

Statement by the Republic of the Philippines

Agenda Item 9: Combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing

34th Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries, 1-5 February 2021

At the outset, the Philippines appreciates the Secretariat's comprehensive report on this agenda item. We wish to focus our intervention on the complementation of national actions and FAO's ongoing initiatives to strengthen developing States' capacity to fulfill their port, flag, coastal and market responsibilities and support the implementation of the PSMA and related international instruments to combat IUU fishing.

In this light, we are pleased to share some of the major steps and measures undertaken by the Philippines in demonstrating its strong commitment to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing, as follows:

- Amended the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998, to enhance the policy framework and address the threats of IUU fishing to food security and the livelihoods of coastal communities dependent on its vast fishery resources, through the passing into law of Republic Act 10654 known as "An Act to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing" in 2017.
- Embarked on the Integrated Marine Environment Monitoring System (IMEMS) Project from 2018-2021, which is on progress to complete key components such as the ongoing upgrade of the Vessel Monitoring System.
- Ratified the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures and the 1993 FAO Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas. For the Philippines, the said agreements have entered into force on 26 May 2018 and on 30 May 2018, respectively.
- Actively engaged in the ongoing WTO negotiations on disciplines that prohibit certain forms of subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing and to eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing, while ensuring the consideration of the special needs of developing and least-developed countries.

Finally, we would like to express appreciation for the PSMA Implementation Support Project of FAO with the Philippine Department of Agriculture and its Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources since 2019, aimed at strengthening the policy and legislative frameworks to combat IUU fishing, as well as enhancing the national capacity to carry out Monitoring, Control and Surveillance through port state measures.

Thank you.