



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE KINGDOM OF TONGA TO THE
UNITED NATIONS**

Statement of the Kingdom of Tonga at the closing session of IGC4 for BBNJ, delivered by His Excellency Mr. Viliami Va'inga Tōnē, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Tonga to the United Nations

Friday 18th March 2022

United Nations Conference Room 4, United Nations Headquarters, New York

Madame President,

As we come to the conclusion of an intensive yet encouraging progressive development fourth session of our negotiations on BBNJ, we commend the transparent and proactive manner in which you have skillfully led us in this process, along with the laudable efforts of facilitators and DOALOS. We appreciate and continue to support you and your team for your strong leadership and dedication.

Tonga aligns itself with the statements delivered by G77 and China, PSIDS and PIF. We are pleased to see principles and approaches which are of particular interest to small island states, specifically ours from the Pacific, positively considered by our dear friends in the room with some reflected accordingly.

Madame President,

We support the plan to hold a 5th session. We stress how important it is for us to build momentum and we therefore encourage further coordination among us and welcome the cross-regional proposals to advance our work on this.

We thank you, secretariat and all delegations for your dedication and flexibility in developing this critical instrument whose dignified goal aims at protecting the last great global commons, biodiversity in the high seas, through a legally binding treaty.

I thank you.