



## Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

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### Thirty-third session

New York, 7 October-22 November 2013

## Progress of work in the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

### Statement by the Chair

#### *Summary*

The present statement provides information on the work carried out during the thirty-third session of the Commission. In particular, it contains an overview of the consideration of the submissions made by the Russian Federation, in respect of the Sea of Okhotsk; Uruguay; the Cook Islands, in respect of the Manihiki Plateau; Argentina; Ghana; Iceland, in respect of the Ægir Basin area and the western and southern parts of Reykjanes Ridge; Denmark, in respect of the area north of the Faroe Islands; Pakistan; and Norway, in respect of Bouvetøya and Dronning Maud Land.



1. Pursuant to the decision adopted at its thirtieth session, as endorsed by the General Assembly in paragraph 74 of its resolution 67/78, the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf held its thirty-third session at United Nations Headquarters from 7 October to 22 November 2013. The session was devoted entirely to the technical examination of submissions at the geographic information system (GIS) laboratories of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat.

2. The following members of the Commission attended the session: Muhammad Arshad, Lawrence Folajimi Awosika, Galo Carrera, Francis L. Charles, Ivan F. Glumov, Richard Thomas Haworth, Martin Vang Heinesen, Emmanuel Kalngui, Wenzheng Lu, Mazlan Bin Madon, Estevao Stefane Mahanjane, Jair Alberto Ribas Marques, Simon Njuguna, Isaac Owusu Oduro, Yong-Ahn Park, Carlos Marcelo Paterlini, Walter R. Roest, Tetsuro Urabe and Szymon Uścinowicz. George Jaoshvili and Sivaramakrishnan Rajan did not attend the session. Several members of the Commission attended only parts of the session and stayed in New York for six, five or four weeks. One member of the Commission did not attend the last two weeks of the session owing to a health-related emergency.

3. The Commission had before it the following documents and communications:

(a) Statement by the Chair on the progress of work in the Commission at its thirty-second session (CLCS/80);

(b) Submissions made by coastal States<sup>1</sup> pursuant to article 76, paragraph 8, of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.<sup>2</sup>

## **Consideration of submissions**

### **Consideration of the partial revised submission made by the Russian Federation in respect of the Sea of Okhotsk<sup>3</sup>**

4. The Subcommission met, under the chairmanship of Mr. Carrera, from 11 to 15 and from 19 to 22 November 2013 to continue the main scientific and technical examination of the submission.

5. On 28 October and 13 and 15 November 2013, the Subcommission received additional data and information in response to the request it had made at the thirty-second session (see CLCS/80, para. 41).

6. On 13 November 2013, the Subcommission held a meeting with the delegation of the Russian Federation, which made a presentation of the additional data and information. On 14 November 2013, pursuant to paragraph 10.3 of annex III to the rules of procedure of the Commission (CLCS/40/Rev.1), the Subcommission provided a comprehensive presentation of its views and general conclusions arising from the examination of the submission. On the same date, pursuant to paragraph 10.4 of annex III to the rules of procedure, the delegation responded to the presentation and indicated its agreement with the Subcommission's views. The delegation also

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<sup>1</sup> For a full list of the submissions made to the Commission, see [www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs\\_new/commission\\_submissions.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/commission_submissions.htm).

<sup>2</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1833, No. 31363.

<sup>3</sup> Submission made on 28 February 2013; see [www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs\\_new/submissions\\_files/submission\\_rus\\_rev.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/submission_rus_rev.htm).

stated that it would consider making a presentation to the Commission pursuant to paragraph 15.1 bis of annex III to the rules of procedure at the next session.

7. The Subcommission reached an agreement on the substantive components of the recommendations and decided that it would proceed with the adoption of the final draft at the thirty-fourth session of the Commission,<sup>4</sup> with a view to transmitting the recommendations to the Commission in advance of the first plenary part of the thirty-fourth session.

#### **Consideration of the submission made by Uruguay<sup>5</sup>**

8. The Subcommission, under the chairmanship of Mr. Charles, held nine meetings with the delegation of Uruguay during the periods from 14 to 18 October and from 4 to 8 November 2013. In the course of the session, the Subcommission and the delegation discussed the methodology used by the delegation in the submission.

9. The Subcommission decided that its members would continue to work on the submission during the intersessional period, individually and in working groups, in order, inter alia, to evaluate the materials that would be provided by the delegation of Uruguay by 17 January, as agreed during the thirty-third session.

