



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. MR. HORACIO SEVILLA BORJA, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON THE CONSIDERATION OF A ROAD MAP FOR THE NEXT SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE, AT THE 3RD PREPCOM MEETING ON CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF MARINE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF AREAS BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION (New York, 7 April 2017)**

(Original version)

Mr. Chairman,

It gives me great pleasure and honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on the consideration of a road map for the next session.

At the outset, the Group of 77 and China wishes to congratulate you, Ambassador Carlos Duarte, Chair of the Preparatory Committee, as well as the distinguished Facilitators, for your outstanding work during this 3rd session. We believe and recognize that the discussions so far have been successful, constructive, and that our understanding of the various elements has greatly improved.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China would like to reiterate its attachment to General Assembly resolution 69/292 and we recall that in paragraph 1(a) of the resolution, the Preparatory Committee has been mandated to report to the General Assembly on its progress before the end of this year.

We are confident that, by the end of the 4th session of the Preparatory Committee, we will be able to fulfill this mandate and to make substantive recommendations to the General Assembly on the elements of a draft text of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea; and that, before the end of the 72nd session and taking into account the aforementioned report, the General Assembly will decide on the convening and on the starting date of an intergovernmental conference.

In this regard, in order to move forward we would like to kindly request you, in your capacity as a Chair of the Preparatory Committee, to prepare a paper consolidating and streamlining what has been expressed on the floor and in the written submissions, to be circulated before the beginning of the 4th PrepCom. Given the progress made, we consider that a set of draft recommendations reflecting the substantive elements could be useful and valuable. It would help us to prepare for and lead us to engage into productive and constructive discussions for the next session and we would request that you prepare such a draft to be shared at the earliest possible date.

I thank you.