

Country Statement – ROK

Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Republic of Korea attaches great importance to conserving and managing fish stocks and has participated in the global fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. On the occasion of this event, let me share some of Korea's recent efforts.

The Korean Government has strengthened its measures to combat IUU fishing. It has intensified efforts to eradicate IUU fishing by reinforcing Korea's legal system, by strengthening monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) on fishing vessels and by raising public awareness about IUU fishing.

Recently, the ROK amended the 'Distant Water Fisheries Development Act' to improve the level of sanctions on IUU fishing. Under this revised act, new penalties – imprisonment of up to 3 years or a criminal fine of up to three times the potential gain from illegal catches – have been introduced, and the duration of suspension on distant water fishing / officer's licenses has been extended. Legal grounds have been laid to provide financial disincentives to non-compliant distant water fisheries operator, and Port State Inspections have been strengthened. All Korean-flagged distant water

fishing vessels are required by law to have a functioning Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) on board. The Regulation for the Operation of the Fisheries Monitoring Center was established and took effect in January 2014.

Moreover, Korea has been enhancing monitoring, control and surveillance on Korean fishing vessels. The Korean government encouraged the early installation of Vessel Monitoring System on distant water fishing vessels, and as of March 20, 2014, all Korean-flagged distant water fishing vessels have a VMS on board. The Fisheries Monitoring Center (FMC) was open on March 28, 2014, thereby operating an early warning system for IUU fishing operations in order to preemptively address IUU fishing.

Furthermore, Korea has made a lot of efforts to enhance the awareness of distant water fisheries operators on IUU fishing through various education programs. For example, a textbook on IUU-prevention and a video tutorial was developed on January 17, 2014, and an IUU-related course will be included in four mandatory courses for distant water fishers. In addition, guidelines and leaflets on IUU-prevention will be developed for distribution amongst distant water fisheries operators and crew.

The Korean government will continue to make its efforts and strengthen the cooperation with other countries in order to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing.

Thank you. /End/