

**Marine Biodiversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction  
Intergovernmental Conference - Third Session  
(August 19 to 30, 2019)**

**Statement by Canada**

**Thank you, Madame President,**

Canada is very pleased to attend this third session of the Intergovernmental Conference for the elaboration of an Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ).

We are very much looking forward to making solid progress in the development of this legally binding instrument. We firmly intend to maintain our active involvement in the deliberations, and to contribute constructively during the debates, be it through plenary sessions, informal working groups, or “informal/informals”.

Canada remains firmly committed to working resolutely towards our common objective of producing a sound and effective treaty. We recognize that, collectively, we have a demanding two weeks ahead of us to serve that objective. And we thank you, Madame President, for building a programme of work that will allow us to keep the pace moving.

**Madame President,**

Canada wishes to thank you, and commend you, for producing, with the able assistance of DOALOS, the conference document containing the “draft text of an agreement”. That document constitutes a very useful basis for our work, laying out the different approaches that we have discussed over the past months and years, into a comprehensive, logical, and fully structured draft treaty text. We now have draft language on which to base our negotiations, allowing us to roll up our sleeves and move beyond the exchange of positions of principle. This should prove instrumental in our efforts to make good progress over the next two weeks.

You have, once again, delivered impressively on your undertaking to support our work. It is now up to us, in this room, to put the legwork in, to turn your document into our document.

Of course, a lot of work remains to be done. We will have to narrow down our differences on a number of complex issues. We will also have to proceed with a careful review of the draft text as a whole, to ensure that the international treaty we are producing is of high quality, clear, and coherent -- as demanded by such an important and formal document. Canada looks forward to bringing ideas and innovative ways forward to tackle those problems, in support of the most effective solutions.

I will conclude here, Madame President, as we have so much to do. Let me simply reiterate that our delegation is looking forward to the many hours we will spend together, with you and the rest of our colleagues, over the course of the next two weeks. No single state, no matter how big or how strong, can succeed by acting in isolation. We all need to work together. We are eager to get to work under your able direction, to progress on our ever so important common goal of completing the BBNJ Agreement.

Madame President,

We are ready to go!

Thank you.