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DECLARATION OF MADRID

The representatives of the countries participating in the High-Level Meeting held in Madrid on 4 October 2021, on the 30th anniversary of the signature of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty (Madrid Protocol), recognise the importance of the Protocol as an integral part of the Antarctic Treaty System and global environmental conservation, setting an example for international standards and note and support the recent declarations adopted during the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings held in Santiago 2016 and Paris 2021 which emphasise this importance.

Recognize that the international cooperation at all levels and the scientific basis for decisions, which are taken by consensus, guide the responsible management of Antarctica. Scientific activity shared among the Parties has resulted in much better understanding of the functioning of Antarctica and its environmental protection needs and its role in the global climate system.

The Protocol has played a fundamental role in maintaining Antarctica as a natural reserve dedicated to peace and science, but we must work closely together to overcome the new challenges faced by this continent. As such, future efforts should take into account the importance of the following:

Peaceful use. Antarctica is a natural reserve devoted to peace and science, where measures of a military nature are prohibited, and military personnel and equipment may be used only for scientific research or other peaceful purposes.

Importance of inter- and multidisciplinary scientific research, the monitoring of ecosystems, and the exchange of scientific information. In order to generate the greatest scientific knowledge and therefore anticipate and prevent environmental damage before they occur, in accordance with a precautionary approach informed by the best available science.

Urgency of combatting climate change. Given our concern for the profound and often irreversible impacts of climate change, we stress the need to work in an active and coordinated manner to undertake initiatives intended to mitigate and adapt, in order to lessen the effects of climate change and the impacts of human activities, occurring in Antarctica and surrounding waters within the CCAMLR Convention area.

Ensuring that the planning and conduct of all activities in Antarctica considers protection of the Antarctic environment and dependent and associated ecosystems.

Responsibility and accountability. Importance of performing environmental impact assessments in the planning and conduct of activities so as to limit adverse impacts on the Antarctic Environment and its dependent and associated ecosystems.

The need to increase biodiversity-protection initiatives, paying particular attention to the conservation and protection of wildlife, marine biological diversity, the functioning of Antarctic ecosystems and the further elaboration of the Antarctic Protected Areas System.

Encouraging further progress to implement the long-standing commitment of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) based on the best available scientific evidence, recognizing that Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) can serve as a powerful tool for protecting sensitive ecosystems representative of the Convention Area.

Commitment to reinforcing international cooperation between Protocol Parties, with the aim of overcoming the environmental challenges faced by Antarctica, and enhancing its value as a nature reserve for future generations, including by maintaining the prohibition contained in Article 7 of the Protocol regarding any activity relating to mineral resources, other than scientific research.

Underscore and support the important work of the Committee for Environmental Protection in providing advice and recommendations to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings on the implementation of the Environmental Protocol.

The Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty has served the Antarctic Treaty system well as its environmental pillar for the last 30 years. We believe that it will and should continue to play a pivotal role in the future management of Antarctica on the basis of its comprehensiveness, its knowledge- and ecosystem-based approach to management, its holistic approach to both terrestrial and marine environments and its call for international cooperation and collaboration to that end.