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Preparatory Committee established by General Assembly resolution 69/292: Development of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction - First session

Agenda item 6: Informal working group on marine genetic resources, including questions on the sharing of benefits

**Statement by Mr. Jeem Lippwe
Deputy Permanent Representative**

New York, 27 March 2017

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Madame Facilitator, thank you for the opportunity to speak.

Micronesia reiterates the view expressed by several delegations to this preparatory committee with respect to the common heritage of mankind. Indeed, the marine genetic resources of the areas beyond national jurisdiction are resources that are for the benefit of all humankind around the world. They are not resources exclusively for a particular nation or a few nations—not even reserved to only those with superior capacity to explore and exploit these resources. Micronesia is of the view that *common heritage of mankind* means that all nations shall observe and respect equitable and meaningful sharing mechanism in the conservation and use of these valuable resources. Moreover, these resources are not only for the present generation but for future generations as well.

Micronesia wishes to express the view that a BBNJ instrument must be carefully crafted because the “freedom of the high seas” is not absolute. Rather, this freedom of the high seas is with due regard for the interests of other states in the exercise of the same freedom, and it is also subject to the duty to cooperate in the conservation and management of the living resources in the high seas.

Consequently, we cannot support the proposal by South Africa splitting BBNJ between the Area and the High Seas into two separate regimes.

Thank you.