

## Call for transparent and corruption-free elections at the International Seabed Authority

AUG 02, 2024: Today's elections in Kingston, Jamaica, for the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority (ISA) could be a turning point for the future of the oceans.

As Civil Society Organizations dedicated to fighting environmental crime and corruption, we are concerned that the incumbent candidate's campaign, as well as his two previous terms, have been marked by serious allegations of corruption and conflict of interest (see allegations in reporting by [New York Times](#), [LA Times](#), [the Guardian](#) and [Bloomberg](#)).

Member states have also criticized the lack of transparency within the ISA and have lamented the inability to effectively audit the finances of the Authority and question the spending habits of the Secretary-General.

ISA's mandate requires that it both ensures the effective protection of the marine environment and that deep sea mining benefits humankind as a whole. It is impossible for ISA to fulfill either of these obligations so long as the current opaque structure of the Authority persists.

We, the undersigned, call upon ISA member states to be mindful of the above when exercising their right to vote and to take steps to ensure a clean election reflecting the principles of accountability, transparency and integrity. In addition, we also call for a full and independent investigation into the allegations of corruption within the Authority. Finally, we recommend establishing guardrails to ensure that the office of the Secretary-General and all Secretariat members adhere to their duty of neutrality.

Signed,

- Andy Whitmore, Deep Sea Mining Campaign

The logo for the Deep Sea Mining Campaign (DSMC) features the letters 'DSMC' in a large, bold, blue, sans-serif font. The letters are slightly shadowed, giving them a three-dimensional appearance.A red rectangular banner with the text 'Deep Sea Mining Campaign' in white, lowercase, sans-serif font.

- Susannah Fitzgerald, Natural Resource Governance Institute

The logo for the Natural Resource Governance Institute (NRGI) consists of a stylized green icon of three curved lines on the left, followed by the text 'Natural Resource Governance Institute' in a green, sans-serif font.

- Mamadou Ciré DIOUM, Plateforme Démocratie, Paix, Élections et Développement Durable en Guinée (Plateforme DPEG)

- Anthony Umoru, Sensitisation Against Hazard And Crime Initiative



- Simon Taylor, Hawkmoth (co-founder and Board member, Global Witness)
- Stephen Kohn, Chairman of the Board, National Whistleblower Center



- Ana Carballo, Accountable Mining Programme, Transparency International Australia



- Beverly Besmanos, Bantay Kita Philippines



- Ravi Rebbapragada, Samata India



- Tijah Bolton-Akpan, Policy Alert Africa

