

Statement delivered by

Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Tonga to the United Nations,
On Agenda Item 79: The Report of the International Law Commission
at its 73rd and 74th Sessions (Cluster I)

At Sixth Committee of the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Trusteeship Council Chamber,
United Nations Headquarters, New York,
24 October 2023

Check against delivery.

Mr. Chair,

1. Thank you

level rise, with the view to promoting the stability, security, certainty, and predictability of maritime entitlements irrespective of the impacts of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise.

Mr. Chair,

5. Tonga welcomes and agrees with the report by the Co-chairs that there is a direct relevance of sea level rise to the question of peace and security. And rightly so as tensions are deepening due to loss of territories, scarce in resources, increased displacement and so forth as voiced during Security Council Arria-formula meetings.
6. It is crucially important in this regard that UNCLOS must be interpreted and applied in a way that respects the rights and sovereignty of vulnerable small island states. It is for this that PIF leaders endorsed a declaration on preserving maritime zones in the face of climate change-induced sea level rise.

Mr. Chair,

7. As earlier mentioned, we maintain the importance of preserving baselines and outer limits of maritime zones measured therefrom and their entitlements, despite climate change-induced sea level rise. We are committed to ensuring maritime zones of Pacific Member States are delineated in accordance with UNCLOS which should not be challenged or reduced due to climate change-induced sea level rise.
8. We agree with the preliminary observation of the Co-Chairs brought up by the distinguished delegate of Singapore that there is no obligation under UNCLOS to keep baselines and outer limits of maritime zones under review nor to update charts or lists of geographical coordinates once deposited with the Secretary

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