

Remarks

By the co-facilitators of the agreed declaration

Of the OCEAN conference

Preparatory Meeting, February 5 PM

[Ambassador Hermann of Denmark]

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,

I call to order the fourth meeting of the preparatory meeting for the 2020 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. 

These past two days have been very valuable and Ambassador Olai and I are grateful to all delegations for their statements and for bringing concrete and focused ideas and input for both the thematic dialogues and the political declaration. You have certainly given us a lot of food for thought and put a lot of wind into the sails of our canoe.

With regards to the themes of the interactive dialogues, we strongly encourage all delegations to express these views in the input you provide to the concept notes for the dialogues, which will be prepared by the Secretariat. Information on how to provide this input will be shared with Member States in due course.

The Secretary-General of the Conference will prepare concept notes on each of the themes of the interactive dialogues. We want this to

be a collaborative effort, and he will therefore invite Member States and all stakeholders to submit inputs for the concept notes.

We have heard a lot of delegations expressing a wish to broaden the scope of one dialogue in particular, interactive dialogue 3 on minimizing and addressing ocean acidification. Based on the statements we have heard, we propose to make a slight amendment to the title of this dialogue, so it will read “Minimizing and addressing ocean acidification, deoxygenation and ocean warming”. This is the only change we are proposing. The titles of the remaining seven dialogues will remain as proposed in the Secretary-General’s background note.

We propose the following way forward. If no Member States object to this amendment, we will include it in our recommendation to the President of the General Assembly.

If any Member States objects to this amendment, our recommendation will be to retain the titles as currently formulated in the Secretary-General’s background note.

We will circulate the new title to Member States in writing later today, and put it under silence procedure until noon on Friday.

I open now the floor for comments and questions on this proposed way forward.

[See list of speakers.]

Thank you for your support for this proposed approach to finalizing the themes of the interactive dialogues. I now propose that we return to considering the elements for the declaration.

Before the floor is opened for statements, I wish to remind participants of the time limit of FIVE minutes for States speaking on behalf of a group of States, THREE minutes for States speaking in a national capacity and TWO minutes for other participants so that all requests for the floor can be accommodated.

I would therefore request speakers to keep statements as brief and succinct as possible. Representatives with longer statements are encouraged to read a shorter version of their text and to submit their full-length statements to the Secretariat for posting on the Conference website.

Participants are kindly requested to press the button on the console before them in order to request for the floor.

I open now the floor for comments and questions.

[See list of speakers.]

[Ambassador Uludong of Palau]

I now give the floor to the representative of _____.

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I thank the representative of _____.

[Ambassador Uludong of Palau]

We have heard the last speaker in the discussion on elements for a declaration. Before concluding this session I would like to give the floor to Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs.

At around 5:30 p.m.

[Closing remarks by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs]

I now give the floor to Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and Secretary-General of the Conference, who will deliver some closing remarks.

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I thank Mr. Liu for his statement.

[Statement by the Legal Counsel]

I now give the floor to Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares,

Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel, and Special Adviser to the Presidents of the Conference on oceans and legal matters, to make a statement.

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I thank Mr. de Serpa Soares for his statement.

[Closing remarks by the Co-Facilitators]

[Ambassador Uludong of Palau]

On behalf of Ambassador Martin and myself, I would like to express my sincere thanks for your engagement these past two weeks. Martin and I have been listening intently to all of the views you have presented.

Based on the input you have given us regarding the elements of the declaration these past two days, we will prepare a brief, concise and action-oriented draft declaration. A zero draft will be circulated to all Member States within the next few weeks and at the latest by the beginning of March.

When circulating the zero draft, we will also inform you of the dates for the informal consultations. We expect to have the first round of informal consultations in mid-March and subsequently one or two rounds of consultations in April. We aim to circulate a final draft of the declaration by the beginning of May, as mandated in resolution 73/292.

We are confident that in the coming weeks we will agree on a declaration that will bring us closer to our common goal of reaching the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 14.

We count on your active engagement and constructive spirit throughout this process. Our doors are always open and we remain at your disposal.

I thank delegations for their attendance and participation at the preparatory meeting for the 2020 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

The meeting is adjourned. 