In 2015, the United Nations continued to promote universal acceptance of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and its two implementing Agreements on the implementation of Part XI of the Convention and on the conservation and management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks, respectively.

The three institutions created by the Convention—the International Seabed Authority, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf—held sessions during the year.

Highlighting the need for a comprehensive global regime to better address the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, the General Assembly in June decided to develop an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, and to that end decided to establish a preparatory committee to make recommendations to the Assembly on the elements of a draft text and requested the preparatory committee to start its work in 2016.

**UN Convention on the Law of the Sea**

**Signatures and ratification**


**Meeting of States Parties**

The twenty-fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention (New York, 8–12 June) [SPLOS/287] discussed the 2014 activities of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea [YUN 2014, p. 1547]. Also discussed were the activities of the International Seabed Authority (see p. 0000) and of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf [SPLOS/283] (see p. 0000) during the previous 12 months, as well as the Secretary-General’s reports on oceans and the law of the sea for 2014 [YUN 2014, p. 1567] and 2015 (see p. 0000). The Meeting took note of the report of the Tribunal for 2014 [SPLOS/278], the report of the external auditor for the financial period 2013–2014 [SPLOS/279], and the report on budgetary matters for the financial periods 2013–2014 and 2015–2016 [SPLOS/280]. It approved the report of the Credential Committee [SPLOS/285]; adopted the decision regarding the conditions of service of the member of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf by consensus [SPLOS/286]; and decided that the open-ended working group continue to consider issues related to the conditions of service of the members of the Commission, in particular issues related to working space and medical insurance coverage. The Meeting also elected one member of the Commission to fill the vacancy from the date of election until 15 June 2017.

**Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the Convention**

During 2015, the number of parties to the 1994 Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the Convention (governing exploitation of seabed resources beyond national jurisdiction), adopted by General Assembly resolution 48/263 [YUN 1994, p. 1301], reached 147, with the State of Palestine acceding to the treaty during the year [A/70/74/Add.1]. The Agreement, which entered into force on 28 July 1996 [YUN 1996, p. 1215], sought to address certain difficulties with the seabed mining provisions contained in Part XI of the Convention, which had been raised primarily by the industrialized countries. The Agreement was to be interpreted and applied together with the Convention as a single instrument, and in the event of any inconsistency between the Agreement and Part XI of the Convention, the provisions of the Agreement would prevail. Any ratification of or accession to the Convention after 28 July 1994 represented consent to be bound by the Agreement also. Parties to the Convention prior to the Agreement’s adoption had to deposit a separate instrument of ratification of or accession to the Agreement.

**Agreement relating to conservation and management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks**

As at 31 December, the number of parties to the 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law
of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks [YUN 1995, p. 1334] remained 82 during the year [A/70/74/Add.1]. Referred to as the Fish Stocks Agreement, it entered into force on 11 December 2001 [YUN 2001, p. 1232].

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 8 December [meeting 69], the General Assembly adopted **resolution 70/75** [draft: A/70/L.19 & Add.1] (Sustainable fisheries, including through the 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, and related instruments) without vote [agenda item 70 (b)].

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**Institutions created by the Convention**

**International Seabed Authority**

Through the International Seabed Authority, established by **UNCLOS** and the 1994 Implementation Agreement [YUN 1994, p. 1301], States organized and conducted exploration of the resources of the seabed and ocean floor and subsoil beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. In 2015, the Authority, which had 167 members as at 30 May, held its twenty-first session (Kingston, Jamaica, 13–24 July) [ISBA/21/A/11]. Its subsidiary bodies, namely, the Assembly, the Council, the Legal and Technical Commission and the Finance Committee, also met during the session.

The Assembly considered the annual report [ISBA/21/A/2] of the Authority’s Secretary-General, which reviewed the Authority’s work since the twentieth session [YUN 2014, p. 1564]. The report covered the membership of the Authority, relations with the host country, the Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the Authority, financial and administrative matters, and the voluntary trust fund and the Endowment Fund for Marine Scientific Research in the Area. The Assembly decided to undertake, pursuant to article 154 of the Convention, a general and systematic review of the manner in which the international regime of the Area had operated in practice [ISBA/21/A/9]. The Assembly adopted decisions relating to financial and budgetary matters including the appointment of **KPMG**, an external consultant firm, as independent auditor for 2015 and 2016 [ISBA/21/A/10]. The Assembly also adopted the report of the Credentials Committee [ISBA/21/A/7] and decided that the twenty-second session of the Assembly would be held from 11 to 22 July 2016.

