

Opening Statement by India at the 67th Biennial meeting of International Whaling Commission held in Florianopolis, Brazil from 5 to 14 September, 2018

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of Government of India, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Secretariat of International Whaling Commission for hosting the 67th biennial meeting in the picturesque and vibrant city of Florianopolis.

As a member of the International Whaling Commission, India has always been favouring efforts of nations in conservation of Whales and has been supportive of the need for conducting scientific studies to avoid unsustainable whaling. India considers International Whaling Commission as a key tool for the conservation and management of whales, their sanctuaries in the world and able to enforce moratorium on whale killing. Few whale species are highly threatened and it would be in the interest of conservation that the nations come forward to accrue economic benefits through more cogent and sustainable means like whale watching tourism rather than unsustainable killing.

Mr Chairman, India notes with appreciation the significant work taken up by the different Committees constituted under the IWC, mainly towards conservation of whales and its habitats through out its range.

India wishes to reiterate its commitment towards the conservation of the cetacean species and considering this, India has enacted a strong legislation, namely, the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, which accords all the Cetacean species, the highest degree of protection from hunting.

Mr. Chairman, India would also like to place on record its highest appreciation to the Secretariat of the International Whaling Commission that has been playing a pivotal role in bringing all the stakeholders and Contracting Governments to one platform through negotiations and peaceful dialogue with a view to maintain the Convention's healthy atmosphere of constructive dialogue.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Whaling Commissioner for India for the 67th Meeting.