



PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE KINGDOM OF TONGA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Mahe 'U. S. Tupouniua,
Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Tonga to the United Nations
At the Preparatory Meeting to the Oceans Conference
Themes for the Partnership Dialogues**

New York, CR4, UNHQ, Wednesday, 15th February 2017

Co-Facilitators,

Thank you for giving me the floor and please be assured of my delegation's full support.

We align ourselves with the statements delivered by Nauru on behalf of PSIDS, Federated States of Micronesia on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum, Maldives on behalf of AOSIS, and Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Co-Facilitators,

My delegation welcomes the convening of the Oceans Conference and commends the Secretary-General for his background note. We regard the seven proposed Partnership Dialogue themes as equally important as they speak to 3 of Tonga's key national interests on the ocean, namely 1) the conservation of the marine environment and its biodiversity; 2), the environmental, economic, and social benefits derived from the ocean; and 3), the all important means to achieve the first 2 key interests I have just mentioned, through the building of capacity, strengthening of institutions, transfer of technology, and the rule of law. Importantly also, these themes embrace critical issues in implementing SDG14, including interlinkages with other SDGs in particular SDG13 on climate change.

Co-Facilitators,

Partnerships are invaluable to Tonga as a small island developing State in the Pacific as various efforts and initiatives have been made possible due to the genuine and durable commitments of our partners, which encompass a broad range of stakeholders, through both financial and non-financial means. We welcome further discussions on this topic.

In the 7 Partnership Dialogues, Tonga looks forward to an exchange of views and ideas on various initiatives and actions that have provided, or aim to provide, solutions and guidance in achieving, and going beyond, the targets of Goal 14. Particular areas of interest are:

- (a) Successful policies which provide an integrated framework and allow for management of the ocean which is inclusive and coordinates efforts within a country or a region;
- (b) Expanding scientific knowledge, technology, and resources, in particular, addressing causes of ocean degradation incidentally interlinked to the adverse effects of climate change under Theme 3;
- (c) Addressing Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, in particular, the elimination of harmful subsidies and the effective implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement;
- (d) Key partnerships that have allowed resource owners to realize the full benefits from the sustainable use of marine resources both living and non-living;
- (e) Discussions on achieving a unified view on the “blue economy” concept to incorporate it into domestic macroeconomic modeling, resource allocation, planning, and decision making frameworks; and
- (f) The cross-cutting nature of themes 6 and 7 under all themes.

I thank you