



**PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

STATEMENT BY

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PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

TO 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**

**UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK
1ST APRIL 2014**

Co-Chairs,

It is a pleasure to see you once again at the helm of this important Working Group and I join other delegations in congratulating you on your re-appointment. Your continued stewardship is indeed fitting as the Working Group takes a major step forward in its work. We are confident that the depth of knowledge and expertise that we have come to associate with you will serve us well in ensuring that our discussions are meaningful and productive. It is, therefore, with a great deal of enthusiasm and a high level of expectation that Jamaica enters these discussions.

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Bolivia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and takes the opportunity to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

Co-Chairs,

The process aimed at studying issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction has reached a critical phase - that of decision-making which we greatly welcome. We arrive at this point in the process after several years of intense deliberations, which together with this week's consultations and the two to follow in the coming months, are a firm indication that the status quo of the past years has come to an end.

Against the backdrop of the Rio+20 mandate and UN General Assembly resolution 68/70, which are firmly rooted in the international community's recognition of the urgent need to address ocean governance in a more holistic manner, we must now ensure that our efforts are geared towards concrete, constructive and fruitful dialogue, as the Working Group helps to prepare the General Assembly to take a decision that is integral to safeguarding the "Future We Want".

Jamaica attaches high importance to the enhanced mandate of the Working Group, through which we will discuss the scope, parameters and feasibility of an international instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). As an archipelagic developing State that is party to the UNCLOS and host to the International Sea-bed Authority, the regulatory framework for the sustainable and responsible governance, development, and management of the world's last global commons, with its complex ecosystem and extensive yet fragile biodiversity, the resources of the seabed, subsoil and territorial waters, are critical to Jamaica's sustainable development.

Jamaica shares the heightened concerns of the international community over the unprecedented rate of loss of marine biodiversity and we are convinced that together we can act, swiftly and decisively, within the universal framework of the United Nations, to halt this degradation and create an enhanced form of ocean governance that results in integrated

management and sustainable development of the oceans and seas and the regulation of new and emerging activities.

Co-Chairs,

Jamaica, therefore, stands ready to contribute to this process as the Working Group commences its work. Indeed, we welcome the views submitted by Member States on the scope, parameters and feasibility of an international instrument, and we are pleased to have had the opportunity to submit our views through the G77 and China and in our national capacity. We thank the Secretariat for circulating the compilation of views, which we believe, will assist in the consideration of the complex issues before us.

Given that our discussions at this juncture are of a general nature, I will highlight some elements that we have identified in our submission as indispensable in the consideration of an implementing agreement under UNLCOS:

- We believe that all elements at stake (conservation, sustainable use, including the sharing of benefits, and capacity-building and transfer of technology) need to be addressed “together and as a whole”. To this end, we underscore that the “package” that was agreed by this Working Group in 2011 and subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly must be maintained as the basic building block for the scope of a new international agreement.
- As it regards sustainable use, we believe that the genetic resources of the sea-bed and ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, beyond areas of national jurisdiction, are the common heritage of mankind as contained in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and General Assembly resolution 2749 (XXV). Provisions must, therefore, be made for equitable access and benefit-sharing.
- Any new implementing agreement should define its relationship to other existing international agreements. No provisions should be inserted that diminishes the role of the International Sea-bed Authority in addressing issues related to the Area.
- In order to ensure that the new implementing agreement is robust in nature, it should contain provisions for effective assessment, monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.
- There must be a level playing field between developed and developing countries and this can best be achieved if attention is given to the development of benefit-sharing

arrangements based on modalities to facilitate transparency, capacity-building, the transfer of technology, information sharing and disclosure requirements.

Co-Chairs,

I reiterate Jamaica's high expectations of a strong outcome of the Working Group's deliberations in the coming months. Our expectation is that the General Assembly will decide to launch negotiations for an implementing agreement.

To the question of political feasibility our answer is a resounding yes. Indeed, our political will and commitment have been strengthened by discussions within the context of the upcoming Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, as well as the processes underway to create a set of sustainable development goals and elaborate the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The state of the oceans and seas has gained prominence in these inter-linked processes; the key message of which is collective action to develop practical solutions that will produce tangible improvements aimed at sustainable development.

Co-Chairs,

While we recognize the complexity of the work before us and the many details to be discussed and differences to be resolved, we are confident that under your able leadership, together with the cooperation, spirit of compromise and good faith of all participating delegations, we can achieve our objective. As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated at the Rio+20 Summit, "now Rio has put more wind in our sails so we can navigate the waves to a better future". Let us seize this occasion.

I thank you.