



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. TUMASIE BLAIR, PERMANENT MISSION OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE NINTH MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OPEN-ENDED INFORMAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESS ON OCEANS AND LAW OF THE SEA (New York, 18 March 2008)

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

2. At the outset let me congratulate both of you, Ambassador Paul Badji of Senegal and Lorraine Ridgeway of Canada, on your appointments as co-chairs for the ninth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and Law of the Sea. The Group of 77 and China assures both co-chairs of its support as you undertake to lead UNICPOLOS in its work for this Session. We are confident in your ability to lead us to a successful outcome.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The Group of 77 and China considered the framework for discussion proposed by the co-chairs of this year's United Nations Open-ended informal Consultative Process on Oceans and Law of the Sea and would like to make the following intervention under Annex C item 2; Draft areas of concentration for the discussion panel on "Maritime Security and Safety".

4. Firstly, the Group attaches great importance to the issue of maritime security and safety and the work that UNICPOLOS is trying to achieve in promoting and improving maritime security and safety, both at the global and national levels.

5. Against this backdrop, Mr. Chairman, the Group of 77 and China would like to highlight under Annex C, item 2, bullets 2 and 3 respectively on maritime security, the issue of terrorist acts involving shipping, offshore installations and other maritime interests, and illicit trafficking in arms and weapons of mass destruction are not in keeping with the mandate of the ICP. The Group of 77 and China sees the importance of these two issues; however, the Group is of the view that these two items are better dealt with in another forum provided by the UN.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The ICP mandate was established in support of sustainable development, and as such, the Group of 77 and China is of the view that the focus of maritime security and safety should stay aligned with sustainable development.

7. The Group of 77 and China therefore request the deletion of these 2 items from the discussion panel.

8. Under Annex C item 4 on maritime safety, the Group of 77 and China fully supports the areas highlighted and would encourage the co-chairs to link the issue of capacity building to ALL the elements of paragraph 4.

9. Additionally, Mr. Chairman, the Group of 77 and China considered the time schedule elaborated in Annex B of the co-chairs letter on the draft agenda for the ninth meeting of the United Nations

Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and Law of the Sea. On the basis of our above stated position on maritime security and safety, the Group is of the view that the time allotted for maritime security should be focused to 1 day and the time allotted for maritime safety should be increased to 2 days.

10. The principle of reasonable geographical representation is a well-established principle at the United Nations. Our group is of the view that this principle must be upheld in the nomination of the panelist for the forthcoming process. In light of this, we take note that some of our delegations have submitted names to be on the panel discussion. We strongly urge the co-chairs to adhere to the conception equitable geographical representation.

Mr. Chairman,

11. I would like to reiterate our best wishes for the success of your work and I assure you of G-77 and China's full cooperation during the process.

Thank you.