

Introduction of Draft Resolution A/73/L.82
General Assembly Hall: May 9th, 2019 – 10:00a.m.

Amb. Lazarus O. Amayo, Permanent Representative of Kenya to the UN

My delegation is pleased to address the General Assembly on agenda item 20 on “Sustainable Development” and agenda item 78 (a) on “Oceans and the law of the sea”.

Kenya and Portugal had the great honor of coordinating the informal consultations on draft resolution A/73/L.82 entitled “*The 2020 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.*” The Permanent Representative of Portugal, Amb. Francisco Duarte Lopes and I are therefore pleased today to introduce the text on behalf of the two countries and all its sponsors.

I would like to start by expressing our deep appreciation to all delegations for their cooperation and constructive engagement throughout the negotiations. This cooperation and positive spirit of engagement were vital to ensure an outcome that was agreeable to all.

The draft resolution before us convenes the 2020 United Nations Ocean Conference in Lisbon, and furthermore, sets its modalities. It reaffirms the commitment made by Portugal and Kenya to follow up on the 2017 Conference which was successfully organized by Sweden and Fiji. More importantly, it marks a renewed mobilization of efforts to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 – “*Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.*”

Excellencies, dear colleagues,

Allow me to reiterate that the 2017 Conference was indeed a huge success. It raised awareness of the state of the Ocean and the many challenges it faces. It encouraged tangible, significant commitments by Member States and other stakeholders and similarly inspired sub-regional and global conferences like the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference, to support the implementation of Goal 14. The 2017 Conference similarly stimulated new and strong

partnerships with Ocean health and sustainability at the core of the discussions. We, however, cannot afford to rest on our laurels. We must continue to maintain the momentum that has been created and carry out the immense work that remains to be done in pursuit of our desired goals for the oceans and seas.

This is important as the full implementation of Goal 14 still faces a number of obstacles, some of which are difficult to overcome. More efforts are necessary to reverse the current cycle of decline in which the Ocean and marine resources are caught. It also reiterates the fact that the importance of our Oceans, Seas and marine resources for sustainable development cannot be overstated. They provide livelihoods for millions of people, enable food security and maritime trade, regulate the climate and are an important source of renewable energy; it is for these reasons that we cannot afford to lose more time.

The 2030 Agenda, whose universal and indivisible character we are bound to uphold, provides us with a clear roadmap of what we need to do if we want future generations to benefit from the wealth of the Ocean. We need to ensure that we implement that roadmap and reaffirm our collective commitment to conserve and sustainably use our oceans, seas and marine resources. Failure is not an option.

It is therefore imperative that the international community continues to keep the Oceans and the Seas high on the agenda. In this regard, the 2020 UN Ocean Conference may not solve all the challenges that we face, however, it accords us an opportunity to bring about a new generation of concrete, ambitious commitments and help us to forge new, inclusive and effective partnerships to support the implementation of Goal 14. We must take advantage of this opportunity to get ourselves one step closer to the realization of our commitments under the 2030 Agenda.

Excellencies, dear colleagues,

Portugal and Kenya are committed to make the 2020 UN Ocean Conference a transformative moment for the Oceans and for the implementation of Goal 14. We pledge to working closely with Member States, relevant international

organizations and partners in preparing for the Conference in June 2020 and to ensure that the Conference delivers on the mandate given by this organ.

We count on you all for your support. I thank you.