1
Statement by Bangladesh at the Intergovernmental Consultation on the
Declaration of 2020 Ocean Conference
23 March 2020, New York
I thank the co-facilitators for continuing the consultation process for conclusion of 2020
Ocean Conference Declaration, despite the COVID-19 situation. We deeply appreciate the
innovative approach of the co-facilitators and the resilience of the member States who
are supporting the process and submitting their statements by email.
We align with the statement made by Guyana on behalf of G-77 and China.
Madam/Mr. Co-facilitators
The 2nd Ocean Conference to support the implementation of Sustainable Development
Goal 14 is indeed a very important initiative of the UN. It not only furthers our collective
actions to promote conservation and sustainable use of oceans, and its resources, but
also adds essential value to the implementation of the Agenda 2030 as a whole. This is
even more timely since as many as six targets of Goal 14 (out of ten) are scheduled to be
achieved by this year which we are way off unfortunately. We would, therefore, like to
see this Conference as the forum to forge stronger global partnerships to support and
sustain national, regional and international efforts towards achieving those targets
expeditiously. The holding of the Conference is also a critical occasion to set the right
policy direction for utilization of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable
Development leveraging the overarching UN Decade for Action. These urgencies need to
be reflected in any outcome of the Conference. Hence, we expect the Declaration coming
out of the Conference to

2
Agenda 2030. We also appreciate the acknowledgement of challenges caused by climate
change, sea level rise, plastic pollution, as well as the cumulative human impacts on the
ocean and its ecosystem in the draft Declaration.
The renewed commitments to international law – particularly to the United Nations
Convention on the Law of the Sea, reference to the BBNJ Conference and other
international processes and initiatives aimed at achieving SDG 14 are appreciated. We
may also think of some other related processes such as developing the ‘mining code’
under the aegis of International Seabed Authority which could further contribute to the
overarching aim of achieving the 2030 Agenda.
In this context my delegation would like to highlight the following points:
First: Although the impacts of climate change and sea level rise have been incorporated
in the draft declaration in the context of the health and productivity of the oceans, we
believe it is also important to take note of other socio-economic, political and security
implications of these phenomena on the coastal states. Especially the impacts of sea level
rise are manifold, as it could cause the submersion of existing land territories of many
countries, or even change boundaries in the maritime zones; thereby raising complex
issues of sovereignty, and access to natural resources.
Second: We take note of the importance given to the issue of ocean pollution by plastic
litters and other pollutants in the draft declaration through comprehensive life-cycle
approaches. However, given the urgency of the issue, we need more robust approach and
perhaps a time-bound call for reduction of plastic litter pollution to zero level within the
shortest possible time. In addition to that, we also call for further scientific research to
identify the ‘dead zones’ in various oceanic areas including in the Bay of Bengal, and take
urgent and effective measures for improvement of ocean’s health in those areas.
Third: The Blue Economy is the new frontier of opportunity for countries with limited
natural resources. Exploring alternative options for resources in the high seas could
partially cater their enormous demand for resources. We expect the 2020 Ocean
Conference to recognize the potentials of Blue Economy and promote scientific research,

3
innovative financing, and partnerships to maximize the benefits of all ocean-based
economic activities aiming at achieving sustainable development goals.
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