As at 1 June, 22 contracts for exploration had entered into force, including 14 for exploration for polymetallic nodules, 5 for exploration for polymetallic sulphides and 3 for exploration for cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts. On 15 July, the Council [ISBA/21/C/21] considered the report of the Secretary-General on the status of contracts for exploration in the Area [ISBA/21/C/8/Rev.1]. The Council approved the application for the approval of a plan of work for exploration for polymetallic nodules submitted by China Minmetals Corporation, and requested the Secretary-General to issue the plan of work in the form of contract between the Authority and China Minmetals Corporation [ISBA/21/C/17]. It adopted a decision relating to the procedures and criteria for the extension of an approved plan of work for exploration [ISBA/21/C/19]. The Council took note of the Commission’s work on the framework for the exploitation regulations and requested the Commission to continue its work on exploitation regulations as a matter of priority. It also requested the Commission to consider the document [ISBA/21/C/13] submitted by the Netherlands on addressing serious harm to the marine environment, in the context of its work on developing the exploitation regulations. The Council endorsed the Commission’s list of priority deliverables for the development of the exploitation regulations over the next 12 to 18 months, and approved the agreement of cooperation between the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Authority [ISBA/21/C/10] and the memorandum of understanding between the Authority and the Pacific Community [ISBA/21/C/11].

The Legal and Technical Commission [ISBA/21/C/16] considered the application for approval of a plan of work for exploration for polymetallic nodules by the China Minmetals Corporation, and reviewed and evaluated 18 annual reports submitted by contractors [ISBA/21/LTC/16]. The Commission took note that 22 contracts for exploration had been issued by the Authority as at 30 June 2015. The Commission reviewed the recommended template for annual reports of contractors and adopted draft recommendations [ISBA/21/LTC/15], which would be applied by all contractors with effect from 1 January 2016.

The Finance Committee [ISBA/21/A/6] took note of the balance of the Endowment Fund in the amount of $3,468,750, and of the balance of the Voluntary Trust Fund in the amount of $225,462, as at 30 June 2015. It also took note of the status of the Working Capital Fund as at 30 June, with advances of $559,601 out of a ceiling of $560,000. The Committee recommended to the Council that the fee for processing an application for extension of a contract be fixed at $67,000. It also recommended that the Council and the Assembly request the Secretary-General to endeavour to allocate sufficient resources in the budget for 2015–2016 to the priority deliverables identified in the draft action plan and to report to the Committee on the progress made...
and resources used. The Committee developed a new budget format and requested the Secretary-General to use it for the preparation of the budget proposal for the financial period 2017–2018. The Committee recommended to the Assembly that KPMG be appointed for two more years to complete its four-year term.

As at 31 December, the 1998 Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Seabed Authority [YUN 1998, p. 1226], which entered into force in 2003 [YUN 2003, p. 1355], had 28 signatories and 37 parties. Albania acceded to it during the year.

International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea

The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea held its thirty-ninth (9–20 March) and fortieth (21 September–2 October) sessions in Hamburg, Germany [SPLOS/294].

By an order dated 12 January 2015, the Tribunal decided to accede to the request of the Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire to form a Special Chamber to deal with the case concerning delimitation of the maritime boundary between these countries in the Atlantic Ocean (Ghana/Côte d’Ivoire), and determined the composition of the Special Chamber with their approval. On 18 February, the President of the Special Chamber held consultations with the representatives of the parties in order to ascertain their views with regard to questions of procedure. On 24 February, the President adopted an order fixing 4 September as the time limit for the filing of the memorial by Ghana, 4 April 2016 as the time limit for the filing of the counter-memorial by Côte d’Ivoire, and, should the Special Chamber find it necessary to authorize the presentation of a reply and a rejoinder, 4 July 2016 as the time limit for the filing of the reply by Ghana and 4 October 2016 as the time limit for the filing of the rejoinder by Côte d’Ivoire. On 27 February 2015, Côte d’Ivoire filed a request for the prescription of provisional measures by the Special Chamber in accordance with article 290, paragraph 1, of the Convention. By an order dated 6 March, the President fixed 29 March as the date for the opening of the hearing. Ghana filed its written statement with the Special Chamber on 23 March. The Special Chamber held initial deliberations on 28 March, prior to the opening of the hearing. Oral statements were presented at four public sittings held on 29 and 30 March, and the final submissions were presented at the hearing on 30 March. The Special Chamber delivered its order on 25 April. The Special Chamber further decided that Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire each had to submit an initial report not later than 25 May to the Special Chamber. Each party submitted an initial report on the measures taken with the prescribed time limit.

