Distinguished Co-facilitators,

1) I have the honor to deliver these remarks on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

2) The revised draft declaration shared on 14 February 2022 is a positive step in the right direction and provides us with a framework around which we can structure our discussions.

3) We note that a number of our proposals were incorporated. However, a few key elements remain missing.

Co-Facilitators,

4) The Group would like to reflect the role of ocean in relation to ‘global trade’ in paragraph 3.

5) With regard to the environment, the Group suggests adding a factual and self-explanatory paragraph on the “Rio Conventions” to demonstrate an inter-linkage between climate change and biodiversity loss at land and ocean. We also recommend strengthening language on coastal erosion which is threatening many countries and none more so than the developing ones.

6) Hence, the Group suggests expanding paragraph 4 to add the seriousness of coastal erosion and to highlight the added pollution caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which eventually ends up in the Ocean.

7) The Group further believes that the principle of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances is of fundamental importance and worth mentioning in the paragraph where we have reference to international instrument on climate change.

8) The Group also believes that it would be more appropriate to use the phrase "to maintain crucial functions" instead of "delivering crucial services."
Co-Facilitators,

9) As the means of implementation are a key enabler to address the adverse effect of climate change on the ocean, especially for the climate vulnerable developing countries, the Group proposes a dedicated para after paragraph 5 on the means of implementation.

10) In paragraph 6, we note that the adverse impacts of climate change are already impacting the Ocean and related loss and damage must be addressed. The Group, therefore, suggests adding references to recent developments at COP 26 in Glasgow, which has initiated an annual dialogue in its Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) on the Ocean-climate nexus.

11) In paragraph 7, the Group would like to suggest stressing the role of healthy ocean for our resilient recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

12) The Group would also highlight that the terminology in the last line of the same paragraph, “greener and bluer” is not an agreed upon language. Various delegations inside our Group do not have the same understanding of the meaning of this language and therefore we advise to use “a sustainable, inclusive and resilient recovery” instead.

Co-Facilitators,

13) As stipulated in our Group statement during the first round of consultations, we propose to strengthen means of implementation as developing countries will need assistance to take full advantage of the promises of developing ocean science. This can be done through a new paragraph after existing para 10. Our draft proposal in this regard is contained in our separate submission to you. The Group would also like to add its proposal on “Maritime Disaster Recovery and Restoration” in the declaration.

14) With regards to the remaining paragraphs of the draft political declaration, the Group will provide its views when discussions on those Paras is initiated later in the consultations.

15) I thank you.

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