

Draft Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram,
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United
Nations, on behalf of G77 and China at the Plenary of
the 2022 UN Ocean Conference

(27 June – 01 July)

Excellencies,

Distinguished Representatives,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

2. At the outset, allow me to express my gratitude to the Governments of Portugal and Kenya for co-hosting this conference.

3. The Group pledges to you its full support to achieve a meaningful outcome of this Conference.

Excellencies,

4. The Ocean is an essential and elementary part of our Planet and of humanity's emergence, evolution

and survival on Earth. It covers 71% of the Earth surface and contains about 97% of the Earth's water.

5. The sustenance and sustainability of the Ocean is inextricably linked with the achievement of all the 17 SDG's and the 2030 Agenda. Multiple components of the SDGs such as climate change, food and water supply, renewable energy, health and well-being, tourism, trade and transport, are all directly dependent on the health of the Ocean.

6. It is regrettable that the international community has been unable to effectively combat the global emergency of the Ocean. Sea levels are rising, coastal erosion is worsening, marine pollution is increasing, marine biodiversity is rapidly declining, and the Ocean is warmer and more acidic.

7. Regrettably, we have failed collectively to achieve targets 14.2, 14.4, 14.5 and 14.6 which were to be implemented by 2020.

8. The Ocean has taken up more than 90% of the excess heat in the climate system and has warmed progressively since 1970.

9. Plastic pollution in the Ocean is a major stressor on the health of the Ocean and will increase by 40% in the next 10 years. If we don't do anything about this plastic soup, the Ocean will have more plastic than fish (by weight) by 2050.

10. Today, we have gathered at this Conference with a single purpose: to accelerate efforts for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14. We hope the Conference will result in renewing and reinforcing our commitment to take urgent actions to achieve all the targets of SDG 14 as soon as possible.

11. The Group of 77 and China believes that for successful implementation of SDG 14, it is imperative that the following principles are taken into account:

- a) First, actions should be taken for the conservation and sustainable use of the Ocean bearing in mind the integrated and indivisible nature of all the SDGs; and
- b) Second, in view of the wide economic and development differences between States, such actions must adhere to the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, particularly the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities; and
- c) Third, due to their historic contribution towards Ocean ecosystem degradation, developed countries must take the lead in addressing the challenges facing the Oceans in order to restore harmony with Nature.

Excellencies,

12. The actions required to address the threat to the Ocean have been identified in our past deliberations and decisions. What is urgently needed is to mobilize the means of implementation, such as financing, technology transfer, and capacity building, as well as to enhance scientific knowledge and research in developing countries to assist them in protecting and restoring the Ocean.

13. Access to marine technology still remains unequal between developed and developing countries. Addressing the technological gap in mobilizing Ocean action is vital.

14. All nations and peoples rely on the Ocean for economic growth, food and resources. We must fully understand and better manage the multiple aspects of oceanic sustainability, ranging from sustainable fisheries, ecosystem health and prevention of marine pollution.

15. In particular, developing countries require an institutional solution to help them in the implementation of SDG 14.

Excellencies,

16. The Group of 77 and China also acknowledges that the Ocean is closely linked to the atmosphere and both influence each other. In the long term, the adverse effects of climate change on the Ocean will have profound and unpredictable consequences with huge costs for humanity. Therefore, the Group attaches utmost importance to the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement, under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

17. We call on developed countries to fulfill their commitments under the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement, including taking accelerated action on mitigation and adaptation in a balanced manner and urgently fulfilling their long overdue commitment to provide US\$100 billion per annum in climate

finance; and also reach Net Zero well before 2050 in order to achieve overall global net zero target by around mid-century on the basis of equity, CBDR and RC.

18. The Group sincerely hopes that all the commitments adopted at this Conference will be immediately implemented by all parties – States, private sector, civil society and other stakeholders – to save and sustain the Ocean for the benefit of people and planet.
