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## COUNCIL

### Hundred and Fifty-fifth Session

Rome, 5-9 December 2016

### International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing

#### Executive Summary

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Committee on Fisheries endorsed the proposal for the Declaration of the International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, taking into account the entry into force, on 5 June 2016, of the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, adopted by FAO in 2009. As the entry into force of this agreement marks an historical event, in that it is the first international legally-binding instrument specifically devoted to the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, the Committee recognized the importance of a specific initiative within the framework of FAO to raise awareness at all levels, including civil society and general public, on the threats posed by this phenomenon to the conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources.

#### Suggested action by Council

The Council is invited to:

- a) Review the proposal to establish observance of 5 June as the International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (ID-IUU), and provide guidance as deemed appropriate;
- b) Submit the proposed draft Conference resolution to the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO Conference (July 2017) for approval.

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1. The 32<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Committee on Fisheries endorsed the proposal for the Declaration of the International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing<sup>1</sup>, taking into account the existing FAO policy on the proclamation and implementation of international days, and acknowledging that this proposal needed to be further considered by all relevant FAO Governing Bodies.
2. In the context of the discussions on the implementation of the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA), the 32<sup>nd</sup> Session of COFI welcomed the entry into force of this legally-binding instrument on 5 June 2016. Also, the Committee noted that this instrument is the first one specifically devoted to the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and its entry into force now provides for a unique opportunity to progressively eradicate this scourge, consistent with global commitments under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14<sup>2</sup>.
3. There is a pressing need to raise awareness on the threats associated to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities, including but not limited to the conservation and sustainable use of fisheries. FAO, as the United Nations Specialized Agency competent in this area, has to promote efforts to draw widespread attention on the efforts being made to fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. The celebration of the ID-IUU on the very day of the entry into force of the PSMA is expected to provide an occasion to give visibility to ongoing initiatives in the context of the implementation of this agreement and, more generally speaking, to any initiative that countries, organizations, including civil society organizations, and the private sector are promoting.
4. The draft resolution is being submitted to the 155<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council for its consideration and endorsement, with a view to forwarding it to the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference in July 2017 for approval. The draft resolution, set out in *Appendix A*, has been elaborated in consultation with regional groups.

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<sup>1</sup> COFI/2016/5 Rev.1.

<sup>2</sup> The following target is set under United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14.4: "By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics".

**Appendix A****Draft Conference Resolution****The Conference,**

**Noting** that fishing and aquaculture are human activities that provide high quality food, social and economic benefits, and contribute to nutrition and food security, poverty reduction and rural development;

**Recognizing the importance** of the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the world's oceans and their resources;

**Deeply concerned** that illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing continues to pose a serious threat to the long-term conservation and sustainable use of such resources;

**Acknowledging** the strenuous efforts by FAO to fight illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing towards sustainable use of fisheries resources in the context of food security and eradication of hunger, thereby contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2 and 14;

**Welcoming** the entry into force on 5 June 2016 of the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, approved by the FAO Conference at its Thirty-sixth Session (Rome, 18-23 November 2009) under paragraph 1 of Article XIV of the FAO Constitution;

**Calling upon** governments to ratify the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing and to commit to its effective implementation;

**Affirming** the urgent need of raising public and government awareness on the threats posed by illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing activities to the sustainable use of fisheries resources as well as on ongoing efforts to fight these activities, with particular attention to the negative impacts on the economies of developing countries dependent on fisheries resources;

**Recalling** the 32<sup>nd</sup> Session of FAO Committee on Fisheries endorsement of the proposed "International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing";

**Taking note** of the 2016 resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on "Sustainable fisheries, including through the 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, and related instruments" which welcomes the endorsement by the Committee on Fisheries of the proposed International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing while encouraging the Food and Agriculture Organization to take further action in this regard;

**Requests** the Director-General to transmit this resolution to the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a view to having the General Assembly of the United Nations consider declaring 5 June as the International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.