

# International Seabed Authority

Press Release



**Fourteenth Session  
Kingston Jamaica  
26 May - 6 June 2008**

Biographical Note

**SB/14/17  
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## NII ALLOTEY ODUNTON

Mr. Nii Allotey Odunton, who was elected the new Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority Thursday, 4 June, has since 1996 been Interim Director-General and Programme Coordinator of the International Seabed Authority. He is also Deputy to the Secretary-General.

Mr. Odunton has had more than twenty years experience in the International Civil Service with progressively increased responsibility in marine resource policy formulation, particularly marine mineral resources. He is currently also Secretary of the Authority's Assembly and substantive head of the Authority's Office of Resources and Environmental Monitoring.

He has conceptualized and convened technical workshops and their proceedings, including, a) deep seabed polymetallic nodule exploration; development of environmental guidelines (1998); and b) proposed technologies for deep seabed mining of polymetallic nodules (1999).

Mr. Odunton held several positions at the United Nations Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (1984-1988) in New York, including as Chief of the Mineral Resources Section/Ocean Economics and Technology Branch. As head of the section, he was responsible for contributions of reports to United Nations conferences and meetings on marine mineral resources development.

Reports and publications prepared by the Section included:

- a) selection of sites for seabed manganese nodule processing plants. (Seabed Mineral Series Vol.5. United Nations. Graham and Trotman, 1989);
- b) Issues and prospects for the development of small oil fields in the West and Central African sub-region;
- c) Unconsolidated mineral deposits in the Exclusive Economic Zone – A resource search methodology and its application to the West African coastal zone. (United Nations, 1985, ST/ESA/139).

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Mr. Odunton was adviser to the Minerals Commission of the Government of Ghana (1984-1987), assisting the Government with expert advice on national minerals policy. He also assisted the Government with a mineral development policy, in particular, in revamping the national mining code and in investment promotion in the gold sector. Furthermore, he helped the Government of Ghana in procedural changes in the exploitation and marketing of gold and diamond.

Mr. Odunton assisted the International Centre for Ocean development (ICOD) of Canada in formulating a training programme on near shore minerals resource assessment. In addition, he lectured at the ICOD-sponsored seminar on offshore non-fuel minerals resource assessment in Ghana on the geological processes leading to placer formation; the United Nations resource search methodology and placer deposits evaluation. (6-17 November 1989).

Mr. Odunton was an Economic Affairs Officer at the United Nations Department of International Economic Social Affairs (1980-1983) where he participated in the formulation of the International Ocean Institute programme on management and use of the resources of seabed.

He spent a year (1974-1975) in the private sector with Bethlehem Steel Corporation, Rose Mine, Morgantown, Pennsylvania, as a Mine Planning Officer.

Mr. Odunton has a Master of Science degree in Mineral Economics and Mine Finance from Henry Krumb School of Mines of Columbia University, New York, United States (1972-1974) and from where he also obtained his Bachelor of Science degree in Mining Engineering. He was also educated at the Achimota Secondary School in Accra, Ghana where he obtained his Ordinary and Advanced Level Certificates.

Mr. Odunton is a member of the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical and Petroleum Engineers (AIME) and the Ghana Institute of Engineers. He is a recipient of the African Scholarship Programme of American Universities Award (ASPAU) 1969 and 1969-1972.); the Henry Krumb Research Fellow (1972) and the Henry Krumb Fellow (1974-1975).

Born on 14 June 1951, Mr. Odunton is married with four children.

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