



THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

10 April 2017

Excellency,

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/303 on the modalities for the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, I have the honour to enclose herewith, the letter of the co-facilitators of the preparatory process, H.E. Mr. Álvaro Mendonça e Moura, Permanent Representative of Portugal and H.E. Mr. Burhan Gafoor, Permanent Representative of Singapore, attaching the revised 'zero draft' of the Call for Action, following the first round of consultations held from 20 to 22 March 2017. The next round of consultations will be held on the 24, 25 and 27 April 2017 in the Trusteeship Council Chamber.

I encourage your positive and constructive engagement at the next round of consultations.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Thomson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Peter Thomson

All Permanent Representatives  
and Permanent Observers  
to the United Nations  
New York



New York, 7 April 2017

Excellency,

We are pleased to write to you in our capacity as co-facilitators appointed by the President of the General Assembly to oversee the preparatory process and to conclude the intergovernmental consultations on a “Call for Action” for the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

In our letter dated 9 March 2017, we enclosed a “zero draft” of the “Call for Action”. This was the basis for our first round of consultations in March 2017. The consultations were very constructive and fruitful and we thank delegations for their active participation at the meeting.

Taking into consideration the views we heard during the meeting and bearing in mind the strong signal from delegations that the document should remain concise, focussed and action-oriented, we have prepared a revised draft “Call for Action”, which is enclosed.

This revised draft will be discussed during the second round of consultations to be held on Monday, 24 April 2017, Tuesday, 25 April 2017 and Thursday, 27 April 2017 from 10:00am to 1:00pm and 3:00pm to 6:00pm. The venue will be the Trusteeship Council Chamber.

We look forward to delegations once again engaging actively and constructively.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Alvaro Mendonca Moura  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative  
of Portugal to the United Nations

Burhan Gafoor  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative  
of Singapore to the United Nations

## **OUR OCEAN, OUR FUTURE: CALL FOR ACTION**

1. We, the Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives, meeting at the first United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 of the 2030 Agenda, with the full participation of civil society and other relevant stakeholders, affirm our strong commitment to conserve and sustainably use our oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
2. We are mobilised by a strong conviction that our ocean is critical to our shared future and common humanity in all its diversity. As responsible stakeholders, we are determined to act decisively and urgently, convinced that our collective action will make a meaningful difference to our people, to our planet, and to our prosperity.
3. We recognise that our ocean covers three quarters of our planet, connects our populations and markets, and forms an important part of our heritage and culture. It supplies half the oxygen we breathe, absorbs a third of the carbon dioxide we produce, and plays a vital role in the water cycle. It contributes to sustainable development and sustainable ocean-based economies, as well as to poverty eradication, food security and nutrition, and livelihoods.
4. We are particularly alarmed by the adverse impacts of climate change on the ocean, including the rise in ocean temperatures, ocean acidification, deoxygenation, and sea-level rise. We acknowledge the need to address the adverse impacts that impair the crucial role of the ocean as climate regulator, carbon sink, source of marine biodiversity, and as key provider of food and nutrition, ecosystem services, maritime trade and transportation, and as an engine for sustainable economic development and growth.
5. We are committed to halting and reversing the decline in the health and productivity of our ocean and to protecting and restoring its resilience. We recognise that the well-being of present and future generations is inextricably linked to the health and productivity of our ocean.
6. We reaffirm our commitment to achieve the targets of Goal 14 within the timelines. We also affirm our commitment to continue to take action beyond those dates, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities.
7. We underline the integrated and indivisible character of all Sustainable Development Goals under the 2030 Agenda, as well as the interlinkages and synergies between them.
8. We stress the need for an integrated, interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach as well as enhanced cooperation, coordination, and policy coherence, at all levels. We emphasise the critical importance of effective partnerships enabling collective action, to reverse the decline in the health of our ocean and its ecosystems, and to protect and restore their resilience and productivity. We reaffirm our commitment to the implementation of Goal 14 with the full participation of all relevant stakeholders.
9. We underline the need to integrate Goal 14 into national development plans and strategies, and to promote national ownership and leadership and success in the implementation of Goal 14 by involving all stakeholders, including local authorities and communities, indigenous peoples, women and youth, as well as business and industry.
10. We recognise the crucial role of women in the conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
11. We stress the importance of enhancing understanding of the health and role of our ocean, including through assessments on the state of the ocean, science and traditional knowledge, as well as the need to further increase marine scientific research to inform and support decision-making, and to promote knowledge hubs and networks to enhance the sharing of scientific data, and best practices.
12. We emphasise that our actions to implement Goal 14 should be in accordance with, reinforce and not duplicate or undermine, existing legal instruments, arrangements, processes, mechanisms, or entities. We affirm



the need to be consistent with international law, as reflected in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea which provides the legal framework for all the activities in the oceans and seas.

13. We recognise that the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean and its resources require the necessary means of implementation in line with the 2030 Agenda, Addis Ababa Action Agenda and other relevant outcomes, including the enhanced capacity building and the transfer of knowledge and environmentally-sound marine technology to developing countries on mutually agreed terms.