10. The Subcommission also decided that it would resume its consideration of the submission during the thirty-fourth session, between 27 January and 7 February 2014, and invited the delegation to meet with it on 3 February 2014.

#### **Consideration of the submission made by the Cook Islands in respect of the Manihiki Plateau<sup>6</sup>**

11. The Subcommission met, under the chairmanship of Mr. Carrera, from 7 to 25 October and on 18 and 19 November 2013. During that period, the Subcommission continued the main scientific and technical examination of the submission. On 18 November, pursuant to paragraph 10.3 of annex III to the rules of procedure, the Subcommission presented to the delegation its views and general conclusions arising from the examination of the submission, and pursuant to paragraph 10.4 of annex III to the rules of procedure, the delegation provided its response to the presentation. The delegation informed the Subcommission that the Cook Islands would provide a complete response to the presentation at a later date.

12. The Subcommission decided that, after receiving the complete response of the Cook Islands, it would resume its consideration of the submission during the thirty-fourth session. The Subcommission will meet from 17 to 21 February, and if necessary also from 24 to 28 February 2014, with a view to finalizing its consideration of the submission.

<sup>4</sup> To be held in New York from 27 January to 14 March 2014. The plenary parts will be held from 10 to 14 February and from 10 to 14 March.

<sup>5</sup> Submission made on 7 April 2009; see [www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs\\_new/submissions\\_files/submission\\_ury\\_21\\_2009.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/submission_ury_21_2009.htm).

<sup>6</sup> Submission made on 16 April 2009; see [www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs\\_new/submissions\\_files/submission\\_cok\\_23\\_2009.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/submission_cok_23_2009.htm).

**Consideration of the submission made by Argentina<sup>7</sup>**

13. The Subcommission met, under the chairmanship of Mr. Carrera, from 7 to 11 October and from 28 October to 8 November 2013. During that period, it held five meetings with the delegation of Argentina, during which the delegation gave detailed presentations on its submission and transmitted additional data and information to the Subcommission in response to questions that had been raised by the Subcommission during the thirty-second session of the Commission. The Subcommission also presented its preliminary views on a number of issues and indicated areas where it was in agreement with the delegation on the basis of the data and information submitted by the latter.

14. The Subcommission decided that its members would continue to work on the submission during the intersessional period, individually and in working groups. The Subcommission will meet during the thirty-fourth session, between 27 January and 7 February 2014, with a view to presenting to the delegation its views and general conclusions at that session.

**Consideration of the submission made by Ghana<sup>8</sup>**

15. The Subcommission met, under the chairmanship of Mr. Roest, from 7 to 11 October and from 21 October to 1 November 2013. During that period, particular consideration was given to the response of Ghana to the document dated 9 August 2013 in which the Subcommission had requested further clarifications.

16. The Subcommission also held three meetings with the delegation of Ghana, during which the delegation provided new digital data. The Subcommission completed the analysis of the new data on 1 November 2013 and communicated its observations to Ghana.

17. During the thirty-third session, the Subcommission elected Mr. Arshad as Vice-Chair to replace Mr. Jaoshvili.

18. The Subcommission decided that its members would continue to work during the intersessional period and during the thirty-fourth session, from 27 to 31 January 2014, including by meeting with the delegation of Ghana.

**Consideration of the submission made by Iceland in respect of the Ægir Basin area and the western and southern parts of the Reykjanes Ridge<sup>9</sup>**

19. The Subcommission met, under the chairmanship of Mr. Urabe, from 14 to 18 October and from 28 October to 8 November 2013. During that period, particular consideration was given to Iceland's response to the Subcommission's document dated 9 August 2013, requesting further clarifications.

20. The Subcommission also held four meetings with the delegation of Iceland, during which the Subcommission informed the delegation about its views in relation to the outer limit of the continental shelf in the Ægir Basin area. The delegation

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<sup>7</sup> Submission made on 21 April 2009; see [www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs\\_new/submissions\\_files/submission\\_arg\\_25\\_2009.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/submission_arg_25_2009.htm).

<sup>8</sup> Submission made on 28 April 2009; see [www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs\\_new/submissions\\_files/submission\\_gha\\_26\\_2009.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/submission_gha_26_2009.htm).

