



**INTERVENTIONS ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. EMAD MORCOS MATTAR, COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF EGYPT TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 8 OF 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, 13 September 2018)**

**On the matter of the dates of the 2nd and 3rd sessions of the IGC**

Thank you Madam President,

I have the honour to make this intervention on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

At the outset, allow me Madam President to express the satisfaction and gratitude of the group of 77 and China for the excellent manner in which the four facilitators of the informal working groups have managed to steer and guide our work. The Group of 77 and China would like to acknowledge their leadership and expertise, which enriched our deliberations.

With regard to the matter at hand relating to the dates of the second and third session of the IGC, the Group of 77 and China are of the view that the following criteria should be observed:

First, the Group of 77 and China underline the necessity to grant enough inter-sessional time to allow delegations to be better prepared, including conducting proper consultations with their capitals as well as to give the opportunity for different groups to coordinate their common positions.

Second, to avoid overlapping with any other relevant meetings relating to Oceans and the Law of the Sea, or any major activities at the UN that might overshadow the work of the IGC like the preparations for the high-level segment of the General Assembly, bearing in mind the heavy burden and challenges faced by small delegations in this context.

Third, ensure the ability of the secretariat to provide the necessary support during the chosen dates. In this context, the group of 77 and China would like to express our appreciation and to thank the secretariat, in particular, DOALOS and DGACM for their instrumental role in supporting the work of the IGC. We look forward to the continuation of this indispensable support, which will be positively reflected on the quality of our work.

Taking in consideration the above stated, the Group of 77 and China can be flexible on the exact dates. We consider March or April as an acceptable option for the second session as well as August for the third session.