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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST
REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

FAXED
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NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017

My No. LEG/UN/49

20th April, 2007.

Permanent Representatives
Permanent Missions accredited to the United Nations
New York

Excellency

I have the honour to refer to Resolution 61/122 of the General Assembly on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, adopted on 20 December 2006 and the related Note Verbale of 15 January 2007 (Reference 07-00105) from the United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs. In this regard, I take the liberty to enclose herewith an aid memoire with a view to facilitating the preparation of a study by the Secretary General requested by paragraph 88 of the Resolution.

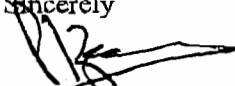
As you may be aware, the study requested is on the available assistance and on measures that may be taken by developing States to realize the sustainable and effective development of marine resources and uses of the oceans within national jurisdiction and is to be prepared "in cooperation with and based on information provided by States...". Accordingly, the Note from the United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs requests the member States to provide relevant information to enable its preparation.

Sri Lanka is pleased that in adopting this Resolution the General Assembly, inter alia, has recognized the important contribution of sustainable development and management of the resources and uses of the oceans and seas for the achievement of international development goals, including MDGs. Therefore we are of the view that member States contribute timely and relevant inputs as required for the preparation of this important study.

For this purpose, I believe the enclosed aid memoire may be of assistance to competent national agencies, academia and civil society organizations that may contribute to the responses of their respective governments.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Sincerely


Prasad Kariyawasam
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka

Aide Memoire

The backdrop to the proposed study is that the nations of the world are increasingly looking towards the oceans as the demands of rising populations are soaring, imperatives of poverty alleviation and improvement of standard-of-living are pressing. Meanwhile, progress in marine science and technology is expanding the possibility frontier and the potential economic benefits of resources from the marine dimension for the gross national products (GNP) of the developing States are increasingly coming to the fore. The goal of sustainable development of the seas and oceans has become the focus of attention as the world's fragile ocean ecosystems are threatened and must be protected or they will not survive.

Yet, twenty-five years after the adoption of the 1982 UN Convention on the law of the Sea, the anticipated economic benefits from the exploitation of the resources and uses of the oceans and seas within national jurisdiction have not been realized to any significant extent in the case of many developing States. In the meantime, developmental concerns now encounter environmental obligations laid down by various international instruments.

The resolution of the General Assembly recognizes that many States have had successes and positive outcomes, primarily resulting from their advanced marine capabilities and enriched base of means of production. Other States, mostly developing States, face daunting challenges in achieving marine resource development. This provides an opportunity for a win-win situation, whereby bilateral and multilateral arrangements can be made between the former group of States and the latter.

Information received from governments on prevailing national situations in relation to the identified issues would reflect the state of development in ocean related activity and would at the same time provide effective inputs to the Secretary-General in the preparation of the study and in identifying measures that may be taken by developing countries to achieve sustainable and effective development.

Information that would serve the purposes of the study and provide crucial guidance for developing countries could be:

- (i) achievements and advances in development of living and non-living marine resources as well as uses of the sea within the limits of national jurisdiction;
- (ii) the plans and expectations of governments for the national marine sector over the next 5-10 years;
- (iii) successes and positive outcomes in the sustainable and effective development of marine resources and uses of the oceans, descriptions of such experiences and of potentials of learning therefrom, including securing technical expertise, entering into partnerships and joint development arrangements, and infusion of capital;
- (iv) difficulties encountered in areas of sustainable and effective development in the marine sector, challenges and constraints in respect of: information base and resource mapping; human resources; technical capabilities and utilization of available technologies; development capital; etc., as well as of potentials for overcoming such challenges through bilateral and multilateral arrangements;

(v) competing priorities for development in the different sectors, including fisheries, offshore oil and gas, marine minerals, ports and harbours, shipping and coastal recreation and the availability of incentives and support to private sector, regional and sub-regional arrangements, and international endeavours.
