



**Statement by the Republic of Maldives
on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States
at the Preparatory Meeting of 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**

15 February 2017

Distinguished Co-facilitators, Excellencies, Colleagues,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Alliance and Small Island States, AOSIS. We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We once again thank the co-facilitators for providing this platform to exchange views on how we envision the Call for Action and applaud you for the inclusive and transparent manner in which you are conducting these deliberations.

Co-facilitators,

The Call for Action must be concise, action oriented and must serve as a testament to the political will of the global community to achieving SDG 14. This means that we must focus on the concrete and actionable activities that could be undertaken.

This said, we must also be mindful of the principle that the SDGs are to be nationally implemented and therefore any call for action should inherently be respectful of national ownership of the implementation process.

Co-facilitators,

Given the fact that the geography of small island states is composed largely of oceans, and taking into account the intrinsic economic, social and cultural ties that we have with the ocean, we believe it is crucial for the Call for Action to reflect a number of elements.

First, it should reflect the special circumstances of SIDS when it comes to conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, underscoring the unique and particular vulnerabilities of SIDS in managing these natural assets.

It should also emphasize the need for capacity building and transfer of technology to small islands, and also highlight the necessity to mobilize sufficient means of implementation when it comes to achieving the targets for SDG 14.

On capacity building we should include a call to enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, particularly least developed countries and small island developing States, in order to improve the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data to support reporting on Goal 14 and the 2030 agenda more broadly.

Similarly, it should include a call to enhance investment in science and research in order to better understand the state of our oceans.

SIDS are at the forefront of facing marine pollution and ocean acidification, and we see the Call for Action as a critical opportunity to demonstrate our strong collective political commitment to addressing these issues.

More specifically, we envision the Call for Action including a call to enhance local, national and regional capacity to effectively implement international obligations in the context of building marine resilience to ocean acidification, including for effective monitoring, reporting and compliance measures.

Additionally, it should include a call for sustainable and predictable support for efforts that aim at enhancing the resilience of the oceans, especially in areas of particular importance for biodiversity, ecosystem services and areas that are sensitive to ocean acidification, such as coral reefs.

Co-facilitators,

The Call for Action, should also reflect on the voluntary commitments that will emanate from the Conference, with a view to providing a platform for these commitments as a signal of our collective commitment to SDG14.

Lastly, it may be prudent to include a reference to other relevant UN oceans processes in order to reflect our collective political will on oceans issues across the work of the United Nations.

Co-facilitators,

We are excited to begin this conversation and remain keen to hear from others. Rest assured, Co-facilitators and other colleagues, the success of the Oceans Conference is one that is vital to the sustainable development of small island states. To that end, we remain committed to having an open and constructive dialogue and look forward to engaging with colleagues at this session.

I thank you.
