



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA
BY MR. MUHAMMAD IMRAN KHAN, COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION
OF PAKISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS, DURING THE
INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE DRAFT POLITICAL
DECLARATION FOR THE 2022 UNITED NATIONS OCEAN CONFERENCE**
(Tuesday, 1st February 2022)

Co-facilitators,

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

We welcome the convening of informal consultations, after almost two years, on the outcome document of the 2022 United Nations Ocean Conference. We look forward to engaging constructively in the discussions.

Co-facilitators,

The draft outcome, dated 28 April 2020, presents a good basis for our discussions, and highlights many pertinent elements on the main theme of the Conference “Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation of Goal 14: stocktaking, partnerships and solutions”.

It took several proposals from our Group on board but nevertheless more work is needed.

Our today’s comments will try to both strengthen existing elements of the declaration but also propose updates on developments in the ocean’s sphere since we last met.

These comments are general as the Group is still coordinating internally on specific issues. We will provide detailed textual proposals at a later date.

For the ease of reference, our points are structured in line with the questions you had provided in your letter.

As for Question 1, we do see that solutions presented in the declaration are still relevant but require update to reflect recent developments. There is the need to strengthen references to means of implementation and should also look at institutional solutions towards implementation of SDG14. The Group provided detailed suggestions in our last submission before the pandemic and will share detailed comments in the next meeting.

On Question 2, access to information and capacity building for marine technology is still unequal between developed and developing countries and needs to be addressed to assist our members to conserve and sustainably use oceans. The same holds true for the sixth question.

Co-facilitators,

Question 3 should be rephrased in order to identify our collective success and failures vis-à-vis the targets that matured in 2020. At the same time, we also need to identify the reasons of our failures.

The fourth question reminds us that the world does not stand still. Several important developments have happened since April 2020 and merit reflection. The Group would like to point out to the following in this context:

- The UN CBD – 14 Initiative regarding the coherence and synergy between the three Rio Conventions to promote a coherent approach to address biodiversity loss, climate change and land and ecosystem degradation.
- The International Law Commission's ongoing work on the implications of sea-level rise in international law.
- UNFCCC, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice holding an annual dialogue on the Climate-ocean nexus.
- United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) forthcoming consideration of the establishment of an intergovernmental negotiating committee on a global agreement to address marine plastic pollution. We believe that these developments at UNEA on the issue of marine plastic pollution will have important implications for the realization of SDG 14.
- Work on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction has continued, during the intersessional work and we look forward to concluding a treaty at the 4th session of the Conference in 2022.

On the points just raised, we would recommend looking at agreed language to avoid duplicating discussions that we already had.

On the question on Covid-19, the pandemic has negatively affected the marine environment. Biosafety material and Personal Protective Equipment have ended up in the ocean. It has also negatively impacted shipping and fisheries. But we also understand that the recovery from the pandemic will depend on the conservation and sustainable use of oceans. Members of our Group have, inter

alia, applied ecosystem-based approaches, protected biodiversity, managing and protected blue-carbon ecosystems that contribute to mitigation, adaptation, and resilience.

The final question is relevant as we have embarked on the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. We should call for bigger efforts by all countries in line with their national legislation and circumstances.

Co-facilitators,

Given the time constraints for interventions, we have kept ours short. I trust that our members will explain out the points in more detail. We look forward to the Conference hosted by Portugal and Kenya and wish them best of success.

I thank you!