14. We call on all stakeholders to work in concert to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development by taking, *inter alia*, the following actions on an urgent basis, including by building on existing institutions and partnerships:

- (a) Approach the implementation of Goal 14 in an integrated and coordinated way and promote policies and actions that take into account the critical interlinkages among the targets of Goal 14, the potential synergies between Goal 14 and the other goals, particularly those with ocean-related targets, as well as other processes that support the implementation of Goal 14.
- (b) Strengthen cooperation, policy coherence and coordination amongst institutions at all levels, including between and amongst international organisations, regional organisations, arrangements and programmes, as well as national and local authorities.
- (c) Promote effective multi-stakeholder partnerships, including public-private partnerships, by enhancing engagement of governments with global and regional bodies and programmes, the scientific community, the private sector, donor community, non-governmental organisations, community groups, academic institutions, and other relevant actors.
- (d) Develop comprehensive strategies to raise awareness of the natural and cultural significance of the ocean, as well as of its state and role, and of the need to further improve the knowledge of the ocean, including its importance for sustainable development and how it is impacted by anthropogenic activities.
- (e) Support plans to foster ocean-related education, for example as part of education curricula, to promote ocean literacy and a culture of conservation, restoration and sustainable use of our ocean.
- (f) Dedicate greater resources to marine scientific research, as well as the collection and sharing of data and knowledge, including traditional knowledge, in order to increase knowledge of the ocean, including to better understand the relationship between climate and the health and productivity of the ocean, and to promote decision-making based on the best available science, to encourage scientific and technological innovation, as well as to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries in particular small island developing States and least developed countries.
- (g) Accelerate actions to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, including marine debris, nutrient pollution, untreated wastewater, solid waste discharges, hazardous substances, pollution from ships, abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear, and plastics and microplastics.
- (h) Develop sustainable consumption and production patterns, adopt the 3Rs – reduce, reuse and recycle – including through incentivising market-based solutions to reduce waste and its generation, improving mechanisms for environmentally-sound waste management, disposal and recycling, and developing alternatives such as reusable or recyclable products, or products biodegradable under natural conditions.
- (i) Implement long-term strategies to reduce the use of plastics, particularly plastic bags, single use plastics and the use of primary microplastic particles in products, including by partnering with stakeholders at relevant levels to address their production and use.
- (j) Strengthen the use of effective area-based management tools, including marine protected areas and other integrated, cross-sectoral approaches, consistent with international law and in accordance with national legislation, including marine spatial planning and integrated coastal zone management, based on best available science and the precautionary and ecosystem approaches, to enhance ocean resilience and better conserve and sustainably use marine biodiversity.

- (k) Develop and implement effective adaptation and mitigation measures that contribute to increasing and supporting resilience to ocean acidification, sea-level rise, and to addressing the other harmful impacts of climate change on the ocean as well as coastal ecosystems such as mangroves, tidal marshes, seagrass, and coral reefs, and ensure the implementation of the relevant obligations and commitments.
  - (l) Enhance sustainable fisheries management through the implementation of science-based management measures, precautionary and ecosystem approaches, monitoring, control and enforcement, and strengthening cooperation and coordination including through, as appropriate, regional fisheries management organisations and arrangements.
  - (m) End destructive fishing practices and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, addressing their root causes and holding actors accountable by taking appropriate actions, so as to deprive them of benefits of such activities, and effectively implementing flag State obligations as well as our port State obligations.
  - (n) Accelerate further work and strengthen cooperation and coordination on the development of inter-operational systems for catch documentation and traceability of fish products.
  - (o) Strengthen capacity building and technical assistance provided to small-scale artisanal fishers, to enable their access to marine resources and markets without increasing pressure on fisheries and improve the socio-economic situation of fishers and fish workers within the context of sustainable fisheries management.
  - (p) Act decisively to prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, including by completing the ongoing negotiations in the World Trade Organization on this issue without further delay, recognising that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of those negotiations.
  - (q) Support the promotion and strengthening of sustainable ocean-based economies, which inter alia build on sustainable fisheries, tourism, aquaculture, maritime transportation, renewable energies, marine biotechnology, as means to achieve the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, in particular for small island developing States and least developed countries.
  - (r) Increase efforts to mobilise the means necessary for the development of sustainable ocean-related activities and the implementation of Goal 14, particularly in developing countries, in line with the 2030 Agenda, Addis Ababa Action Agenda and other relevant outcomes.
  - (s) Actively engage in discussions and the exchange of views, in the Preparatory Committee established by General Assembly Resolution 69/292, on the development of an international legally binding instrument under the Convention on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, so that the General Assembly can, before the end of its seventy-second session, decide on the convening and on the starting date of an intergovernmental conference.
  - (t) Commit to follow-up on the partnership dialogues and to implement the voluntary commitments we have made in the context of the Conference.
  - (u) Contribute to the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda by submitting the results from the Conference as an input to the high-level political forum on sustainable development.
  - (v) Consider further ways and means to support the timely and effective implementation of Goal 14.
15. We call upon the UN Secretary-General to support the implementation of the actions pledged in this document, including by enhancing coordination and coherence among UN agencies and other relevant entities dealing with the issue of oceans, seas and marine resources.

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