With respect to the request for an advisory opinion submitted by the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) [YUN 2013, p. 1375], the Tribunal delivered its advisory opinion on 2 April. It decided that it had jurisdiction to give the advisory opinion requested by SRFC and that, in the case before it, its jurisdiction was limited to the exclusive economic zones of the SRFC member States. The Tribunal decided to respond to the request.

On 26 June, Italy instituted arbitration proceedings in the “Enrica Lexie” Case (Italy v. India). The dispute concerned an incident involving the M/V Enrica Lexie, an oil tanker flying the Italian flag, and India’s subsequent exercise of jurisdiction over the incident. Pending the constitution of the arbitral tribunal and after expiry of the two-week time limits, Italy, on 21 July, submitted a request to the Tribunal for the prescription of provisional measures in respect of the dispute. By an order dated 24 July, the President fixed 10 August as the date for the opening of the hearing. India filed with the Tribunal a statement in response on 6 August. The Tribunal held initial deliberations on 8 August. Oral statements were presented at four public sittings held on 10 and 11 August, and the final submissions were presented at the hearing on 11 August. The Tribunal delivered its order on 24 August. The Tribunal further decided that each party had to submit an initial report to the Tribunal not later than 24 September; each party submitted an initial report on the measures taken within the prescribed time limit.

In the M/V “Norstar” Case (Panama v. Italy), Panama, on 17 December, filed with the Tribunal an application in a dispute with Italy regarding the arrest and detention of the M/V “Norstar”, a Panamanian-flagged vessel. In its application, Panama claimed compensation from Italy for damage caused by the illegal arrest of the vessel by Spanish officials, at the request of Italy, in the bay of Palma de Mallorca on 24 September 1998. The dispute had been submitted to the Tribunal pursuant to the declarations made by Panama and Italy under article 287 of the Convention.

As at 31 December, the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, which was adopted by the seventh Meeting of States Parties to the Convention in 1997 [YUN 1997, p. 1361] and entered into force in 2001 [YUN 2001, p. 1235], had 21 signatories and 41 parties.

Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

In 2015, the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, established in 1997 [YUN 1997, p. 1362], held its thirty-seventh (2 February–20 March) [CLCS/88], thirty-eighth (20 July–4 September) [CLCS/90] and thirty-ninth (19 October–4 December) [CLCS/91] sessions in New York.

At its thirty-seventh session, the subcommissions considered the submissions made by Uruguay; the
Cook Islands in respect of the Manihiki Plateau; Argentina; Pakistan; Norway in respect of Bouvetøya and Dronning Maud Land; South Africa in respect of the mainland of the territory of the Republic of South Africa; the Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands in respect of the Ontong Java Plateau; France and South Africa in respect of the area of the Crozet Archipelago and the Prince Edward Islands; and Mauritius in respect of the region of Rodrigues Island. The Commission received a presentation of submission by Tonga in respect of the western part of the Lau-Colville Ridge, and decided that the submission would be considered at a future session by way of a subcommission to be established as queued in the order. The Commission approved “Recommendations of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf in regard to the submission made by the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on 30 April 2009”, with amendments. Regarding the submission made by Iceland in respect of the Ægir Basin area and the western and southern parts of Reykjanes Ridge, it decided to continue further consideration of the draft recommendations prepared by the subcommission to its next session.

