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 - Fourth session

Plenary

Statement by the Micronesian delegation

New York, 14 July 2017   <u>**Check against delivery**</u>

Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

I have the honour to deliver these remarks on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum members.

Let me begin by thanking you, Ambassador Duarte, for all your efforts over the course of the third and fourth sessions of the Preparatory Committee. We offer our congratulations and our appreciation on the adoption of the substantive recommendations which will now be reported to the General Assembly.

The geographic configuration of the Pacific Islands Forum members makes the BBNJ implementing agreement a necessity for us. A number of important points that the members of the Pacific Islands Forum have advocated for are reflected in the document. While we would have hoped for some of them to be featured more prominently, we do express our appreciation to the Preparatory Committee for including them in the substantive recommendations.

The members of the Pacific Islands Forum will be pleased to take these recommendations forward and will continue to engage constructively with all delegations in the process towards a future BBNJ implementing agreement. We think we have achieved an important milestone today but more work lies ahead. The process now moves back to the General Assembly in order to mandate the Intergovernmental Conference.

Mr. Chair, we are looking forward to the convening of the Intergovernmental Conference in 2018.

Thank you.