

Madam Chair,  
Excellencies,  
representatives from permanent missions and international organizations,  
partners,  
colleagues,  
ladies and gentlemen,

Dear participants,

- This year, 2022, presents a unique opportunity to address the main challenges the oceans face:
  - This summer, the UN Oceans Conference provides a critical opportunity to mobilize partnerships and increase investment in science-driven approaches. It will also be the time for governments, industries, and civil society to join forces and take action;
  - This is the international year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture, which is an important recognition of the millions of small-scale fishers, fish farmers and fish workers who provide healthy and nutritious food to billions of people and contribute to achieving Zero Hunger; and
  - In June, the 12<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference will take place in Geneva and Members are very close to reaching an agreement on fisheries subsidies. The goal is to eliminate subsidies for illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing and prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, with special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries.
- FAO has been providing technical support to the WTO negotiation process whenever requested by WTO or countries. This technical support basically addresses the three “fish pillars” of the negotiation process: IUU fishing, overfishing and overfished stocks, and overcapacity.
- Economic market failures such as harmful fisheries subsidies and unnecessary non-tariff barriers, non-compliance with basic social parameters, and asymmetries in information dissemination create problems in allowing for a proper appropriation of benefits to all participants in the fisheries value chain.
- At the same time, fisheries and aquaculture production is a concrete example of how an integrated sector with diverse participants is fundamental in terms of social and economic development, including food security issues. Developing countries represent a significant group as suppliers of maritime goods. This sector has a high incidence of women employment. Furthermore, the sector is dominated by products originating from small-scale producers. Promoting decent work in the fisheries and aquaculture sector is critical to addressing structural and ongoing problems while improving trade opportunities, livelihoods and food security. It also contributes to the achievement of the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs.
- Millions of people depend on the sector as a source of employment, income, and livelihood. In 2018, more than 59 million people were involved in the primary sector of

fisheries and aquaculture activities. At the request of its Members, FAO is developing a pragmatic guidance for the private sector in order to facilitate compliance with existent instruments involving social responsibility in the fisheries and aquaculture value chains.

- Madam Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, the world must jointly face these challenges at the multilateral level. We must not lose sight of the ultimate goal: managing the world's oceans in an environmental, social, and economically sustainable way. Only if this generation succeeds in delivering on these objectives will future generations also be able to benefit from the immense resources of our oceans.
- I can assure you that FAO stands ready to support its Members, and work in a concerted manner with other UN, and other multilateral organizations, in order to achieve sustainability in the maritime value chain. Concretely, FAO can provide technical support and capacity building in the areas associated with fisheries themes, in order to create a sustainable production leading to better income distribution, more participation of developing countries in this important international trade flow, fair working conditions and sustainable development of the sector.

Thank you for your attention and I wish you a successful meeting.