

Closing Statement of the Republic of Paraguay

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 in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction

Third Session - New York, 19 - 30 August 2019

(1) Thank you very much, Madam President. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the delegations of Armenia, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malawi, Nepal, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Zimbabwe and mine, the Republic of Paraguay as Chair of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs).

(2) Madam President, we congratulate you and the facilitators for your leadership in conducting the debates, which bring us closer to the adoption of the intended legally binding international instrument. We believe that having a zero-draft treaty from the onset of this Third Session was fundamental for the proper development of the negotiations. We recognize your effort Madam President and DOALOS's to meet that objective, which was outlined as one of the results of the Second Session. We also appreciate the effort made by all delegations to move forward with negotiations productively and constructively. The Group places great importance on keeping the discussions open and transparent.

(3) Navigating through an array of different realities and interests in the search for consensus is not a modest mission, and it entails sophisticated negotiation skills. Despite the complex challenge, in our evaluation, the Third Session has witnessed a constructive spirit from all actors, including the civil society, towards developing and concluding the Fourth Session, in accordance with resolution 72/249 adopted by the General Assembly.

(4) We believe that the result of this process must be balanced and must address the concerns of all countries, taking into account the specific challenges and vulnerabilities. To address the topics identified in the package agreed on in 2011, the LLDCs Group reiterates the need to keep the following principles central to our discussions:

- Freedom of the high seas,
- Principle of the common heritage of mankind,
- Protection and preservation of the marine environment,
- Access to and fair and equitable benefit-sharing of marine genetic resources, and
- Capacity building and transfer of marine technology.

(5) Madam President, we have the opportunity to create a robust and universal framework that will be acceptable to all. Thus, I reaffirm our bedrock position to endeavor for more rights of LLDCs building upon those already embodied in UNCLOS, the CBD, and the Nagoya Protocol. We reiterate our commitment to engage in the process of crafting a fair and balanced instrument that recognizes our specific needs and circumstances and ensures fair and equitable access to marine genetic resources and the distribution of their benefits.

(6) We are also pleased to see the treatment of a critical aspect for developing countries, in particular the LLDCs, under Part V of the draft treaty. Ensuring capacity building and the transfer of marine technology, which must be mandatory and a cross-cutting element throughout the agreement, plays a crucial role in assisting developing States in implementing the provisions of the future agreement and achieving its objectives. We are looking forward to the enhancement of the topic of Capacity Building and the Transfer of Marine Technology during the Fourth Session.

(7) We trust that all of these issues are going to be addressed more comprehensively in the revised draft that to result of this Third Session. It is vital to have an updated version of the draft treaty text promptly to allow for the necessary preparation before the Fourth Session.

(8) Finally, we wish to draw your attention to the importance of the Trust Fund. The full participation of the vulnerable countries like the LLDCs is fundamental to the negotiations to ensure that the outcome is balanced and considers the needs of our countries. We, therefore, encourage the partners to continue to make voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund to enable more significant and better participation of developing countries, including LLDCs, in the Fourth Session in 2020.

(9) Madam President, we are confident that your leadership will bring us to the successful conclusion of this Conference, achieving a legally binding international instrument that contains a fair, effective, sustainable and transparent regime for the conservation and use of marine resources beyond national jurisdiction. We reiterate the firm support of the LLDCs, and we express our best predisposition to achieve the desired objective.

(10) Thank you very much, Madam President.