



CLOSING STATEMENT

Third Session

Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction

Conference Room 4, UN Headquarters, New York, 19-30 August 2019

Thank you, Madame President. The Philippines aligns itself with the statement of Palestine on behalf of G77 and China.

We thank you, your Bureau, the facilitators and DOALOS for your hard work in the successful conduct of our third session.

Allow me to recall the Philippines' principles of engagement on BBNJ:

First, the instrument must be anchored on the Common Heritage of Mankind, as enshrined in UNCLOS.

Second, it must give due regard to the rights and jurisdiction of adjacent coastal States. This includes all areas within their national jurisdiction, including the continental shelf within and beyond 200 nautical miles and the exclusive economic zone.

Third, special recognition must be accorded to environmentally vulnerable States. Consideration of the extraordinary requirements of these States cuts across the overall management and use of biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction through the enhancement of adaptive capacity and climate resilience. It must also take into account the specific challenges of middle income countries.

Fourth, it must incorporate the precautionary principle.

Finally, it must be imbued with transparency of action and support.

On marine genetic resources, including questions on the sharing of benefits, it is our view that access includes not just collection, but also the opportunity to obtain MGRs -- including their derivatives -- originating from the ABNJ. Access must be regulated in order to facilitate fair access to MGRs while ensuring traceability, transparency and accountability.

On area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, we must not lose sight that the primary goal is to protect and conserve marine biodiversity and sustainably use and develop the resources therein. Open, inclusive and transparent stakeholders' consultation is needed to ensure effective management of ABMTs, including MPAs.

On environmental impact assessment, consultation must be conducted by States Parties all throughout the EIA process. Cumulative and transboundary impacts must be considered in the conduct of the EIA.

On capacity-building and transfer of marine technology, we need a concrete financing mechanism specific to CBMT to ensure a fair and equitable MGR benefit sharing regime. Non-monetary benefits are equally important as monetary benefits, as they provide immediate positive impact on developing states, such as in the enhancement of marine scientific and technological capacities.

On cross-cutting issues, we want a clearing-house mechanism and a dispute settlement framework, as well as a mandatory financial mechanism in place.

As we move on to the 4th session, let us keep in mind that it took us nearly 20 years to agree to have an internationally legally binding instrument on BBNJ. We must therefore go beyond the "business as usual" approach, and strive to reach an agreement that benefits mankind as a whole, in keeping with the aspiration of UNCLOS. Political will, and willingness to compromise, are critical.

We must remember that at the end of the day we live in a common world, we sail within a single sea. Tides may be turbulent at times, but with some political will, we can achieve anything.

We look forward to the timely circulation of the revised draft text for the fourth IGC. Thank you.