

Statement by Ms. Sewa Lamsal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Leader of the  
Delegation to the 2022 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

27 June – 01 July 2022, Lisbon

*(Please, check against delivery)*

**Five minutes**

*Honourable Co-Presidents*

*Excellencies Heads of States, Heads of Governments, Hon. Ministers; Heads of Delegations,  
President of the General Assembly; President of the ECOSOC,  
UN Secretary-General, Under Secretary-General,  
Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen*

At the outset, I would like to thank the Republics of Portugal and Kenya for co-hosting this conference in the beautiful city of Lisbon. I congratulate co-presidents on their elections and assure my delegation's full support for productive deliberation of the conference.

My delegation thanks the Permanent Representatives of Grenada and Denmark to the United Nations for their inclusive and transparent consultations in drafting the political declaration, '**Our ocean, our future, our responsibility**' to be adopted by this conference. I would like to associate my statement with the statements delivered by Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

**Excellencies,**

Oceans and seas are crucial for our planet, our life, and our future. They are not only the origin of life but also the providers in our ecosystem. Nepal highly values the importance of oceans and seas and calls for urgent actions to retain their health and sustainability. Oceans are our common heritage. By preserving oceans and seas, we protect the regulators of the global climatic system and water cycle; prevent climate crisis; promote international trade and food security; preserve biodiversity and achieve socio-economic development. Harmony with the oceans and seas is integral to the existence and prosperity of our people and the planet.

However, the oceans and seas are under severe stress today than ever. Many small developing coastal and island countries are already experiencing existential threats due to adverse impacts of climate change, sea-level rise, over-pollution, biodiversity loss, and inconsiderate anthropogenic activities. Today, the entire world is grappling with triple crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and marine pollution. From their perilous combined impact, not only the coastal and island countries are suffering but the entire world is suffering in terms of environmental challenges and socio-economic development, among others. This has delayed the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for SDGs. Moreover, the devastating impacts of the global COVID -19 pandemic have further aggravated the challenges to SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs to realise their development aspirations.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Nepal believes that the business as usual approach cannot improve the health, sustainability, and productivity of the ocean. It requires urgent attention and action. To that end, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea should be a primary legal instrument to govern ocean related activities, along with the implementation of the other internationally agreed development goals, targets, and commitments, including the Paris Agreement and the SDGs.

Nepal is a mountain country with the Himalayas that links us naturally to the oceans through hydrography and hydrological cycle. Though Nepal is a landlocked country, oceans and seas are lifelines for our international trade, marine resources, and economic development.

However, rapid melting of the Himalayan glaciers and glacial lake outburst caused by global warming and a resultant increase in water volumes has led to floods and landslides and ultimately to the sea-level rise affecting millions of lives in our region and beyond. Therefore, Nepal stresses on the integrated approach of development for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda due to their interconnectedness and indivisible nature.

Nepal underscores the need for capacity development, transfer of marine technology, and free access and equitable sharing of benefits acquired from the marine resources among member States, especially the SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs. We should recognize the common but differentiated responsibilities of the Member States. Developed countries must take lead in addressing the current challenges and take on board the developing world for the implementation of the SDGs, including SDG14. Nepal reaffirms its support to the ‘multi-stakeholder approach’ for enhanced, effective, and coordinated collaboration and cooperation in achieving the 2030 Agenda.

My delegation hopes that this conference will be successful to muster the global partnership with the renewed commitments and stronger political will along with predictable resources for the conservation of oceans and their sustainable use, including marine resources.

Finally, we must not forget that there is an organic link between melting of glaciers in the mountains and sea-level rise in the ocean and devise our efforts accordingly for the lasting solution to ensure healthy, productive, sustainable, and resilient blue oceans while preserving the sanctity of white mountains.

**I thank you.**