



PHILIPPINES

STATEMENT

Preparatory Meeting
For the UN Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable
Development Goal 14: Conserve and Sustainably Use the Oceans, Seas and
Marine Resources for Sustainable Development

Thursday, 16 February 2017
Conference Room 4, UNHQ, New York

Mr. co-facilitators,

Thank you dear co-facilitators for your firm but gentle and focused conduct of our discussions.

Thank you Fiji and Sweden for your transformative vision, leadership and generosity to ensure that the Ocean Conference will be a success for all of us and for future generations.

We associate ourselves with the statement of Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We agree with earlier speakers that the "Call for Action" should be concise, understandable to the public, action-oriented and time bound.

The "Call for Action" should restate key overriding principles already found in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and other key agreements like Rio+20 and the Paris Agreement, and not reopen the carefully negotiated targets of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14.

The "Call for Action" should bring together in relevant, concise, action-oriented, time-bound and accessible fashion all the work we do on the oceans, including the recommendations of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (ICP), the Regular Process, the work of the three UNCLOS treaty bodies, particularly the International Seabed Authority (ISA), and even the ongoing discussions on the Preparatory Committee for the development of an international legally binding instrument under the UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

The vastness of oceans, seas and marine resources means that Member States and all stakeholders have different priorities and concerns.

Our specific proposals are thus evolving and will come together as we approach the Ocean Conference. Let me highlight the Philippines' main priorities on ocean governance as a large archipelagic country.

In his remarks yesterday, the President of the General Assembly mentioned the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), an annual hearing held earlier this week, where one of the priorities which global parliamentarians agreed upon is ocean governance.

To our own mind, ocean governance devolves upon not just Member States and global stakeholders collectively, but Member States and stakeholders within their own countries. We look forward to learning more about best practices.

Ocean governance overarches the proposed seven themes for the partnership dialogues, especially ocean acidification, capacity building and transfer of marine technology, sustainable fisheries and marine pollution, especially in relation to the Manila Declaration on Furthering Implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities.

We will revert on specific proposals together with like-minded delegations in the coming weeks and months leading to the June conference.

But like other delegations, like Greece earlier, at this point let me highlight the peaceful settlement of disputes as an essential aspect of ocean governance. With this in mind, our "Call for Action" will genuinely and effectively achieve the targets of SDG 14.

As chairman this year of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for its fiftieth anniversary, the Philippines and ASEAN agreed on maritime security and cooperation through the rule of law as a thematic priority.

It is the Philippines' hope that this preparatory meeting will recognize maritime security and cooperation through the rule of law as part of ocean governance to achieve the targets of SDG 14.

Thank you, Sir.