



**Statement of Hiroko Muraki Gottlieb
Representative for the Ocean, International Council of Environmental Law**

**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
(UNGA Res. 72/249)**

Item 5: General Exchange of Views

New York, Monday, 19 August 2019

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Madame President,

International Council of Environmental Law continues to place our full confidence in your able leadership, which is reflected in the Draft Text. We thank you, the Secretariat, and the Bureau members for all of the hard work in supporting the negotiations, which has now come to a critical point. We also sincerely thank the Member States for continuing to engage observers in this important process.

Madame President,

Through ICEL's participation in a number of informal intersessional meetings, we continue to witness robust stakeholder engagements leading to enhanced understanding of dauntingly complex challenges. Most importantly, we have witnessed such collaborative work giving rise to innovative solutions. To that end, we are very pleased to participate in this session and to co-sponsor the MGR Workshop at the Singapore Mission on August 24th with the Governments of Singapore and Norway, as well as with IUCN and Harvard University.

Madame President,

As you, the Secretary General of the Conference, and many distinguished delegates have stated before me, this Agreement could make transformative positive changes to our interconnected planet. As we embark on the next two weeks, it is our hope that the negotiations reflect what the ocean is trying to tell us, through the work of scientists, relevant traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities, and voices of those who witness and experience the devastating cumulative impacts that are taking place.

Madame President,

We are prepared to help find ways to effectively and creatively use the rule of law and innovative approaches to protect the largest ecosystem of our Earth, leaving no one behind.

Thank you.

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