



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. FUAD BATEH, SENIOR ADVISOR, MISSION OF THE STATE OF PALESTINE TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE SECOND SESSION OF THE 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  
(New York, 25 March 2019)**

Madame President,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

At the outset, the Group of 77 and China would like to congratulate you Madame President and express our satisfaction and admiration for the efficient way you have steered the work of the IGC so far, guiding us smoothly and effectively through its first session, as well as preparing a President's aid to negotiations document which was circulated in a timely manner and provides a solid basis for our discussions. We believe the document serves as a valuable tool for focusing our substantive negotiations on the topics identified in the package agreed in 2011.

Madame President,

The BBNJ process has proceeded through many milestones. The work done so far is the fruit of the efforts and determination shown by member states, as well as all other relevant stakeholders who truly believe in the necessity to conserve and sustainably use our oceans and seas in a responsible manner.

We pursue in this process a clear goal which is the elaboration, adoption and implementation of 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. During this second substantive session, and in line with the approach put forward by the President and with its own expressed positions and principles, the Group of 77 and China will aim to identify the options and the language from the President's aid to negotiations that can serve as a basis for the drafting of the new instrument. The Group of 77 and China remains proud of its role as a driving force - in collaborations with other partners - in reaching this important juncture.

Madame President,

The Group of 77 and China has carefully studied this document and is willing and eager to engage with all partners to get the most out of the second session in order to advance this process, taking in consideration all relevant resources and the outcome of previous deliberations. Recognizing that neither participation in the intergovernmental conference nor its outcome may affect the legal status of non-parties to the Convention or any other related agreements with regard to those instruments, the Group of 77 and China underlines the importance of balanced, progress on the four topics identified in the package, in particular, together and as a whole. We give special attention to the importance of access and fair and equitable benefit-sharing of MGRs, covering monetary and non-monetary benefits, and to addressing properly the conservation and sustainable use of Marine Biodiversity in ABNJ. The Group of 77 and China reiterates that the new instrument should take into account the special requirements of developing countries for capacity building and transfer of marine technology, with a view to enabling them to assume their responsibilities and obligations under the new instrument.

We trust in the wisdom and jurisprudence of the President in shepherding the way forward towards the elaboration of a zero-draft by the third session as we all work in good faith and with the determination to conclude negotiations as soon as possible.

Finally, the Group of 77 and China would like to reiterate its confidence in your able leadership and guidance leading the IGC to reach a successful conclusion. We would like to assure you Madame President of our full support and disposition to constructively engage in productive discussions with the aim to successfully fulfill our mandate for the benefit of all humankind.

I thank you.