At its thirty-eighth session, the Commission received presentations of submissions from Brazil, in respect of the South Region; Angola; Cabo Verde, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone, jointly, in respect of areas in the Atlantic Ocean adjacent to the coast of West Africa; and Spain in respect of the area west of the Canary Islands. The Commission decided to consider the submission by Brazil in respect of the South Region by way of a subcommission, and proceeded to reconstitute the subcommission for the examination of the submission by Brazil. The Commission decided that it would establish subcommissions when the submissions were next in line for consideration, including submissions made by Cabo Verde, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone, jointly, in respect of areas in the Atlantic Ocean adjacent to the coast of West Africa; and by Spain, in respect of the area west of the Canary Islands. It also decided to defer further consideration of the submission and the communications by Angola as queued in the order, in order to take into account any further developments that might occur in the intervening period. Regarding the submissions made by the Cook Islands in respect of the Manihiki Plateau, and by Argentina, the Commission decided to defer further consideration of the draft recommendations to its fortieth session, in order to allow sufficient time for its member to consider the submissions and the draft recommendations. Regarding the submission made by Iceland in respect of the Ægir Basin area and the western and southern parts of Reykjanes Ridge, the Commission continued its consideration of the draft recommendations by its subcommission at the thirty-fourth session [YUN 2014, p. 1565], and decided to further explore the possibility of reaching agreement on substantive matters by way of consensus and to continue further consideration of the draft recommendations at its fortieth session.

The subcommission decided to continue consideration of the submissions made by Uruguay; by Norway in respect of Bouvetøya and Dronning Maud Land; by South Africa in respect of the mainland of the territory of the Republic of South Africa; by the Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands in respect of the Ontong Java Plateau; by France and South Africa in respect of the area of the Crozet Archipelago and the Prince Edward Islands; by Mauritius in respect of the region of Rodrigues Island; and by Nigeria at the Commission’s thirty-ninth session.

At its thirty-ninth session, the subcommissions carried out the initial examination of the submissions made by Brazil in respect of the Brazilian Southern Region, and by Kenya, and decided to continue its consideration of the submissions during the fortieth session. The subcommission presented its preliminary views on a number of issues, with consideration of the submission made by South Africa in respect of the mainland of the territory of the Republic of South Africa, and decided to continue its consideration of the submission. The subcommission continued the main scientific and technical examination of the joint submission made by the Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands concerning the Ontong Java Plateau, and decided to continue its consideration of the joint submission. The subcommission continued the preliminary analysis of the submission by Nigeria, proceeded to the main scientific and technical examination of the submission, and decided to continue consideration of the submission. The subcommissions decided to continue consideration of the submissions made by Norway in respect of Bouvetøya and Dronning Maud Land; and by France and South Africa in respect of the area of the Crozet Archipelago and the Prince Edward Islands during the next session. Regarding the submission made by Uruguay, the subcommission finalized the draft recommendations, which would be presented to the Commission at the fortieth session. The subcommission decided to continue its consideration of the submission made by Mauritius in the region of Rodrigues Island during the fortieth session, and would proceed to prepare its recommendations to the Commission at its forty-first session.

Other developments related to the Convention

Pursuant to resolution 69/245 [YUN 2014, p. 1568] and article 319 of the Convention [YUN 1982, p. 237], the Secretary-General in September submitted his an-
nual report [A/70/74/Add.1] covering developments and issues relating to ocean affairs and the law of the sea, including the implementation of the resolution. The report reviewed the Convention and its implementing bodies established thereunder and peaceful settlement of disputes; maritime spaces; developments relating to international shipping activities; ocean and climate change and ocean acidification; people at sea, including maritime workers, and unsafe mixed migration by sea; and maritime security, including piracy and armed robbery at sea, illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, illicit traffic in firearms, and smuggling and trafficking of persons. The report further reviewed sustainable development of oceans and seas, including developing marine science and scientific information in support of decision-making; assessments in support of decision-making; conservation and management of marine resources; conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity; pressures on the marine environment; and management tools. It also covered issues related to supporting small island developing States and landlocked developing countries; building the capacity of States to implement the legal regime for the oceans and seas; as well as strengthening international cooperation and coordination.

The Secretary-General concluded that the General Assembly needed to continue to provide firm guidance for effective action by States and other stakeholders. The Assembly was best placed to foster an integrated, interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach to oceans and the law of the sea issues, as well as cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination. The United Nations system remained ready to provide its support, including in the area of capacity-building, which was crucial for achieving sustainable development and for enabling developing countries to realize benefits from the oceans and resources, in a sustainable manner and in accordance with the Convention.

