

UNITED NATIONS



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MESSAGE

**Briefing on the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of
Sustainable Development Goal 14: The Trade and Development Perspective
16 January 2017, Geneva**

I wish to thank UNCTAD for organizing the briefing on the preparations for the high-level United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 in Geneva.

I want to take this opportunity to reiterate our deep appreciation to UNCTAD for its steadfast support to the Ocean Conference and its preparatory process.

Oceans, seas and coastal areas form an integrated and essential component of the Earth's ecosystem and are critical to sustainable development.

Oceans contribute to poverty eradication by providing opportunities for sustainable livelihoods and employment. Oceans are crucial for global food security and human health. They are also the primary regulator of the global climate.

Despite their importance, oceans, seas and marine resources are increasingly threatened, degraded or destroyed by human activities, reducing their ability to provide crucial ecosystem services.

In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UN Member States responded to the ocean crisis by committing themselves to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources and adopting Sustainable Development Goal 14 and its associated targets.

In further follow-up action, the General Assembly decided to convene the UN Conference to Support the Implementation of SDG 14 at UN Headquarters in New York, from 5 to 9 June 2017. The Conference will be co-hosted by the Governments of Fiji and Sweden.

The overarching theme of the Conference is “Our oceans, our future: partnering for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14”.

The Conference will be a great opportunity for Member States and stakeholders to assess challenges, identify opportunities and actions, as well as to strengthen partnerships to advance the implementation of SDG 14.

The outcome of the Conference will consist of a concise, focused, intergovernmentally agreed declaration in the form of a “Call for Action”, a report containing the Co-Chairs’ summaries of the partnership dialogues, as well as a list of voluntary commitments for the implementation of Goal 14.

The President of the General Assembly will convene a preparatory meeting on 15 and 16 February 2017 in New York. It will be co-chaired by the two co-facilitators, H.E. Mr. Álvaro Mendonçae Moura, Permanent Representative of Portugal to the UN, and H.E. Mr. Burhan Gafoor, Permanent Representative of Singapore to the UN. The meeting will consider the themes of the partnership dialogues, as well as the elements of a “Call for Action”. The preparatory meeting will be informed by the Secretary-General’s background note. Based on the deliberations at the preparatory meeting and other inputs, the co-facilitators will present a concise draft “Call for Action” in March 2017. The intergovernmental consultations on the “Call for Action” will be concluded by May 2017.

The United Nations Secretariat, including UNCTAD, stands ready to offer any kind of support required for the Conference. I am confident that under the leadership of the Governments of Fiji and Sweden, the President of the General Assembly and the two co-facilitators, and with great support from Member States and all stakeholders, the Conference will be a great success in bringing about solutions and concrete actions in the implementation of SDG 14.

Thank you.
