



## **[Check against delivery]**

Madam President,

Since this is the first time Fiji has taken the floor, I congratulate you on your election and assure you of Fiji's full support. We would also join others in thanking the Secretariat and Chris Brown for the excellent briefing papers. Fiji would like to make a few points at this time in regard to this Agenda Item 11 on the Draft Regulations.

My delegation listened intently to the discussions from yesterday and have some points we would like to make.

With regards to the Financial Model, Fiji was pleased to attend the working group last week and fully appreciated the presentations by the MIT and the rich discussion that ensued but like others, Fiji was disappointed with the lack of members present from the MIT team.

Fiji fully supports the outcome statement tabled yesterday which highlighted a preference for a "ramp up" approach, a preference for simplicity that a tiered ad valorem royalty payment mechanism provided. But we also supported that other options such as a hybrid mechanism blending ad valorem and profit sharing continue to be examined at this time.

We fully support the convening of a second meeting of the working group prior to the Council meeting in July. In this regard Fiji requests justification, be provided for the 1% environment levy and the cap of \$500 million on an Environment Trust Fund as raised by other delegations.

On the Standards and Guidelines, Fiji as a small island developing state in the Pacific Ocean, we acknowledge the need for standards and guidelines and that these must be as clear and simple as possible so as not to create any disproportionate burden on developing states but also ensuring that that the highest standards and guidelines are maintained, a fine balance must be

reached. In particular Fiji is keen to be able to participate in discussions on those standards and guidelines that relate to environmental matters.

However, in formulating the standards and guidelines, Fiji stresses the importance of ensuring that such standards and guidelines are inline with other international negotiations currently taking place right now like the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) process to ensure harmonization.

We fully support the need to separate the standards and guidelines into two. First, those that MUST be in place prior to completion of the exploitation regulations and commencement of applications. Second, those that can be developed and agreed to subsequent to completion of the regulations.

In order to achieve this in a transparent manner a roadmap is clearly a good option for the way forward. Furthermore, we fully support the Pretoria Workshop as a next significant step on the roadmap. We thank Germany for the offer to host a follow-up meeting maybe with a focus on environmental standards and guidelines. This will surely keep up the momentum and urgency.

On the Key Concepts and Definition of Terms let us keep ongoing the discussion on key concepts and definition of terms such as “best” and “good” practices. The emergence of consensus will surely take place.

Finally, with regards to Decision-Making and the delegation of functions by the Council we agree the SG is fully responsible for day-to-day functioning of the Secretariat. In this regard ongoing communication with the contractors is a key matter especially where there may be issues within the context of a contract relating for example to compliance and where urgent action maybe required. Necessarily reporting to the Council will be required often “after the fact” given the frequency of Council meetings. We also note that the Council assisted by the Legal and Technical Commission must have provided guidelines for the SG wherever necessary for example in regard to taking action on environmental, or health and safety matters.

Council must retain sole responsibility in regard to approval, suspension or revoking of contracts.

I thank you.