Assessment of global marine environment

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/245 [YUN 2014, p. 1568], the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects (the Regular Process) held its sixth meeting (New York, 8–11 September) [A/70/418]. Representatives of 51 Member States, one non-member States, nine intergovernmental organizations and other bodies and three non-governmental organizations attended the meeting. The Working Group adopted the agenda and agreed on the organization of work, as proposed by the Co-Chairs. The Working Group considered the first global integrated marine assessment, including its summary [A/70/112]. The Group of Experts provided a brief history of the Regular Process, outlined the main conclusions from the assessment and enumerated the knowledge gaps and the capacity-building gaps. The summary covered the main themes, including implications for the ocean of climate change and related changes in the atmosphere; challenges faced by marine biota; food security and safety; biodiversity hotspots as magnets for human activities; increasing and conflicting demands for ocean space; increasing inputs of harmful materials; cumulative impacts of human activities on biodiversity; uneven distribution of ocean benefits and disbenefits; integrated management of human activities; and the urgency of addressing threats to the ocean. The Working Group also considered the lessons learned in conjunction with the way forward for the Regular Process. It took note of the letters of 11 May and 7 September from the Joint Coordinators to the Co-Chairs, and requested the secretariat of the Regular Process to provide a brief overview of the lessons learned.

The Working Group recommended that the Assembly: approve the first global integrated marine assessment including the summary; launch the second cycle of the Regular Process; request the Bureau to continue the consideration of lessons learned from the first cycle of the Regular Process with a view to the implementation of the second cycle; request the Secretary-General to convene the seventh meeting of the Working Group in 2016; to review the resource requirements for the second cycle of the Regular Process and to invite the Chairs of the regional groups to constitute a group of experts for the duration of the second cycle of the Regular Process. The working group also recommended the Assembly request the secretariat of the Regular Process to compile an inventory of available information on recent and ongoing assessments and other processes at the regional and global levels relevant to the Regular Process, and to submit it to the Bureau by the end of February 2016).

Marine biological resources

The Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, established pursuant to Assembly resolution 59/24 [YUN 2004, p. 1333], held a meeting (New York, 20–23 January) [A/69/780] to provide Co-Chairs’ summary of discussions and recommendations to the Assembly, as requested in resolution 69/245 [YUN 2014, p. 1568]. The meeting was attended by representatives of 104 Member States, two non-Member States, 17 intergovernmental organizations and other bodies and 11 non-governmental organizations.

The Working Group recommended that the Assembly reaffirm the commitment to address the issue of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, including by taking a decision on the development of an international instrument under the
Convention before the end of the sixty-ninth session of the Assembly). In that regard, it decided to develop an international legally binding instrument on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (para. 1 (e)). To that end, it decided to establish a preparatory committee to make substantive recommendations to the Assembly on the elements of a draft text of an international legally binding instrument. The Assembly would decide on the convening and on the starting date of an intergovernmental conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, to consider the recommendations of the preparatory committee, on the elements and to elaborate the text of an international legally binding instrument under the Convention. The Working Group also recommended that the Assembly decide that negotiations address the topics identified in the package agreed in 2011, namely the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, in particular, together and as a whole, marine genetic resources, including questions on the sharing of benefits, measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, environmental impact assessments and capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology).

The Working Group also considered the scope, parameters and feasibility of an international instrument under the Convention, and further considered and adopted the draft recommendations to the sixty-ninth session of the Assembly.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 19 June [meeting 96], the General Assembly adopted resolution 69/292 [draft: A/69/L.65 & Add.1] (Development of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction) without vote [agenda items 74 (a)].

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 22 December [meeting 81], the General Assembly adopted resolution 70/226 [draft: A/70/472/Add.9] (United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development) without vote [agenda items 20 & 79 (a)].

By resolution 70/1 (see p. 000) of 25 September on “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, the Assembly established a number of goals relating to the conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development (Goal 14), and called for enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

**United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process**

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/245 [YUN 2014, p. 1568], the sixteenth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (New York, 6–10 April) [A/70/78] discussed the topic “Oceans and sustainable development: integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, namely, environmental, social and economic”. The meeting was attended by representatives of 68 States, nine intergovernmental organizations and other bodies and entities and seven non-governmental organizations.

