



Republic of Cyprus

Partnership Dialogue 7: Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

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1. UNCLOS is rightly referred to as the “Constitution for the Oceans”, as it provides the effective, comprehensive and overarching international legal framework for the oceans and seas. By setting out the overall legal framework for all activities on the oceans and sea, it also provides the legal framework for their sustainable development. We therefore welcome the recognition of its prominent role in this Conference and through this important partnership dialogue.
2. Indeed, the General Assembly has recognized the pre-eminent contribution of the Convention to the strengthening of peace, security, cooperation and friendly relations among all nations, to the promotion of the economic and social advancement, as well as to the sustainable development of the oceans and seas.
3. In providing the global community with a carefully balanced package of rights and duties in the various maritime zones, UNCLOS carefully balances the enjoyment of rights and benefits with the undertaking of duties and obligations. Moreover its implementation cannot be effected in a piecemeal fashion since its provisions are closely interrelated and form an integral package.
4. The Convention has a universal character, having been ratified by 168 parties. Its provisions reflect customary international law. In addition, the principle of sustainable development has become a principle of general international law. However, while we do possess a strong legal regime, it is important to acknowledge that effective implementation can be a challenge, especially for developing states. Effective implementation of the UNCLOS regime and its implementing agreements, requires

giving greater prominence to ocean issues at the national level, effective national legislative, administrative and technical frameworks and adequate technological, financial and human capabilities. Effective implementation of UNCLOS provisions also requires cooperation.

5. Cyprus's national legal framework is solidly based on UNCLOS, as well as the relevant European Union legal framework. We are also committed to effective cooperation with our neighbours and partners in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, aiming towards the harmonious implementation of the UNCLOS regime for the conservation and sustainable use of the sea and its resources.

6. In closing, I wish to emphasise a point highlighted by many throughout this conference: that the Goals of Agenda 2030 cannot be effected in a fragmented fashion, as they are mutually dependent. I would like to add in this respect, that the significance of UNCLOS is not only instrumental to the implementation of Goal 14, but also to the overall implementation of the Agenda, due to the perennial connection between development and security, because of its significant contribution to peace, security, and cooperation.