

International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF)

Statement for
“Ocean Action Panel 5: Fostering sustainable fisheries management
including supporting small-scale fishers”
Wednesday, 11 June, 10:00 to 13:00

Speaker: Margaret Nakato

Good afternoon delegates,

My name is Margaret Nakato, and I am here today from Uganda as part of a delegation of small-scale fisher representatives from around the world. **We represent national, regional and global SSF organizations and support organizations** – including the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fishworkers, and the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers.

Our effective participation here is crucial, as rights-holders and people whose culture, lives and livelihoods are dependent on ocean and inland waters globally. **We are stewards of our local environments**, with traditional methods to conserve biodiversity that are effective and equitable than top-down “fortress conservation” approaches that exclude us from our territories. Exclusion of **small-scale fishers, is a threat to ‘SDG14: Life Below Water’, and to a sustainable future for the ocean.**

As stated in the UNOC 3 Declaration, we call upon all States to **actively support** participatory management approaches for small-scale fisheries, that uphold our **dignity, freedom for self-determination, and equity** in accordance with the human rights principles in the *Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication*.

Our **Call to Action**, launched at UNOC 2 in Lisbon, also calls upon governments to:

- Secure **preferential access** and co-management of 100% of coastal areas;
- Guarantee the **participation of women** and support their role in innovation;
- Protect small-scale fishers from **competing blue economy** sectors;
- Be **transparent and accountable** in fisheries management; and
- Build **resilient communities** to face climate change and offer prospects to youth.

We are committed to working side-by-side with our governments to ensure that the **tenure and human rights** of SSF communities are respected and protected, and that we are able to directly and **effectively participate** in the decision-making processes that effect our lives and livelihoods.

We are the frontline protectors of the ocean. Stand with us.

Thank you.