to global peace and security, sustainable development and the well-being of people and planet now and for years to come.

I thank you.