



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MINISTER PLENIPOENTIARY MOHAMED GAD, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF EGYPT TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE FIRST SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE ON 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 (New York, 4 September 2018)

Madame President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

At the outset, the Group of 77 and China would like to congratulate the new members of the bureau for their election, and once again to congratulate you Madame President and express our satisfaction and admiration for the efficient way you have steered the work of the IGC so far, guiding us smoothly and effectively through its first organizational segment, as well as preparing a President's aid to discussions document which was circulated in a timely manner.

Madame President,

The BBNJ process went through many millstones; the work done so far is the fruit of the efforts and determination shown by member states, as well as civil society and all other relevant stakeholders who truly believe in the necessity to conserve and sustainably use our oceans and seas in a responsible manner.

This process is going through a new phase by launching the first session of intergovernmental negotiations to discuss and explore ways and means to reach our goal to elaborate, adopt and implement 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.

The Group of 77 and China was proudly one of the main driving forces - in collaborations with other partners - in reaching this important juncture, we still believe that we are far behind in giving Ocean the proper timely attention it deserves, it is about time to switch gears for more concrete steps after lengthy and comprehensive discussions. We should all work together in good faith within this new format to efficiently fulfill our mandate of elaborating the text of an International legally binding instrument on BBNJ with a view to develop such instrument as soon as possible.

Madame President,

The Group of 77 and China acknowledge and commend your efforts and leadership in preparations of the President's aid to discussions document, as we believe it will serve as a valuable guide through our substantive discussions by flagging the areas where the IGC need to focus its attention and covering most questions in hand relevant to the topics identified in the package agreed in 2011.

The Group of 77 and China had carefully studied this document and is willing and eager to engage

with all partners to get the most out of the first session in order to advance this process following the right pace, taking in consideration all relevant resources and the outcome of previous deliberations.

The Group of 77 and China will be looking forward also to address the way forward before the second session of the IGC, including the preparation of a zero draft treaty format text at the right timing. We trust in the wisdom and good judgment of the President in formulating a road map that can guarantee the accumulative nature of this process and reflect accurately the outcome of what we expect to be a fruitful session to advance to the next stage.

Finally, the Group of 77 and China would like to reiterate its confidence in your able leadership and guidance leading the IGC to reach a successful conclusion. We would like to assure you Madame President our full support and disposition to constructively engage in productive discussions with the aim of successfully conclude with our mandate.

I thank you.

