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Sustainable development: implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

Letter dated 13 November 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Yeosu Declaration on the theme “Living Ocean and Coast”, the outcome document of the International Exposition Yeosu, Republic of Korea 2012, held in Yeosu, Republic of Korea, from 12 May to 12 August 2012 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 19 (a).

(Signed) Oh Joon
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 13 November 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Yeosu Declaration on the theme “Living Ocean and Coast”

(Adopted on 12 August 2012 in Yeosu, Republic of Korea)

Under the theme “Living Ocean and Coast”, we, the organizers, participating countries, international organizations, specialized agencies and experts, gathered at the International Exposition Yeosu, Republic of Korea 2012, held in Yeosu, Republic of Korea, from 12 May to 12 August 2012 under the auspices of the International Expositions Bureau,

Respecting the objectives embodied in the sub-themes “Coastal Development and Preservation”, “New Resources Technology” and “Creative Maritime Activities”,

Recalling the principles set forth in the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972, the Nairobi Declaration of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on the state of the worldwide environment (1982), the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992), the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development (2002) and the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2012,

Noting the relevant provisions in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, and other important multilateral conventions, agreements and action plans related to the ocean and coasts,

Emphasizing that the ocean covers more than 70 per cent of the planet’s surface, is crucial to sustaining life, provides food and income to billions of people who depend on marine ecosystems for their livelihood, and connects people, markets and communities as the silk road for over 90 per cent of the world’s trade,

Mindful of the pressures and threats facing the ocean, seabed, regional seas, coasts and islands, such as unsustainable fishing practices and resource exploitation, discharge of marine pollutants and debris, habitat destruction, introduction of invasive alien species, ocean acidification and climate change phenomena, including extreme weather events, rising sea levels and melting of polar glaciers,

Understanding that such impacts have global ramifications and are not confined to a single country or region and that collaborative international efforts are required to minimize the detrimental impacts of humankind on marine ecosystems, and,

Having discussed the role of the ocean in meeting the sustainable environmental, social and economic goals of the global community through a new vision of “green growth from the sea”,

Declare the following:

1. The ocean is a vital part of our planet and an essential element of human civilization. We call for global leadership to raise the awareness of Governments about the need to better protect the marine environment, and to elevate ocean-related issues to the top of the global policy agenda;

2. We call for the international community to preserve and develop maritime cultures in order to enlighten all elements of civil society regarding the need for greater stewardship of the marine environment;

3. We call upon all nations of the world to cooperate in halting illegal practices on the sea, including piracy and hijacking, to preserve the ocean as a safe and effective transportation network linking the global community;

4. We call for concerted international efforts to undertake “integrated ecosystem-based management” of marine resources, particularly global fish stocks, to manage them in a sustainable manner for the benefit of all humankind;

5. We call for the overall scientific community to enhance our understanding of the ocean through expanded real-time ocean observing systems to provide resource managers and policymakers with timely and reliable data, enabling rapid responses to the impacts of climate change and natural disasters such as tsunamis;

6. We look towards the ocean as a new engine of sustainable economic growth, in the light of the gradual depletion of many land-based resources and the food security concerns of a growing global population. We call upon all nations to increase investment in advanced science and technologies and innovative industries that use marine resources and renewable energy in an environmentally friendly manner for the prosperity of all humankind;

7. We call for increased assistance to developing nations, including small island developing States, in addressing their ocean-related concerns and sustainably utilizing their marine resources through development assistance and investment, and international cooperation projects;

8. In this regard, we welcome the Yeosu Project, aimed at providing developing nations with capacity-building support on ocean-related issues through professional training and technology transfer, as an important legacy of the International Exposition Yeosu, Republic of Korea 2012;

9. We also welcome the launch of the Oceans Compact by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, aimed at strengthening the capacity of the United Nations system to act in a coordinated manner in delivering its ocean-related mandates, with a view to achieving the goal of “Healthy oceans for prosperity”;

10. In the spirit of this Declaration to provide the world with a new vision of “green growth from the sea”, we call upon all Governments and civil society to work together in achieving our common goals for the ocean.