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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement: Governments Push Back Against Rushed Timeline for Ocean Mining Regulations

At international meeting, Germany, Belgium, Costa Rica, Chile, Russia, Ghana, China among countries objecting to rushed regulations based on a non-binding, industry-imposed deadline

Editor's note: Please see a [previous statement](#), [factsheet](#) and [pressroom](#) for background information about the International Seabed Authority meeting (December 6-10), which is being live streamed [here](#).

Member states attending the International Seabed Authority meeting in Kingston, Jamaica this week have rejected a call by the body's Secretary-General to adopt regulations for commercial deep-sea mining by 2023.

At the meeting, the ISA leadership pushed to complete these controversial regulations by July 2023 in response to the triggering of the "two-year rule" in June by Nauru. This clause in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea requires the ISA to consider a country's application for an exploitation license within two years of the country notifying the ISA of their intentions to begin mining. If exploitation regulations have not been finalized by that deadline, the ISA must still consider the application against the draft text of the regulations.

Germany, Belgium, Costa Rica, Chile, Russia and Ghana--representing the African Group of nations that are members of the ISA--questioned the legal need to meet the two-year deadline set by Nauru. Some member states went as far as to recommend that the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea be asked to advise on the issue. China stated that the deadline was 'unrealistic' in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Other observers challenged the wisdom of finalizing regulations to meet an industry-imposed deadline and expressed concern about the environmental impacts if regulations were rushed through.

Dr. Douglas McCauley, a professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara, said: *"Member states and observers to the International Seabed Authority have spoken: rushing through regulations for ocean mining is neither desirable nor necessary. It's encouraging that these governments have stood up against the two-year rule."*