

Mr. Wu Hongbo Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs

Closing Remarks

Preparatory Meeting United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14

16 February 2017, New York

Ambassador Álvaro Mendonça e Moura,
Ambassador Burhan Gafoor,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

After two days of intensive, enriching, insightful, and I would say, often inspiring, deliberations, we have come to the conclusion of the preparatory meeting.

As the Secretary-General of the Conference, I am heartened and encouraged by the level of energy and dedication that I have heard and witnessed during this meeting.

I have also had opportunities to engage in bilateral discussions and I appreciate the resolve to make the Ocean Conference a success – a success anchored on action, on voluntary commitments and on partnerships.

Indeed, the meeting has offered a timely platform for hearing the views and perspective of Governments, UN system and other international organizations, NGOs, civil society organizations, the scientific community, the business sector and other major groups and stakeholders.

We appreciate the insights and the guidance you have provided on the elements for the Call for Action and on the themes for the partnership dialogues.

Overall, there is an encouraging convergence of views:

- All of you underscored that oceans, seas and coastal areas are critical to sustainable development.
- The Ocean Conference should be a game changer to reverse the decline of the health of the oceans and seas with concrete solutions.
- It is time to move from words to actions to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
- The success of the Ocean Conference and the implementation of SDG 14 rely on the full and meaningful engagement of all stakeholders with tangible and new partnerships and voluntary commitments on all SDG 14 targets.
- The interlinkages of SDGs, an integrated and holistic approach, capacity building, financing, technology development and transfer, governance, and science-policy interfaced should be highlighted and strengthened in this process.
- Special consideration should be given to the countries in special situations: SIDS, LDCs, and LLDCs.

Going forward, the Secretariat will follow the guidance of the modalities resolution to prepare the concept papers for each of the partnership dialogues with inputs from all stakeholders.

We will also consult with Member States and stakeholders on the selection of moderators and panellists for the partnership dialogues.

The online registration of the voluntary commitments will continue until the end of the Conference and they will be an essential part of the outcome of the Conference.

The outcome of the Ocean Conference will contribute to the follow-up and review of SDG 14 at the high-level political forum on sustainable development, along with other SDGs.

Distinguished delegates,

We are embarking on the next phase of the preparatory work.

I am confident that with active engagement and support from Member States and all other stakeholders, with the able leadership of the President of the General Assembly, the Co- Presidents of the Conference, and the co-Facilitators, the Ocean Conference will be a game-changer in advancing the implementation of SDG 14.

Thank you.