

55th Session of the IOC Executive Council (14-17 June 2022)

Opening Statement by Ariel Troisi, IOC Chair

14 June 2022

Estimados delegados, señoras y señores, colegas y amigos.

Tras años muy difíciles para todos, en particular por la pandemia de CoVid-19, es un verdadero placer para mí estar aquí hoy en esta primera reunión presencial de un órgano de gobierno de la COI tras la 30^a Asamblea en 2019. En estos tres años hemos debido adaptarnos a circunstancias cambiantes y demandantes, haciendo uso de la tecnología y basados en el esfuerzo de nuestro secretariado y la confianza y compromiso de nuestros estados miembro para poder seguir adelante con nuestras múltiples funciones como Comisión Oceanográfica Intergubernamental. A todos, mi más profundo agradecimiento.

Las reuniones remotas nos han permitido cubrir la más amplia gama de temas y facilitado la participación, pero nos privaron de la posibilidad de encontrarnos personalmente con toda la riqueza y valor agregado que esa interacción nos brinda.

Es entonces en este nuevo contexto que quisiera recuperar junto a ustedes otra práctica habitual. En el pasado, supimos tener un ítem de agenda en nuestras reuniones de Consejo y Asamblea en el que nos dedicábamos a debatir acerca del futuro de la COI. Creo más que oportuno retomar esa práctica de forma de atender no solo al resultante de la evaluación del posicionamiento estratégico de la COI, sino también a todas aquellas aspiraciones y necesidades para cumplir las metas de la Comisión y su misión fundamental de fomentar la cooperación internacional y coordinar programas en la investigación, los servicios y la creación de capacidad, a fin de conocer mejor la naturaleza y los recursos del océano y las zonas costeras y aplicar ese conocimiento para mejorar la gestión, el desarrollo sostenible, la protección del medio ambiente marino y el proceso de adopción de decisiones de sus Estados Miembros .

This space for thought and discussion is essential to give direction to our actions and maintain the leadership role of our Commission in matters related to ocean sciences.

Returning to the necessary adaptation that we had to make in the face of the circumstances, it is perhaps also appropriate to rethink some of our structures to confirm that they have the flexibility and operability that current times impose, preserving the objectives, representativeness and responsibilities of our Commission, while ensuring the attention to priority and emerging issues. [*quote Voltaire Mais la mollesse est douce, et sa suite est cruelle ; Je vois autour de moi cent rois vaincus par elle*]

As we will see throughout this session, 2022 is indeed a very special year for the Ocean.

Ocean science covers a wide range of natural and social science disciplines, observations, technology, infrastructure, science-policy interfaces and services. Therefore, IOC partnerships and active communication with key stakeholders are critical mechanisms to achieve the goals of the Ocean Decade and the IOC Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029. During the reporting period, IOC Officers participated in a number of international events representing the interests of the oceanographic community.

In my particular case, after our 31st Assembly I have had the opportunity to hold working meetings with the WMU-Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute, particularly on issues of empowerment of women in ocean sciences, I have participated together with our vice president of the Group III of meetings of the Latin American component of the OceanInfoHub project, in the TROPICAL AMERICAS CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT CO-DESIGN WORKSHOP THE DEEP-SEA, of the Predicted Ocean Decade Laboratory, the meetings of the interim Decade Advisory Board, the webinar on Clearing House Mechanism in the framework of the BBNJ negotiations, events linked to the Ocean decade such as the one organized by Australia and the Regional Kick-off Conference for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021–2030 for the Tropical Americas and the Caribbean Region, the UNFCCC COP 26 in Glasgow, together with our Executive Secretary and his team, the meeting of the Steering Group of the OTGA, the 3rd meeting of the Group of Experts in Capacity Development.

Last week I gave a presentation to the 22nd UN Informal Consultative Process, which was focused on Ocean Observations, and where several of our colleagues and experts were also invited to contribute.

With the Board of Officers we held a series of meetings for the selection process of the Decade Advisory Board. After having analyzed more than 200 applications from professionals with vast experience, and thanks to a collegial spirit and close collaboration, we were able to identify a total of 15 international experts with recognized experience.

In January of this year, the regular Officers meeting took place virtually, allowing us to review and update the status of the various IOC actions, as well as make the necessary preparations for this Executive Council.

WMO is one of the strategic partners of the IOC. The Second Session of the Joint WMO – IOC Collaborative Board (JCB) was held online on 1-2 March 2022, where my colleague Srinivas Tummala serves as co-chair for the IOC. Its main goal was to

prepare specific proposals for the implementation of the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative strategy (2022- 2025) approved by both WMO 73rd Session of Executive Council and IOC Assembly 31st Session in June 2021. The JCB was able to discuss gaps/ opportunities, and how /where the JCB can add value. A joint collaborative workplan in 2022-2023 was agreed.

Srinivas has also had multiple activities related to the Standing Committee on Marine Meteorology & Ocean Services, the Decade and the International Indian Ocean Science Conference (IIOSC-2022)

Our Vice President Alexander Frolov has been very active on the issue of early warning systems and services. The IOC has also successfully developed tsunami warning and mitigation partnerships with the UNDRR, WMO, IHO, ITU / WMO / UNESCO-IOC Joint Task Force on SMART cables, FDSN, and IUGG Commission on Tsunami. The implementation of the IOC together with its partners of the Tsunami Ready Recognition Program will be a key contribution to achieving the societal outcome 'A Safe Ocean' of the Ocean Decade.

Together with the vice-chairs Marie-Alexandrine Sicre and Srinivas Tummala, we have actively participated in the discussions in the intersessional group for the transformation of IOCINDIO into a sub-commission.

For his part, our Vice President Frederico Saraiva Nogueira has closely followed the evolution of the OceanInfoHub project, especially its component for Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as capacity development issues and regional Decade matters.

Last but not least, Karim Hilmi has chaired the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group, attending discussions on strategic issues for the Commission, and has been involved in multiple events including the African kick-off conference for the Decade.

In addition to these activities, our Vice Presidents have kept themselves informed and busy with all the issues of their respective constituencies, for which I am very grateful.

We all welcome the success of the Decade in raising the visibility of ocean matters at the national and international level. At the same time we must not forget the bedrock of the decade at the level of the IOC: IOC, over the past 60 years, has built a number of highly valuable programmes, products and services. Without these we would probably not be able to say anything sensitive about climate change based on ocean observing and historical data, would not be able to save life and property through the tsunami warning and mitigation systems, only to name a few. May I invite you then, when considering the allocation or re-allocation of funds through this decade, to continue and even enhance your support of our core programmes.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the efforts of our tireless secretariat, here in Paris as well as in the various locations where they perform their duties, under the leadership of our Executive Secretary. Without their dedication and commitment we would not have been able to achieve the goals we set.