Good morning Mr Chair and distinguished delegates.

The IMO Secretariat is pleased to provide SBSTA 48 with an update on recent action by the International Maritime Organization to further limit or reduce emissions from fuels used for international maritime transport.

Earlier this month, the seventy-second session of IMO’s Marine Environment Protection Committee, adopted by resolution the Initial IMO Strategy on reduction of GHG emissions from ships.

This “Initial Strategy” represents a framework for further action, setting out a future vision for international shipping, identifies levels of ambition to reduce GHG emissions with their guiding principles; includes a list of candidate short, mid- and long-term further measures, with possible timelines, and that impacts on States of a measure should be assessed and taken into account as appropriate before adoption of the measure. The initial strategy also identifies barriers and supportive measures including capacity building, technical cooperation and research and development.

The “Vision” set out in the strategy confirms IMO’s commitment to reducing GHG emissions from international shipping and, as a matter of urgency, to phasing them out as soon as possible in this century.

The Initial Strategy envisions a reduction in total GHG emissions from international shipping which, it says, should peak as soon as possible and to reduce the total annual GHG emissions by at least 50% by 2050 compared to 2008, while, at the same time, pursuing efforts towards phasing them out as called for in the Vision as a point on a pathway of CO₂ emissions reduction consistent with the Paris Agreement temperature goals.

Following its adoption, Mr. Kitack Lim, the IMO Secretary-General, noted the Initial Strategy was another successful illustration of the renowned IMO spirit of cooperation and would allow future IMO work to be rooted in a solid basis. Mr. Lim presented the outcome as “the result of fruitful negotiations involving many Member States with a variety of shared and different interests to find a compromise solution that represents a strong middle ground”.

Meanwhile, further progress has been made on related matters including entry into force of mandatory requirements for the collection and reporting of ship fuel oil
consumption data and the official launch of the Global Maritime Technology Cooperation Centres (MTCC) Network.

Further details, including the text of the Initial Strategy, can be found in our submission to this session.