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BANGLADESH

Statement under agenda item 78:

'Oceans and Law of the Sea'

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Date and venue: 11 December 2018 at General Assembly Hall

Madam/Mr. President,

Bangladesh joins other delegations in thanking the coordinators of the two draft resolutions under Agenda Item 78 for their excellent work.

Healthy oceans are critical for sustaining life, eliminating poverty and promoting prosperity on this Planet. With the peaceful settlement of maritime border issues with neighboring states Myanmar and India in 2014, the Government of Bangladesh embarked on to unlock the potentials from better access to sea and ocean resources. The blue economy is now considered as a new 'development space' in Bangladesh. Shipping, sea ports, ship building and recycling, marine fisheries, sea salt, coastal tourism, ocean energy, land reclamation, maritime safety and surveillance, human resources development and governance have been identified as key priority issues for the development of blue economy. These issues have been addressed in our recently under taken 'Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100' under the visionary leadership of our Prime Minister. Here, we touch upon the following issues from our national point of view:

- **First**, we recall the outcome of the UN Ocean Conference in identifying ways and means for implementing the goal 14 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Out of ten targets under goal 14, six are time specific and require robust and sustained global partnerships to facilitate their implementation. In this context, we stress the importance of completing the WTO negotiation to address fisheries subsidies that can contribute directly or indirectly, to overcapacity and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.
- **Second**, it is evident from research that climate induced sea level rise would have severe socioeconomic and environmental impact on coastal states, including on their maritime boundary delimitation. We thank the International Law Commission for their recent decision to include 'sea-level rise in relation to international law' in its long-term programme of work.

- **Third**, we remain particularly concerned over large movements of refugees and migrants at sea, mostly in perilous situations. We urge States to comply with their obligations for search and rescue at sea, and to work towards addressing the push and pull factors for such irregular movements. In the renewed aftermath of the Rohingya humanitarian crisis from Myanmar's Rakhine State since August last year, we draw attention to all concerned regional countries to the need for strengthening surveillance and interception along the coastal areas. We take full note of the Secretary-General's observation made on this under chapter 'migration by sea' in his report on 'oceans and law of the sea' contained at document A/73/368.
- **Fourth**, we urge the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) to expedite its work towards disposing of the pending submissions. Bangladesh submitted its claims on continental shelf in 2011, and later deposited updated baseline information to DOALOS as per UNCLOS provision. We appreciate the amendment of the terms of reference of the trust fund created for facilitating the preparation of submissions to the CLCS by developing countries.
- **Fifth**, we welcome the holding of the first session of intergovernmental negotiations to discuss and explore ways and means to reach our goal to elaborate, adopt and implement an international legally binding instrument under the UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. We look forward to commencing work on text-based negotiations to bring our work dating back to 2006 to its logical conclusion. We thank the Nippon Foundation and DOALOS for organizing training for developing country representatives.
- **Finally**, capacity building and transfer of marine technology are of utmost important for the developing states, in particular LDCs. Among other issues, we draw the attention of our development partners to the suitable utilization of the UN Technology Bank for LDCs for this purpose.

To conclude, Madam/ Mr. President, we would like to reiterate our commitment to UNCLOS as the constitution of the oceans, establishing the overarching legal framework within which all activities in oceans and seas must be carried out. We urge all remaining States to join the convention for attaining its universality.

I thank you.