<sup>9</sup> Submission made on 29 April 2009; see [www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs\\_new/submissions\\_files/submission\\_isl\\_27\\_2009.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/submission_isl_27_2009.htm).

gave presentations providing new information for the western and southern parts of the Reykjanes Ridge. The Subcommission analysed the new information and communicated its views to Iceland.

21. The Subcommission decided that its members would continue to work on the submission during the intersessional period and that it would resume its consideration of the submission during the thirty-fourth session, between 3 and 7 February 2014, including by meeting with the delegation of Iceland.

**Consideration of the partial submission made by Denmark in respect of the area north of the Faroe Islands<sup>10</sup>**

22. The Subcommission met, under the chairmanship of Mr. Haworth, from 7 to 30 October 2013. On 21 October, pursuant to paragraph 10.3 of annex III to the rules of procedure, the Subcommission presented to the delegation of Denmark its views and general conclusions arising from the examination of the submission.

23. On 22 October 2013, pursuant to paragraph 10.4 of annex III to the rules of procedure, the delegation made a presentation indicating its agreement with the outline of the draft recommendations and stating its intention to avail itself of the possibility to make a presentation to the Commission pursuant to paragraph 15.1 bis of annex III to the rules of procedure.

24. The Subcommission then finalized the draft recommendations, which were adopted by consensus on 30 October 2013 and transmitted to the Chair of the Commission on the same date.

**Consideration of the submission made by Pakistan<sup>11</sup>**

25. The Subcommission met, under the chairmanship of Mr. Urabe, from 11 to 22 November 2013 and carried out the initial examination of the submission, in conformity with annex III to the rules of procedure.

26. The Subcommission completed the preliminary analysis of the submission, concluding, *inter alia*, that further time would be required to examine all the data and prepare recommendations for transmittal to the Commission.

27. The Subcommission held one meeting with the delegation of Pakistan, during which the delegation made a presentation on its submission focused on the technical aspects.

28. The Subcommission transmitted a communication to Pakistan requesting clarification on the submission.

29. The Subcommission decided that its members would continue to work individually on the submission during the intersessional period and that the Subcommission would meet at the thirty-fourth session, between 24 February and 7 March 2014. The Subcommission invited the delegation to meet with it during the week of 3 to 7 March.

<sup>10</sup> Submission made on 29 April 2009; see [www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs\\_new/submissions\\_files/submission\\_dnk\\_28\\_2009.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/submission_dnk_28_2009.htm).

<sup>11</sup> Submission made on 30 April 2009; see [www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs\\_new/submissions\\_files/submission\\_pak\\_29\\_2009.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/submission_pak_29_2009.htm).

**Consideration of the partial submission made by Norway in respect of Bouvetøya and Dronning Maud Land**

30. The Subcommission met, under the chairmanship of Mr. Haworth, from 11 to 22 November 2013. During that period, it held three meetings with the delegation of Norway, during which the delegation gave a summary presentation of its submission, recapitulating and further elaborating the scientific and technical aspects of the submission.

31. The Subcommission transmitted a communication to Norway requesting clarifications and answers to questions that had arisen from Norway's presentation and the Subcommission's examination of the submission. The delegation provided verbal responses to those preliminary questions. On 20 November 2013, the delegation transmitted additional information to the Subcommission in response to its request.

32. The Subcommission will continue its consideration of the outer limit of the continental shelf in the Bouvetøya area during the thirty-fourth session, between 24 February and 7 March 2014.

**Trust funds****Trust fund for the purpose of defraying the cost of participation of the members of the Commission from developing States in its meetings**

33. The Commission was informed that, for the thirty-second session, assistance had been provided to eight members of the Commission, in the amount of \$172,401. For the thirty-third session, an estimated total of \$171,000 in financial assistance was being provided to eight members. Since the thirty-second session, contributions had been received from Iceland (\$19,113), Ireland (\$31,822), Japan (\$352,100) and Mexico (\$7,500). As at 13 December 2013, the trust fund had an approximate balance of \$1,125,275.<sup>12</sup>

**Trust fund for the purpose of facilitating the preparation of submissions to the Commission by developing States, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, and compliance with article 76 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea**

34. The Commission was informed that, since the thirty-second session, no contributions had been received. As at 13 December 2013, the trust fund had an approximate balance of \$1,299,119.

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<sup>12</sup> In paragraph 83 of document CLCS/80, it was erroneously indicated that the contribution from Japan amounted to \$704,200.