

PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA

TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**STATEMENT BY**

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**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**

**AGENDA ITEM 6: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS**

**UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK**

**16 APRIL 2018**

Madam President,

Please allow me to congratulate you on your election as President of the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) for this process. My delegation is confident that under your able leadership the items on the agenda will be addressed in an efficient and effective manner, resulting in a positive outcome of the meeting. I also take this opportunity to assure you of Jamaica’s full support for your efforts in the work ahead.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by Egypt, on behalf of Group of 77 and China; the Maldives on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS); and Barbados, on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Madam President,

We wish to state at the outset, that we are open to your guidance, in keeping with the General Assembly’s (GA) Rules of Procedure and as agreed in resolution A/RES/72/249, on how our work proceeds. We are underscoring as well the importance of ensuring that there is scope for inclusivity and engagement by all states, while avoiding duplication of processes, which could negatively impact participation of small delegations such as ours.

As we look towards the upcoming negotiations on this legally binding instrument, we are mindful of our responsibility to safeguard the gains of the preceding Prepcom. In that connection, we are conscious that our work should allow for a level of engagement that builds on the discourse to-date, and from which a document will emerge that provides a platform for discussions suited to the context of an IGC.

In that, Jamaica encourages that the initial draft of this document be completed in a timely manner to allow for internal consultations, which are critical to effective preparation and participation of delegations engaged in the process.

We are fully aware of the complexity of the task ahead. However, having persevered to this point, it is our belief that there is the resolve to reach a conclusion that is advantageous to all, and will serve to secure preservation and protection of marine resources beyond national jurisdiction, thereby ensuring that future generations can also benefit from the resources of this *common heritage of mankind.*

As an island state, Jamaica is acutely aware of the significance of the ocean to sustainable development. We are also convinced that the resources of this great global common have the potential to advance considerably our developmental agenda, and that of other similarly situated states. We are also cognizant of the responsibility that all countries should share for the conservation and sustainable use of the marine resources found in areas beyond national jurisdiction. I, therefore, reiterate my Government’s strong support for the realisation of an internationally legally binding instrument and trust that we can begin our work in earnest at the first session of the intergovernmental conference in September.

Madam President,

While we fully appreciate that the proposed new implementing agreement will not be a panacea, we remain convinced that it is a necessary mechanism and possibly the best option for providing legitimacy, a common set of standards and principles, and an urgently required integrated approach to ocean governance. Our commitment to this process, therefore, is unwavering. We look forward to working with all partners, including our friends from civil society, in this regard.

In conclusion, Madame President,

Jamaica wishes to express appreciation for the support afforded to delegations from countries such as ours, which enables participation in the IGC from resources from the BBNJ Voluntary Trust Fund. We take this opportunity to encourage all those in a position to do so, to continue supporting the Fund, as we are mindful that participation from states like Jamaica could be in jeopardy if there is no replenishment of the resources.

I thank you.