



## **INTERVENTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CABLE PROTECTION COMMITTEE (ICPC) AT THE MARCH 17, 2020 CO-FACILITATORS ONLINE BRIEFING WITH STAKEHOLDERS ON THE ZERO DRAFT OF THE 2020 UN OCEAN CONFERENCE DECLARATION**

Thank you very much for selecting the International Cable Protection Committee (ICPC) to make an intervention today. This is Alice Colarossi, calling in from New York.

The ICPC welcomes and fully supports the language of the zero draft of the declaration. We would like to emphasize one often-forgotten key role of the ocean, which the ICPC would like to see highlighted in paragraph 3 of the zero draft: that the ocean also serves to “facilitate international communication,” as noted in the Preamble to the United Nations Law of the Sea Convention.

The ICPC and its members are well placed to understand this role. The ICPC represents the owners and operators of most of the world’s submarine telecommunication cables, as well as the cable ships that lay and maintain them. As documented in a large body of scientific publications, submarine cables are an environmentally-benign subsea infrastructure that carries, through optical fibers, 99% of the world’s transoceanic phone, internet and data traffic.

Therefore, submarine cables are a sustainable use of the ocean, consistent with SDG 14, without which SDG 9 and its target 9.C could not be achieved. Target 9.C seeks to “significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020.” The case of submarine cable illustrates the linkage between SDG 9 and SDG 14, and could be addressed as a concrete example in the context of the 2020 United Nations Ocean Conference.

We are grateful for the opportunity to speak today, and we look forward to continuing to support the UN agenda for sustainable development.