

Explanation of Position

To be delivered at the General Plenary of the UN Ocean Conference, 5-9 June 2017

The EU and its Member States thank the President for giving us the opportunity to clarify the EU's position with regard to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Paris Agreement.

The European Union and its Member States welcome and fully endorse the Call for Action. We recognise that the Call for Action underscores the need for action to implement SDG 14, and we are strongly committed to that action as part of our obligations to implement the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. We see the concrete actions outlined in the Call for Action, as part of that commitment.

The EU and its Member States would like to emphasize the universal and unified character of UNCLOS and reaffirm that the Convention sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out, as we have reiterated many times in the annual United Nations General Assembly Resolution on Oceans and the Law of the Sea. We would like to stress that although we have accepted to quote target 14.C language in the Call for Action, we regard this as a context-specific compromise solution since this represented agreed language. As we had stressed during the negotiations of the Call for Action, one of the guiding principles for the EU and its Member States was that there should be no renegotiation of agreed targets. We have to make it clear

however that we would not be able to accept the use of this language in any other context including, but not only, the UNGA Resolution on Oceans and the Law of the Sea as well as the relevant work of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The EU and its Member States also would like to stress the fundamental linkage between the ocean and climate change. In this respect, we reiterate our commitment to the Paris Agreement and call for its full and swift implementation.