



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. LUIS OCHOA GARCÉS, SECOND SECRETARY, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OPEN-ENDED INFORMAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESS ON OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA (New York, 15 May 2017)

(Original version)

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

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

First of all, I would like to congratulate you, H.E. Mr. Kornelios Korneliou, Permanent Representative of Cyprus, and H.E. Mr. Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, Permanent Representative of Peru, on your appointment as Co-Chairs of the eighteenth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (or ICP) on the theme "The effects of climate change on oceans". Under your able leadership, we are confident that the ICP can fulfill its primary role in integrating knowledge, the exchange of opinions among multiple stakeholders and coordination among competent agencies and enhancing awareness of topics, including emerging issues, while promoting the three pillars of sustainable development; and that it will render an outcome that gives evidence of its effectiveness and utility as a pertinent forum for discussions on issues related to oceans and the law of the sea.

Besides, I would like to express the Group's appreciation to the Secretary-General for the comprehensive report which provided us with an overview on "the effects of climate change on oceans", the environmental, economic and social impacts, the relevant legal framework and policies as well as ways forward to implement Ocean-based adaptation and mitigation actions, climate change resilient sustainable development, capacity building, partnerships, financing and interagency coordination. The report gives a valuable background and nurtured us with significant information in order to engage in constructive and productive panel discussions.

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

The Group of 77 and China appreciates that the Report of the Secretary-General recognizes the vulnerability of the environmental, social and economic implications of the climate change effects on the ocean for developing countries, especially LDC's, SID's and low-lying coastal countries. The Group acknowledges that the effects of climate change on oceans pose a significant risk to their economies, biodiversity, food security and human health. We call on all States and relevant international and regional organizations to continue to enhance their cooperation and coordination to counteract the effects of climate change on oceans for the well-being of humanity, the ocean and the Earth. We reiterate that it is essential for developed countries to deliver Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment to developing countries, especially SIDs, LDCs and low-lying developing countries, and provide them with technology transfer and capacity building from the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and seas and their resources.

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

The Group is concerned with ocean warming and how it is expected to substantially impact specific species, and broadly impact ecosystems and biodiversity. The Group noted the implications that the continuing warming of the Oceans, with the strongest warming being projected for the surface in tropical and Northern Hemisphere subtropical regions, has on the distribution of marine species for catch potential of fish and invertebrates. As the distribution ranges of most marine species will shift towards the poles, this will shift provisioning services to benefit the middle and moderately high latitudes (often highly developed) at the expense of low latitudes, where small-scale (subsistence) fishing is important for food security. The group is of the view that a space could be found to discuss the redistribution of marine species for catch potential of fish and invertebrates, and a way to address its environmental, social and economic implications for countries located in tropical and Northern Hemisphere subtropical regions, in particular for LDC's, SID's and low-lying coastal countries.

In addition, the Group is of the understanding that increasing seawater temperatures provide more energy for storms that develop at the sea affecting coastal areas exposing them to dangers caused by storms and other extreme weather events. The exchange of heat between the ocean and atmosphere has led to changes in winds leading to fewer, but more intense tropical cyclones globally and in phenomena such as the El Nino-Southern Oscillation. The Group would like to emphasize its concerns for the importance of strengthening international cooperation in the face of disasters, weather-related hazards, and the adverse effects of climate change to prevent major damage and ensure an adequate response and attention to the affected population in a timely manner in order to ensure resilience to their impacts, and recognizing in this regard, the importance of developing coordinated multi-hazard early warning systems and risk assessments.

We are concerned with the total or partial loss of land territory on maritime limits that may result from sea level rise. We believe that this impact could be further discussed.

Moreover, The Group acknowledges that there is insufficient understanding and information regarding the implementation of geoengineering technologies, techniques and its associated risks. The IPCC has noted that comparative assessments suggest that the main ocean-related geoengineering approaches are very costly and have large environmental footprints. In this regard, the Group would like to encourage more transdisciplinary research, environmental assessments, explanations and references to the use of geoengineering techniques that are meant to mitigate climate change and its effects, such as solar radiation management, ocean fertilization, carbon dioxide removal, and others. This would provide a better understanding the impacts of climate-related geoengineering on biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, as well as of socioeconomic, cultural and ethical issues and regulatory options.

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

The Group of 77 and China acknowledges the gaps that remain with respect to a consistent coverage of data and the infrastructure to collect and disseminate data and information in knowledge of coastal, ocean processes and the use of sea data, in capacity and in risk management. In this regard, we recognize the need to further assess land/sea physical interaction and the United Nations could play a bigger role in this regard.

We appreciate the references to the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement under the Convention which are the international, intergovernmental forums for the global response to climate change. However, we would like to see references to the Kyoto Protocol for the reduction of greenhouse emissions, and to recognize that developed countries, being those historically responsible for greenhouse emission levels, have a duty to help finance the costs of climate change responses in

the developing countries.

In addition, the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement under the Convention must be upheld. All parties must step up efforts to fulfil their commitments, and developed countries need to make good their pledge of annual contribution of USD100 billion by 2020, thus laying a solid foundation of mutual trust for the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Developed countries should provide assistance to developing countries to help them implement the Paris Agreement and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development according to the need of the developing countries, which includes tackling the environmental vulnerabilities and good practice sharing.

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

The Group reiterates the relevance and priority it attaches to climate change and its intrinsic linkage to sustainable development. The goals and targets under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will be more difficult to achieve if we continue to be faced with negative impacts due to climate change.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that the Group of 77 and China stands ready to constructively engage in the discussions on this consultative process.

I thank you.