

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Saint Kitts and Nevis



PRESS RELEASE

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First Session of Preparatory Commission for the Entry into Force of BBNJ Convened at UN Headquarters

Basseterre, Saint Kitts, (22 April, 2025) - The First Session of the Preparatory Commission for the Entry into Force of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) and the Convening of the First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Agreement is being held at the UN Headquarters in New York, from April 14-25, 2025.

Saint Kitts and Nevis is represented at these important discussions by H.E. Dr. Mutryce Williams, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ms. Maritza Queeley, National BBNJ Focal Point and Port State Control Officer in the Department of Marine Resources and Mrs. Sonia Boddie-Thompson, Counsellor and Sixth Committee (Legal) expert, at the Permanent Mission of Saint Kitts and Nevis to the United Nations.

The delegation forms part of a wider CARICOM delegation that is actively participating in the deliberations, given the mandate entrusted by the Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR) in 2016, for the region to negotiate as a block on this critical subject matter. CARICOM hosted a Regional BBNJ Preparatory Workshop in Miami,

April 2-4, 2025, to facilitate the strategic preparation and coordination of the region's priorities and positions, for meaningful and effective engagement at the First Session of the Preparatory Commission. CARICOM must be praised for its continued provision of substantive technical support to delegations throughout the BBNJ process, of which Saint Kitts and Nevis have participated and benefitted significantly.

The BBNJ Agreement was adopted on 19 June 2023, with the main objective of facilitating the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond National Jurisdiction for present and long-term use. Additionally, through effective implementation of relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and further international cooperation and Coordination, our ocean can thrive.

The Agreement is open for signature by all states and regional economic integration organizations from September 20, 2023, to September 20, 2025, and will enter into force 120 days after the date of deposit of the sixteenth instrument of ratification, approval, acceptance or accession. Saint Kitts and Nevis is actively preparing to ratify the BBNJ Agreement.
