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Statement by Minister-Counsellor Younghyo Park
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations
Preparatory Meeting for the 2020 UN Ocean Conference (Declaration)
4 February 2020, New York

Thank you, Madam and Mr. Co-facilitators.

My delegation welcomes the opportunity to discuss elements of a brief, concise, action-oriented and inter-governmentally agreed declaration that highlights science-based innovative areas of action to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14. This Declaration should demonstrate Member States' collective commitment and send an appealing message to other stakeholders. In the hope of building on the success of the 2017 Ocean Conference, we would like to propose that the zero draft of Declaration reflect the following points:

First, illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing puts continued pressure on the sustainability of fisheries, food security, and marine biodiversity. Notwithstanding the international community's efforts to fight against IUU fishing, it still persists in many parts of the ocean. We should renew strong stance and enhance international cooperation in implementing relevant legal instruments and building stronger technical capacity.

Second, marine debris gravely endangers the health and productivity of oceans. It is detrimental to marine organisms and ecosystems, which consequently has negative socioeconomic impacts. In this regard, it is critical that the international community

takes proactive actions to reduce marine debris, including the capacity-building and training programs of developing States.

Third, marine pollution of all kinds, especially from land-based activities, such as hazardous chemicals, untreated wastewater, and contaminated water, poses a serious threat not only to human health but also to marine environments. Raising awareness of the severity of the problem is vital. Further efforts should be made to improve and strengthen data sharing and cooperation mechanisms at global, regional and sub-regional levels.

Fourth, my delegation notes the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development which aims to provide a common framework to advance ocean science to support Member States achieving SDG 14. We believe that, with its focus on science, this Conference will build an excellent momentum for the successful launch and implementation of the UN Decade of Ocean Science.

To conclude, my delegation hopes that the Declaration will be action-oriented and solution-focused yet still workable and achievable as a blueprint for the next stage of SDG 14 implementation. We are ready and willing to constructively engage in draft Declaration consultations.

I thank you, Madam and Mr. Co-facilitators. /End/