



**PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AN INTERGOVERNMENTALLY AGREED
DECLARATION FOR THE 2020 UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE TO
SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
GOAL 14,
19 MARCH 2020**

Singapore aligns itself with the statements submitted by Guyana on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and by Belize on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States.

2 We fully support the co-facilitators' decision to invite inputs in writing, in place of the informal consultations originally scheduled for 18 and 19 March 2020. This is a necessary alternative in light of the unfortunate coronavirus disease (COVID-19) situation. This approach safeguards our health and safety, whilst allowing us to continue with the important and urgent work on our ocean.

3 We thank the co-facilitators for the zero draft, which provides a good basis on which to develop the political declaration. We also express our appreciation for the co-facilitators' efforts to keep the declaration brief, concise and action-oriented. Indeed, the focus of this declaration is on science-based and innovative areas of action to support the implementation of Goal 14, building on what we had achieved in the 2017 UN Ocean Conference. In this regard, we fully support the reaffirmation of the declaration, entitled "Our ocean, our future: call for action". This is an important element in the current text as it captures the fact that we are not starting from scratch, but are building on the political momentum that had been generated at the earlier conference.

4 In a similar vein, we emphasise that our actions to implement Goal 14 should be in accordance with, reinforce and not duplicate or undermine existing legal instruments,

arrangements, processes, mechanisms or entities. This is an important element, which should be reflected in the draft declaration.

5 We also fully support the reaffirmation that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. We note that this mirrors language from the annual General Assembly resolution on oceans and the law of the sea, and appropriately reflects the central role of the Convention in the conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and their resources. Pertinently, the Convention established a delicate balance between the need for economic and social development through the use of the oceans and their resources and the need to conserve and manage those resources in a sustainable manner. The effective implementation of international law, as reflected in the Convention, is therefore critical to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 14.

6 We welcome the references in the zero draft to various ocean-related processes, which should be looked at as part of a connected whole. In particular, we wish to underline the importance of the work undertaken by the intergovernmental conference on an international legally binding instrument under the Convention on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. Whilst this conference has been postponed in light of the coronavirus situation, we should reaffirm our commitment to maintain its momentum, and to develop the instrument as soon as possible.

7 We also wish to underscore the importance of capacity building, and we welcome the recognition in paragraph 11 of the zero draft that all developing countries, in particular small island developing States and least developed countries, face capacity challenges that need to be addressed.

8 Finally, we wish to emphasise the importance of giving due regard to science, including the relevant findings of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services; and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate

Change. There is an urgent need for us to formulate policies, make decisions and take concrete action on the basis of the best-available science. We cannot rest on our laurels, nor can we afford to turn a blind eye to real and imminent threats facing our ocean. In this regard, paragraphs 10 and 11 of the zero draft, which identify how science-based and innovative actions can provide the necessary solutions, and what action needs to be taken on an urgent basis, are of particular significance.

9 Singapore looks forward to receiving the written submissions of other delegations, and stands ready to work together to arrive at a consensual outcome.

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