Viet Nam's Contribution to the 23rd Meeting

of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea

This contribution outlines Viet Nam's current practices with regards to new maritime technologies as well as its suggestions on sub-topics for discussion during the upcoming 23rd meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea.

1. Viet Nam recognizes the importance of promoting innovation, application, and transfer of new maritime technologies as well as technologies that are cross-sectoral in achieving sustainable development, sustainable ocean economy and the conservation and protection of the marine environment. The use of new technologies at sea must be in consistence with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the comprehensive legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and the seas must be carried out.

2. Viet Nam adopted the National Strategy on sustainable ocean economy development by 2030, with a vision to 2045 and the National Strategy on climate change by 2050. These national strategies aim to, inter alia, mobilize the necessary resources for marine scientific research and development and application of modern technologies, on the understanding that technology is key to sustainable ocean development and mitigation and adaptation to climate change and sea level rise.

Viet Nam has currently utilized maritime technologies in different economic sectors, including oil and gas exploration and exploitation, fisheries and aquacultures, ocean mapping, etc. It has received support in capacity building and transfer of maritime technologies from such partners as Australia, Denmark, Norway, France, Japan, Korea, Russia, China. Some long-term projects include those on coral reef monitoring and restoration between the Viet Nam Academy of Science and Technology and the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS), or on meteorological forecast between the Viet Nam Meteorological and Hydrological Administration and the Norway Meteorological Institute.

3. Technologies, particularly new and emerging technologies are expensive. To bridge the ocean knowledge and technology gap, to formulate science-based policies to protect and sustainably use the One Ocean that we all share, particularly in the context of climate change and in this Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, stronger commitments and novel initiatives are indispensable. One example may well be the sale of data package generated by modern technologies in developed countries to developing ones at preferential rates before any transfer of technology can take place, which may take years to realize at enormous costs.

4. The upcoming 23rd ICP should focus on the following:

(i) New technologies to mitigate and/or adapt to climate change and sea level rise, and to enable sustainable ocean economy. Crucial fields include ocean-based renewable energy, sustainable aquaculture, coastal erosion control, marine weather forecast;

(ii) Impact of new technologies is not yet studied or known, for example potential impacts of floating nuclear power plants on the marine environment, or of unmanned vehicles on the safety of economic activities at sea;

(iii) Best practices in cooperation among States or between States and international organizations with regards to research, sharing of information and knowledge, and transfer of technologies used at sea;

(iv) Last but not least, the creative, concrete ways or initiatives to enable and facilitate the access to and use of new or emerging technologies and knowledge generated thereof, including through sharing of knowledge with and transfer of technologies to developing countries, under most favourable or preferential terms and at affordable prices.