



INTERACTIVE STATEMENT BY

**Honourable Justice Nthomeng Majara - Deputy Prime Minister and Minister
of Parliamentary Affairs of the Kingdom of Lesotho**

During the Third United Nations Ocean Conference

,

Ocean Action Panel 9 - Nice, France

Friday, 13 June 2025 at 09 -12:00hrs

Promoting the Role of Sustainable Food from the Ocean for Poverty Eradication and Food Security

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great honor for me to address this esteemed panel and wish to extend my appreciation to the organizers of this forum for giving us the platform to discuss critical issues around sustainable development and management of our natural resources.

Although Lesotho is landlocked, we are not disconnected from the global mission to promote food security, sustainable development and eradicate poverty, through responsible use as well as conservation of marine resources amongst other things.

Today, we gather to highlight the vital role of sustainable food from the ocean in achieving these goals. While Lesotho does not have direct access to the sea, we stand in full solidarity with this agenda because ocean health and food systems are interlinked with global climate, international trade, and food security networks, all of which affect our people.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Global Food Security Is a Shared Responsibility. In a time of rising hunger and economic vulnerability, particularly in the Global South, if managed sustainably, food from the ocean will offer a critical source of affordable protein and nutrition. For our country, this means ensuring access to marine-based food through fair regional trade, reduced tariffs, and resilient supply chains.

The theme; *The role of the ocean in global food security and poverty eradication* speaks directly to the heart of our collective mission, to ensure that no person, regardless of geographical location, goes hungry or lives in poverty. The issues of food security, combating poverty, malnutrition and all its forms, resonates well with us as a country and as a region. With the role played by His Majesty King Letsie the III as the African Union Nutrition Champion and a Special Ambassador of Nutrition for FAO, Lesotho stands ready to partner with regional bodies such as the African Union and other international organizations to build more resilient, equitable, and nutritious food systems — on land and at sea. We are convinced that the ocean holds the potential to feed billions, lift millions out of poverty, and safeguard the nutritional needs of future generations.

Excellencies

As an enclave, Lesotho advocates for inclusive governance in ocean-related discussions. Inland states must not be left behind. We seek partnerships which allow us to contribute to and benefit from blue economy strategies, through regional integration, sustainable aquaculture, and capacity building. The health of the ocean, the sustainability of its food systems, and the dignity of those who depend on it, are central to global progress on SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), and cannot be understated.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Aquaculture and Innovation can spur economic development and realize Poverty Eradication globally. We believe that the principles of sustainable ocean food systems, such as ecosystem-based management, community participation, and food value-chain development, can also be applied in our context to lift people out of poverty.

In closing, let us remember that hunger does not recognize borders, and neither should our solutions. A healthy ocean is essential not only to coastal nations, but to all humanity. Let us therefore commit together to using ocean resources wisely to nourish our people, protect our planet, and ensure a dignified future for all.

I thank you.