

Briefing by the co-facilitators of the preparatory process

(1 February 2017)

- As indicated in the letter of the co-facilitators dated 23 January 2017, the informal briefing is to be focused on the presentation of the background note of the Secretary-General for the preparatory process of the Conference and on the tentative programme of work of the preparatory meeting, which was circulated in that same letter and is available on the Conference website.
- Ambassador Mendonça e Moura of Portugal and Ambassador Burhan Gafoor of Singapore have been appointed by the President of the General Assembly as co-facilitators to oversee the preparatory process and to conclude the intergovernmental consultations on a “Call for Action” for the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of SDG 14.
- The General Assembly, in its resolution 70/303, requested the President of the General Assembly to convene a two-day preparatory meeting, which he decided to convene on 15 and 16 February 2017 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The preparatory meeting will be chaired by us co-facilitators, with a view to considering the themes for the partnership dialogues and elements for a “Call for Action”.
- The process about to be initiated needs to be fully grounded on the 2030 Agenda, on the one hand, and on the modalities resolution for the Conference, on the other. It also needs to be inclusive and transparent in its method, while mobilizing and inspirational in its purpose.
- According to the tentative programme of work, it is planned to dedicate the first session to the themes for the seven partnership

dialogues and the rest of the sessions to discussing possible elements for a “Call for Action”.

- The Secretary-General had been requested to prepare a background note for the preparatory meeting, including a proposal for themes of the partnership dialogues, whose advanced unedited version has been made available on the Conference website. The discussions in the preparatory meeting will take into account this background note.
- A discussion is also to be held on the themes for the partnership dialogues in the preparatory meeting. On the basis of that, the co-hosts and the Secretariat will organize the partnership dialogues around the defined themes, including the preparation of concept papers by the Secretary-General of the Conference.
- In line with the modalities resolution, besides State Members of the UN, members of the specialised agencies and parties to UNCLOS, other stakeholders will also be given the opportunity to speak at appropriate junctures during the meeting.
- The other relevant stakeholders who will participate in the preparatory process include, in line with the modalities resolution, organizations and bodies of the United Nations, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions and non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions, the scientific community, the private sector and philanthropic organizations, whose work is relevant to the Conference and who are accredited in accordance with the provisions set forth in Annex II to the modalities resolution.
- The preparatory meeting will be webcasted and conference room 3 will be made available as an overflow room for other relevant

stakeholders as we are likely to exceed room capacity given the high registration numbers.

- Given time constraints, interventions during the first session will be limited to three minutes for State Members of the UN, members of the specialised agencies, parties to UNCLOS, and two minutes for other stakeholders and should mainly focus on enumerating possible themes for the partnership dialogues.
- Interventions during the sessions on the Call for Action will be limited to five minutes for State Members of the UN, members of the specialised agencies, and parties to UNCLOS, and two minutes for other stakeholders and should focus on concrete elements that should be captured in the Call for Action while being as concise and action-oriented as possible.
- While interpretation services for the preparatory meeting are on an as-available basis, it is expected that the 15 and 16 February preparatory meeting will have interpretation.
- Twenty-five side events have been registered to take place on the margins of the preparatory meeting, which will start taking place a day prior to the preparatory meeting in order to accommodate more requests. The side events programme for 14-16 February 2017 is already available on the Ocean Conference website.
- A lunch-time event to launch the on-line registration of the voluntary commitments, as part of the outcome of the Ocean Conference, will be held on 15 February in conference room 3.

Outline of a roadmap:

- The co-facilitators will be closely guided by their mandate and the modalities as set out in GA resolution 70/303.

- The preparatory meeting, on 15 and 16 February 2017, will be an opportunity for the co-facilitators to listen to State Members of the UN, members of the specialised agencies, parties to UNCLOS, and other stakeholders.
- After the preparatory meeting, the zero draft of the “Call for Action” will be made available. In accordance with GA resolution 70/303, the co-facilitators will make the zero draft available by March 2017.
- The co-facilitators are planning to hold intergovernmental consultations in March and April 2017. A schedule will be made available in due course.
- According to GA resolution 70/303, intergovernmental consultations on a “Call for Action” are to conclude by May 2017.
- The co-facilitators are committed to transparency and to consulting widely.
- Intergovernmental consultations are for State Members of the UN, members of the specialised agencies and parties to UNCLOS. However, other stakeholders will be appropriately informed and engaged throughout the process.
- As with the preparatory meeting, interpretation services for the intergovernmental consultations are on an as-available basis. However, we will work closely with the Secretariat to ensure that intergovernmental consultations will have interpretation as far as possible.