



PHILIPPINES

STATEMENT

**Arrangements for the functioning of the secretariat, including its seat
(Cluster I, Issue 4)**

SECOND PREPARATORY COMMISSION
Delivered by
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Excellencies, colleagues,

We wish to express our firm support and gratitude to the Co-Chairs and to the Division of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea (DOALOS) for the preparation of the revised Aids to Discussion and Negotiations, including the Guiding Questions on the arrangements for the functioning of the secretariat, including its seat.

The BBNJ Secretariat will be one of the core institutions for the BBNJ Agreement. We are of the view that its design and functions will lend to how effectively the developing States, like the Philippines, can engage with and benefit from the new regime.

Our delegation is making an assessment on the different models, whether it should be a stand-alone Secretariat, a UN-connected secretariat, or a hybrid one.

However, we would like to see in the draft texts to be developed the following elements:

- (a) **Equity and access** - provisos for participation, capacity-building, and recognition of the circumstances of developing countries, SIDs, LDCs, LLDCs, and archipelagic states;
- (b) **Predictability** - in the financial management of the voluntary trust fund and special fund; and
- (c) an arrangement that would lend to the **achievement of the BBNJ Agreement's goals and aspirations**.

In weighing in on the potential host State, we see the following information as relevant:

- (a) Legal guarantees to be provided by the host State, such as privileges and immunities;
- (b) Financial and in-kind contributions such as provision of office space, meeting facilities, and logistical support;

- (c) Accessibility considerations, such as international connectivity, visa facilitation, and affordability of transportation; and
- (d) Opportunities and equitable representation of developing states.

Thank you. END.