

This statement is submitted by Belize on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), and is aligned with the statement submitted by Guyana on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We wish to take this opportunity to extend our solidarity and support for all people who have been impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. Through united efforts, we hope to overcome this situation and emerge better prepared for dealing with such global challenges in the future. In the meantime, it is also important to not lose focus of the other critical issues that we are dealing with, including the future of our Ocean.

AOSIS wishes to thank the distinguished co-facilitators for the excellent zero draft that they have

4. We also see the utility in stressing the need for reinforcing, and not duplicating or undermining existing legal instruments, arrangements, processes, mechanisms, or entities. The relevant language at paragraph 11 of the declaration “Our Ocean, our future: call for action” (“the Call for Action”, as endorsed in A/RES/71/312) could be utilized here as a supplementary paragraph.
5. Recognizing that the 4th IGC on BBNJ has now been postponed, we think it would be critical to emphasize the urgency of concluding the process as early as possible in paragraph 8 of the zero draft.
6. As we wish to maintain a strong focus on addressing plastic pollution, we would suggest that paragraph 10 (c) of the zero draft be split up with:
 - i. Paragraph 10 (c) addressing marine pollution generally, with an additional reference to other land-based sources of pollution; as waste water and sediments can also have a great impact on the health of coral reefs.
 - ii. A separate (c) bis, addressing the problem of marine litter and microplastics, recognizing the importance of long-term elimination of discharge of litter and microplastics into the oceans and of avoiding detriment to marine ecosystems and the human activities dependent on them from marine litter and microplastics. This draws from agreed language from UNEP/EA.4/Res.6, pp3 and OP1.
7. In implementing area-based management tools, as highlighted in paragraph 10(d) of the zero draft, we believe that broader considerations may be warranted in addition to ecological value. We would suggest inclusion of (t) 0.20 50h(i) 0.2 (n 1 cm BT 50.3 (of) -286.3

We look forward to considering the proposals from other delegations on the zero draft, and will continue to engage as constructively as possible, with the new mode of work that we are now undertaking in this process.

AOSIS wishes to conclude by reiterating our full trust, confidence and support for both co-facilitators, and we look forward to receiving the revised draft as promptly as possible, to ensure adequate time for coordination within our respective Groups.