

**PERMANENT MISSION OF SAINT LUCIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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6 September 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to refer to the Notification concerning the convening of the nineteenth meeting (by correspondence) of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects (the Regular Process) which was circulated to Member States and other participants in the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on 18 August 2023.

In accordance with the modalities of the nineteenth meeting as outlined in the above-mentioned Notification, I hereby declare, in my capacity as the Co-Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process, the nineteenth meeting (by correspondence) of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole open as of today.

I would like to express my appreciation to all delegations for participating in this meeting.

Adoption of the agenda

Regarding the adoption of the agenda, I note that the provisional agenda and the annotated provisional agenda of the nineteenth meeting (by correspondence) of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole have been posted on the website of the Regular Process at: <https://www.un.org/regularprocess/content/adhoc>. The provisional agenda is also annexed to this letter.

I propose that the nineteenth meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole decide to adopt the provisional agenda as contained in Annex I to this letter. This proposal is hereby placed under a silence procedure **until 5.00 p.m. (New York time) on Wednesday, 13 September 2023**.

Any objection to the above-mentioned proposal should be transmitted in a letter or a note verbale sent by email to the secretariat of the Regular Process (doalos@un.org; temnova@un.org).

Adoption of recommendations to the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly.

In accordance with the modalities of the meeting as outlined in the Notification concerning the convening of the nineteenth meeting (by correspondence), and subject to the adoption of the agenda, I propose that the nineteenth meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole decide to adopt the draft recommendations to the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly as contained

in Annex II to this letter. This proposal is hereby placed under a silence procedure **until 5.00 p.m. (New York time) on Monday, 18 September 2023.**

Information to be taken note of by the meeting

Also, in accordance with the modalities of the meeting as outlined in the Notification concerning the convening of the nineteenth meeting (by correspondence), and subject to the adoption of the agenda, the meeting will take note of the information provided under agenda items, “Report of the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole” and “Information from the Group of Experts regarding implementation of the preliminary timetable and implementation plan for the third cycle of the Regular Process.”

The documents for the above-mentioned agenda items have been made available at:
<https://www.un.org/regularprocess/content/adhoc>.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Kimberly Louis', with a stylized, flowing script.

Kimberly Louis

Permanent Missions of Member States and
Permanent Observer Missions
to the United Nations
Delegation of the European Union
Specialized agencies, funds, programmes and bodies
of the United Nations
Intergovernmental organizations
Relevant nongovernmental organizations

Annex I

Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole of the General Assembly

The Nineteenth Meeting (by correspondence)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Report of the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole.
4. Information from the Group of Experts regarding implementation of the preliminary timetable and implementation plan for the third cycle of the Regular Process.
5. Adoption of recommendations to the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly.

Annex II

Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole of the General Assembly

The Nineteenth Meeting (by correspondence)

Draft recommendations to the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly

The Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole recommends that the General Assembly:

Recalling its previous decisions, regarding the Regular Process, as established under the United Nations and accountable to the General Assembly,

Reiterates the need to strengthen the regular scientific assessment of the state of the marine environment in order to enhance the scientific basis for policymaking;

Reaffirms the principles guiding the Regular Process and its objective and scope, recalls the crucial importance of the Regular Process and its possible inputs for ongoing ocean-related intergovernmental processes, including for the 2030 Agenda, the Agreement 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, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Informal Consultative Process, and the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, among other relevant processes, and notes the importance of continuing support and cooperation between the activities of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and those of the Regular Process, and the development of a regulatory regime to organize and control all activities of exploration for, and exploitation of, the resources of the seabed and ocean floor and subsoil thereof beyond the limits of national jurisdiction by the International Seabed Authority;

Reaffirms the importance of ensuring that assessments, such as those included in the Global Sustainable Development Report and those prepared under the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and the Regular Process, support one another and avoid unnecessary duplication, and also recalls the importance of compatibility and synergies between such assessments and assessments at the regional level;

Reaffirms that capacity-building is one of the core objectives of the Regular Process and recalls that, during the third cycle (2021–2025), a coherent programme on capacity-building will be carried out with the aim to develop the capacities of States in strengthening the ocean science-policy interface at the national, regional and global levels;

Recalls that the Regular Process shall be overseen and guided by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, and that the Ad Hoc Working Group shall facilitate the delivery of the outputs of the third cycle of the Regular Process as outlined in the programme of work for the third cycle, and endorses the recommendations adopted by the Ad Hoc Working Group at its nineteenth meeting on the progress in the implementation of the programme of work for the third cycle;

Recognizes the importance of raising awareness of the second World Ocean Assessment and the Regular Process, and welcomes the enhancement of the social media campaign on the Assessment and the wider awareness-raising campaign of the Regular Process;

Recognizes with appreciation the role of the Co-Chairs and the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole in putting into practice the decisions and guidance of the Ad Hoc Working Group during the intersessional period, requests the Bureau to continue to provide oversight of the delivery of the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process, and recognizes the support provided by the secretariat in that regard;

Welcomes the designation by States of national focal points, and invites States that have not yet done so to designate national focal points to facilitate the implementation of the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process and beyond;

Also welcomes the designation of focal points for relevant intergovernmental organizations, and invites the secretariats of relevant United Nations specialized agencies, programmes, funds and bodies and the secretariats of related organizations and conventions that have not yet done so to designate focal points to facilitate the implementation of the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process and beyond;

Invites the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Maritime Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Meteorological Organization and relevant United Nations system organizations, bodies, funds and programmes, as appropriate, to assist in the implementation of the third cycle of the Regular Process;

Invites relevant intergovernmental organizations to contribute, as appropriate, to the activities of the third cycle of the Regular Process;

Welcomes the constitution of the Group of Experts for the third cycle of the Regular Process, which currently consists of 21 members, and notes with appreciation the work being carried out by the members of the Group of Experts in the implementation of the programme of work for the third cycle;

Recalls that the Group of Experts for the third cycle of the Regular Process shall comprise a maximum of 25 experts, with no more than five experts per regional group, and encourages regional groups that have appointed fewer than five experts to continue to appoint experts to the Group of Experts, taking into account the need to ensure adequate expertise, gender balance and geographical distribution;

Endorses the documents developed by the Group of Experts to support the development of the third World Ocean Assessment adopted by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole at its eighteenth meeting;

Encourages the appointment of experts to the Pool of Experts in accordance with the mechanism, and requests the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole to provide oversight of the establishment of the Pool of Experts;

Welcomes the regional workshops in support of the third cycle of the Regular Process, held in Santos, Brazil, in May 2023, in Kingston in June 2023, in Mahe, Seychelles in July-August 2023, [in Lisbon in September 2023, in Singapore in November 2023], and the capacity-building symposium [to be] held in Paris in December 2023, which are being held to support the development of the third World Ocean Assessment and strengthen the ocean science-policy interface;

Encourages efforts to ensure completion of the zero draft of the third World Ocean Assessment for review by Member States in 2024 as outlined in the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process;

Urges States, international financial institutions, donor agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and natural and juridical persons to make financial contributions to the voluntary trust fund, as well as the special scholarship fund, and to make other contributions to the Regular Process;

Requests the Secretary-General to convene, in 2024, up to two meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole of no more than two days of total duration each.