**Press Release**

**“UNCLOS can be a pathway to an ocean of opportunity for LDCs”-Ambassador Rabab Fatima**

**New York, 16 November 2021:**

 “The vast and unexplored resource frontiers of the oceans have the potentials to bring transformative changes to the lives and livelihoods of more than one billion people in the LDCs. And the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) can indeed be the pathway to an ocean of opportunity for them”-said Ambassador Rabab Fatima. She was speaking today at a High-Level event of the International Seabed Authority on the opportunities offered by UNCLOS to LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

As LDCs are among the world’s most resource-constraint economies in the world, the Permanent Representative urged the International Seabed Authority to ensure the fair share of various benefits and opportunities for LDCs in the deep-sea particularly in the areas of marine scientific research, capacity building and access to marine technologies for exploration of resources in the high sea.

Ambassador Fatima is co-chairing the Preparatory Committee for the LDC5 Conference to be held in Doha in January 2022. Referring to the dedicated focus of the Draft Doha Program of Action on the devastating impacts of climate change on oceans, she stated that various forms of pollution are seriously disrupting the balance of marine food webs and ecosystems. In this context, she emphasized the importance of scaling up global efforts to combat marine pollution and uncontrolled activities in the deep sea.

She concluded her remarks with a call to create more space for the women and youth of the LDCs to have enhanced access to the new and emerging opportunities that the ocean can offer.

The event was moderated by Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority Mr. Michael W. Lodge. A significant number of Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives including the LDC Chair also attended the event.

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