

Statement by Professor Mariusz Orion Jędrysek (Secretary of State, Chief National Geologist, Ministry of the Environment, Republic of Poland) the Head of the delegation of the Republic of Poland on the occasion of approval by the Council of The International Seabed Authority of the application for contract on exploration of Polymetallic Massive Sulphides

Kingston 2017.08.10

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary-General,

Excellences,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

As the head of the Polish delegation to this 23rd session of the International Seabed Authority I wish to say how happy I am that the Polish application for approval of the plan of work for exploration of polymetallic sulphides has met with the approval first of the Legal and Technical Commission and then your, the distinguished members of the ISA Council.

Poland is a country with long tradition of mining and metallurgy; you will be interested to know that the Polish experience concerns extraction of lead, zinc, copper, and some rare earth elements among other metals. I am taking this opportunity to show you samples of our land-based riches – ores of zinc, copper, silver, lead, and other elements. Poland has also extensive experience in

exploration for unconventional hydrocarbons, including - since 2007 - shale gas, with all due environmental assurances. You will also, I hope, be interested to know that the world's first oil extraction rig was put into operation in the Polish Carpathians in 1854. In addition, my country has some of the oldest mines for salt, lead and zinc as well as a substantial tradition in extracting energy resources with advanced technologies (e.g. Enhanced Gas Recovery since the 1990s), from land-based deposits (above 80 % of EU hard coal and nearly the entire EU cooking coal, especially critical in steel metallurgy) and Baltic sea oil and gas platforms.

With the application just approved, we turn to the oceans to reinforce our quest for marine mineral resources. This is, however, not a novelty for us. From the very beginning of ISA's work, Poland was very active in its work as one of the six sponsoring states of the Interoceanmetal Joint Organization which is located in Poland. Now we will work as a country under ISA's auspices, first to explore the ocean's potential in providing mineral deposits of interest. In this endeavour we are backed by the industry; our delegation to this session includes a specialist from the KGHM, an industrial giant in mining and metallurgy, with commercial interests also in Canada and Chile.

We are excited at the prospect of becoming acquainted with the fascinating environment of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. This will be a great opportunity for Polish marine scientists from many fields to learn and to contribute their expertise to obtaining more new and interesting data which we are prepared to share, in the spirit of collaboration towards safeguarding the Common Heritage of Humankind.

We will do our best to minimize whatever harm might ensue from our activities in the newly approved application area.

Let me conclude by thanking the Legal and Technical Commission for reviewing our application in such a thorough manner, and for attending to important details of the submission. I wish also to thank all the experts and colleagues back home who had, for months on end, worked hard to prepare the application.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Polish delegation and I regard this day today as a milestone for the Polish ocean science and its applications. We are looking forward to signing the contract for exploration with the International Seabed Authority.

We are fully aware of the responsibilities we are taking upon ourselves. We will work hard to fulfill them – about this I can assure all of you.

Thank you very much.