The meeting had before it a March report [A/70/74] of the Secretary-General on the oceans and the three dimensions of sustainable development, which described oceans and each dimension of sustainable development, and integration in the outcomes of sustainable development meetings. It also reviewed opportunities for, and challenges to, the enhanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in relation to oceans, including the integration of the three dimensions in selected areas of ocean affairs, such as shipping, exploitation of marine living resources, exploitation of non-living resources, marine renewable energy, laying of submarine cables, tourism, natural and cultural heritage, conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity, and oceans and climate change and ocean acidification. It also addressed specific challenges to achieve sustainable development facing the most vulnerable countries, in particular, African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing States, and discussed legal framework for enhanced integration of the three dimensions in relation to oceans.

Representatives highlighted the importance of recognizing the interlinkages between and integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development in order to ensure sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection. Representatives recalled that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea provided the legal framework for all activities in the oceans and seas and highlighted the importance of its implementation for achieving sustainable development. They further stressed the importance of enhancing cooperation and coordination at all levels and across sectors for an integrated approach to the management of ocean activities.

**Piracy**

The International Maritime Organization (imo), on 12 June [MSC.1/Circ.1333/Rev.1], issued recommendations to Member Governments for preventing and suppressing piracy and armed robbery against ships. Imo also issued an annual report [MSC.4/Circ.219/Rev.1]
on acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships in 2014, including a regional analysis. As reported to IMO, 291 acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships occurred or were attempted during 2014, compared to 298 such cases in 2013 [YUN 2014, p. 1568].

The Security Council addressed the issue of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia by resolution 2246(2015) of 10 November (see p. 000).

Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea

During 2015, the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs continued to fulfill its role as the substantive unit of the UN Secretariat responsible for reviewing and monitoring all developments related to the law of the sea and ocean affairs, as well as for the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and related General Assembly resolutions.

The Division, at the request of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, participated in a joint seminar on the Convention on the Law of the Sea and related issues for lawmakers and academics, held in Tehran in May. It also organized a five-day workshop in July in Mogadishu for the Somali Federal Government and regional officials on ocean and the law of the sea. During the year, the Division administered eight voluntary trust funds and was in the process of establishing a new trust fund pursuant to Assembly resolution 69/292 (see p. 0000) to assist developing countries in particular the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, in attending the meetings of the preparatory committee and intergovernmental conference on the development of an international legally binding instrument under the Convention on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

The Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship on the Law of the Sea, established in 1981 [YUN 1981, pp. 130 & 139], had trained 30 individuals from 26 Member States since its establishment. Eric Teiniu (Solomon Islands) was awarded the 2015 Fellowship. The United Nations-Nippon Foundation Fellowship Programme had trained 110 individuals from 67 Member States since its establishment in 2004. Ten individuals were undertaking fellowships and ten new awards would be made in October for the 2016 cycle. Through the first Special Strategic Award, a customized four-month programme was also being provided to a government official of Somalia.

UN-Oceans

As requested by the Assembly resolution 67/78 [YUN 2012, p. 1353], UN-Oceans, an inter-agency coordination mechanism on ocean and coastal issues within the United Nations system which was established in 2003 by Assembly resolution 57/141 [YUN 2002, p. 1322], continued to give priority attention to the development of an online searchable database for an inventory of mandates and activities.

The fourteenth meeting of UN-Oceans was held on 20 March in London. UN-Oceans agreed that the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs (doalos/ola) would convene a meeting in the margins of the sixteenth meeting of the Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (icp) to facilitate a further exchange of views on the inventory of member organizations’ activities and mandates. It also agreed that the next meeting of UN-Oceans would be held the following year in New York.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 23 December [meeting 82], the General Assembly adopted resolution 70/235 [draft: A/70/L.22 & Add.1] (Oceans and the law of the sea) by recorded vote (143-1-4) [agenda item 79 (a)].

Also on the same day (decision 70/554), the General Assembly decided that the agenda item on “Oceans and the law of the sea” would remain for consideration during its resumed seventieth (2016) session.