



Statement by

**H.E. Mr Max Hufanen Rai,
Permanent Representative and Ambassador
of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations
and Head of Delegation**

at the

Plenary Session

**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**

7 June 2017, New York

"Check against delivery"

**Mr. President,
Excellencies and distinguished delegates.**

On my Prime Minister's behalf, I am honoured to lead the Papua New Guinea delegation to this United Nations Oceans Conference on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14. I also congratulate Fiji and Sweden on assuming the Co-Presidency of this important and historic event. We also applaud Portugal and Singapore for their excellent leadership and work on the Call for Action.

Papua New Guinea welcomes and fully supports the convening of this Conference and we reaffirm our commitment in joining the international community to work together in a practical and meaningful way to "conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development."

We are pleased that this landmark Conference bears testimony to our collective vision as not only Pacific Small Island Developing States but large ocean States, for a Sustainable Development Goal on Oceans and Seas, that addresses our increasing concerns over the declining health of the oceans and the threats to our ocean-based economies, livelihoods, cultures and ecosystem.

Papua New Guinea, as an archipelagic State with over 600 islands and an integral part of the Pacific Ocean, which is our home, food basket, source of economic strength, livelihood and cultural identity. As custodians of the Pacific Ocean's bounty, we are duty-bound to protect and secure its health and vibrancy and to sustainably use it so that it continues to remain healthy for our peoples and countries in the region, now and in the years to come.

Papua New Guinea's Constitution and the National Goals and Directive Principles demands us to ensure that we must respect and protect our natural resources, including the oceans, for the benefit of today and future generations. It is in the spirit of sustainable development espoused by the United Nations 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which we have aptly captured already in our Vision 2050 national development roadmap and supported by the National Strategy for Responsible Sustainable Development.

My delegation is pleased to lend our strong support to this Conference's Call to address and take action on the SDG 14 targets by registering several voluntary commitments this week. The Commitments include:

- i. Declaring of the Bootless Bay Project as a newly Marine Protected Area;
- ii. Working together with likeminded countries through the World Trade Organisation to address harmful fisheries subsidies;
- iii. Eestablishing measures to combat IUU Fishing; and
- iv. Prioritised the development of a National Oceans Policy framework and Office for integrated, coherent and effective oceans governance in the country, which would also be a key deliverable towards PNG's hosting of APEC 2018.

We have also commenced work to accede to the FAO Port States Measures Agreement, which also includes further development of a national Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Strategy.

In closing, Papua New Guinea, like many Small Island States (SIDS), continues to face significant challenges to effectively and efficiently monitor, control and survey its exclusive economic zone (EEZ), which is compounded by limited

resources including surface and aerial platforms to monitor the vast porous sea, coastline and riverine areas.

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For instance, currently we are experiencing unprecedented level of IUU fishing in our EEZ and coastal zones from foreign so-called "Blue-Boats" and efforts are underway to stem this tide. We therefore welcome constructive cooperative partnerships at all levels, appropriate transfer of environmentally-friendly marine technology that supports build our capacity for enhanced national ownership and leadership for sustainable fisheries.

Finally, this Conference provides the ideal opportunity to unite as one to address all SDG 14 issues and my delegation is committed to this call.

I thank you.