



*Permanent Mission
of Barbados to
the United Nations*



INTERVENTION BY

SENATOR THE HON. MAXINE MCCLEAN
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN TRADE
BARBADOS

AT

PARTNERSHIP DIALOGUE 7

OF THE

UNITED NATIONS OCEAN CONFERENCE

OF THE

71ST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

9 JUNE, 2017

United Nations Headquarters
New York

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Thank you Mr. Moderator,

Barbados is pleased to participate in today's partnership dialogue on "Enhancing the Conservation and Sustainable use of Oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)".

As I would have indicated in our statement in the plenary debate, Barbados recognises UNCLOS as the overarching legal framework for all activities of the oceans and seas.

As a framework agreement, UNCLOS is by nature broad in scope. Hence there has been a need to develop two implementing agreements to date, and discussions are ongoing towards the development of a third implementing agreement under UNCLOS. These instruments seek to provide specific modalities for managing the inter-connected, but oftentimes competing uses of the oceans.

For small island nations such as Barbados, the maritime area over which they exercise jurisdiction is immensely greater than their land territory. The economic benefits that stand to accrue from sustainable management and exploitation of the living and non-living resources in this vast "new" frontier is inestimable. However, there are challenges related to both the preservation and protection of that marine space as

well as the ability to exploit sustainably, the resources contained therein for the socio-economic development of the state.

In the Caribbean, the geographical proximity of several neighbouring independent states give rise to overlapping maritime entitlements under UNCLOS. The delimitation of boundaries – knowing precisely where the limits of one state’s jurisdiction ends and where the jurisdiction of another begins – often require specialised (hydrographic and legal) expertise.

Following the demarcation of boundaries, and in order to exercise effective jurisdiction over one’s maritime space, additional human resources, technology and equipment are needed to assist with mapping and charting as well as monitoring the range of human uses of the ocean, including fishing, mineral extraction, shipping/transportation and recreation. These specialised resources are often not resident in our countries.

Mr. Moderator,

With respect to fisheries, small developing countries such as Barbados continue to face challenges that prevent the efficient functioning and operation of the sector. Many of these challenges stem from limited financial and human resources and the institutional capacity required to

deal with the numerous threats confronting the sector. These threats include:

- i. *an upsurge in illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing activities; and*
- ii. *ineffective monitoring, control and surveillance systems and enforcement mechanisms*

We believe that the strengthening of regional ocean management/governance mechanisms, including regional fisheries management arrangements and the promotion of greater levels of interaction and sharing of best practices across existing regional ocean governance entities could assist in addressing the challenges posed by limited human resource and technological capacities of developing states.

As CARICOM indicated its submission to this partnership dialogue, there are no less than six (6) major global networks addressing the key issues of biodiversity, fisheries, pollution and climate change. These are primarily led by UN agencies each comprising a global secretariat and several regional sub-bodies. In addition, there are approximately sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) regional networks that include the regional

sub-bodies, '*indigenous*' regional organisations, regional arms of global NGOs and regional NGOs.

The effectiveness of UN Oceans has, however, been limited due to lack of focus and resources. Additionally, given that the full set of global arrangements is larger than the mandate of UN Oceans there is the need for a mechanism with broader reach to provide integration and support connectivity of global and regional arrangements. Without this, the likelihood of significant progress towards SDG Target 14.C will be substantially diminished.

Barbados therefore shares the view that the plethora of global and regional networks, if rationalised, connected and strengthened could provide a working global ocean governance framework for oceans that will enable achievement of the SDG 14 targets.