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Excellencies,

Regimes change, priorities change, people change, but the Oceans Stay. However, today, the same Ocean which has sustained life for hundreds of thousands of years is getting acidified and exploited for fuel and resources to such an extent that in a few years, the Ocean will exist, but it may not sustain life anymore.

In the past few days, we have deliberated on the most efficient ways to turn the tide, including:

- Instantly boosting the Marine Protected Areas and realizing the goal of 30% of protected ocean territories before 2030.
- Collaborating multilaterally on eliminating plastic waste entering oceans via implementing the UNEP international binding declaration on ending plastic pollution.
- Promoting Ocean education across our education systems and involving all stakeholders, including youth, indigenous peoples, local fishers, trade unions, women, and more, in the decision-making processes; and
- Developing opportunities and de-risking the blue investment space to encourage efficient private funding and accelerating the green and blue economy together.

The solutions are right in front of us, and the stakes are 3 Billion people who rely on the Ocean, 350M Ocean linked Jobs and more than 21 Trillion USD of crucial ocean assets.

I think there are enough deliberations, discussions, and negotiations. The time is to set aside our differences and step up to deliver because it is the Ocean that unites us.

Yes, doing all of this will take courage. An act of courage to go on an unconventional track, courage to set aside a part of the Ocean - not to exploit it anymore; and courage to walk the talk and report back on our progress. Somewhere within, I know all of us bear that courage. Let's prove it.

