

## New Zealand Statement

Thank you Madam Chair, and a warm evening to you all from the late hours of New Zealand. The next few days present to us all the important task to find ways of transposing the recommendations annexed to resolution 73-333 into a Political Declaration. New Zealand supports those aspects of Switzerland's intervention that called for a lean and efficient process and we wish to make the following additional comments.

The content of the recommendations will be intimately familiar to many of us, having undergone a process of negotiation in the working group last year. That process was a thorough discussion in which we reached a carefully negotiated outcome that has been endorsed by the General Assembly through 73-333.

It is important that we stick to the mandate of this resolution in drafting a Political Declaration rather than opening discussions on additional elements that fall outside of the recommendations annexed to 73-333. And we think it will be important to avoid reopening discussions that were exhausted in the previous working group.

New Zealand is a strong supporter of international cooperation to enhance environmental protection, and of the important role that the body of international environmental law plays in that respect. It is important that this Declaration both recognises and supports the existing framework of international environmental law.

New Zealand recognises the unique and difficult circumstances facing the world with the outbreak of COVID-19. A political spotlight on environmental law and principles, through this declaration, is timely, bearing in mind the need to address global environmental challenges to "build back better" from the COVID-19 crisis.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the range of participants on this call – many of whom will also be dialling into this at unsociable hours of the day. We welcome further work on enhancing participation and inclusivity for members who are unable to dial into these sessions. Thank you.