

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



STATEMENT BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE DR. SAARA KUUGONGELWA-AMADHILA, PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA ON THE OCCASION OF THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS OCEAN CONFERENCE

LISBON, PORTUGAL, 27 JUNE-1 JULY 2022

Your Excellency, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Portuguese Republic;

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Governments

Your Excellency, Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations,

Your Excellency, Abdulla Shahid, President of the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly;

**Your Excellencies, Heads of International Organizations
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. Namibia is grateful to the Government and people of Portugal for the warm hospitality extended to us since our arrival in the beautiful City of Lisbon. We also extend our appreciation to Portugal and Kenya for co-hosting this Second United Nations Ocean Conference, demonstrating the type of partnership we need to foster to fully implement the outcomes of the conference.
2. This conference affords us the opportunity to leverage the value of partnerships and our interconnectedness through the oceans.

All continents border at least one ocean, and my country Namibia is one of 38 coastal states out of 55 on the African continent.

Increasingly, we are creating links through road, rail and air transport infrastructure, turning what used to be “landlocked countries into sea linked countries”. This is critical as oceans play an indispensable role in the economies of each of our countries.

How we relate to and interact with the ocean in all its mystique and as a powerful economic life force will have direct impact on our efforts and capacity to deliver on the shared targets for sustainable development as set out in Agenda 2030.

3. At the heart of the Namibian economy, is the ocean. We draw sustenance and anchor many of our livelihoods in the ocean economy, and therefore feel compelled to play our role in the sustainable use of marine resources.

As a member of the High-Level Panel on Sustainable Ocean Economy, we do not only advocate for this in our local context, but extrapolate this to international settings to garner increased commitment and action-oriented support to the important focus on the Blue Ocean economy.

4. Through the fourteenth Sustainable Development Goal, we are reminded how inextricably we are linked to life below the water. As such, conservation of the ocean is core to our quest to bequeath future generations a planet that serves them and their needs.
5. Namibia supports a strengthened multilateral approach to addressing the unprecedented threats facing the ocean.

Strong multilateralism will support the mobilization of financial resources and address challenges such as overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities.

Equally, it is only through strong multilateralism that we will address pressing challenges such as climate change, food insecurity, diseases and pandemics, diminishing biodiversity, economic inequality and even conflicts and strife.

We must act now to protect the state of our ocean.

6. Namibia continues to strengthen its policy framework to support an action-oriented approach to sustainably leveraging the benefits of the ocean economy. To this end, we continue to be engaged in the development of our national policy on the blue economy.
7. We cannot engage on the issue of marine and aquatic resources without looking into the negative impact of pollution. Pollution in oceans should be viewed in a holistic manner. If land pollution control measures are poorly implemented, ocean pollution is inevitable.

In this regard, investments should be increased to prevent and manage pollution both on land and in the ocean.

8. The degree of the interconnectedness of the global economy demands that maritime piracy must be seen as a common problem and a threat to all of us. It threatens global supply chains and the tourism industry, as well as the strategic role of coastal states to support landlocked economies through their ports.

The international community must therefore address this issue collectively, including by supporting capacity development programmes in developing countries.

9. To support ongoing efforts for sustainable ocean management, investment in science, research and development should be increased, as this would help generate data and support the development of new technologies. Namibia therefore hopes that this Conference will culminate in the design of incentives to drive research-based development, particularly in developing countries.

We call on multilateral maritime institutions to play a key role in this regard.

I thank you