



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. SAINIVALATI S. NAVOTI (COUNSELLOR), PERMANENT MISSION OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS OPEN-ENDED INFORMAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESS ON OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA (New York, 17 June 2013)

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2. We would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Co-Chairs of the fourteenth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (ICP). The Group of 77 and China assures you, Co-Chairs, of its support as you guide the ICP in its work for this session. We are confident in your ability to lead us in meaningful and productive deliberations.

3. The Group of 77 and China would like to express its gratitude to you, Co-Chairs, for the manner in which you have conducted the preparatory work for this process in March. We thank you for taking on board the Group's views and the views expressed by different delegations during the preparatory meeting, in particular on the proposed program and framework for discussion.

Co-Chairs,

4. The Group of 77 and China remains supportive of the ICP as a process established by the General Assembly in 1999 to facilitate its annual review, in an effective and constructive manner, of developments in ocean affairs.

5. The Group is supportive of the theme for this 14th meeting dealing with ocean acidification and looks forward to participating constructively in the discussions. To ensure that the deliberations proceed in a productive manner at this session, we reiterate our view that the discussions should focus only on the technical and scientific aspects of ocean acidification. It is necessary that our deliberations do not encroach on to issues of policy or address the regulatory aspects of ocean acidification or climate change.

6. As the Secretary-General's report highlights, the impact of ocean acidification disproportionately affects developing countries, in particular the coastal communities and Small Island Developing States, with significant environmental, economic and social repercussions.

7. The high level of acidity in the ocean has placed great stress on the marine ecosystem, thereby directly impacting coral reefs, mollusks, crustaceans and will negatively impact fish stocks. Small Island Developing States and coastal communities that rely heavily on artisanal fisheries as a major food source, and on reefs as a major tourist attraction, stand to suffer significant social and economic losses as a result of ocean acidification.

8. Research on ocean acidification is relatively new and has focused on understanding and

observing the phenomena and determining its impacts. However, little is known on practical adaptation solutions other than improving the resilience of species and ecosystems to ocean acidification. The Group of 77 and China looks forward to learning more about the topic at this session.

Co-chairs,

9. It is clear from the S-G's report that our knowledge about the impacts of ocean acidification on the marine environment is still limited. The Group calls for implementation of paragraph 166 of the Rio+20 outcome document entitled 'The future we want' and relevant paragraphs of the Oceans and Law of the Sea Resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly. Indeed, we need to work collectively to prevent further ocean acidification, as well as enhance the resilience of marine ecosystems and of the communities whose livelihoods depend on them.

10. Finally, we reiterate our best wishes for a positive outcome at this session and assure you of the full cooperation of the Group of 77 and China during the process.

Thank you.