



**REPUBLIC OF RWANDA**  
**MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT**

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**Rwanda National Statement by Dr. Valentine UWAMARIYA, Minister of Environment**

Third United Nations Ocean Conference - **Nice, France**

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Greeting from Rwanda,

I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude to the Government and people of France for your warm hospitality in this beautiful city along with Costa Rica for this important conference.  
Merci beaucoup!

The health of both marine and terrestrial ecosystems is increasingly under threat. From pollution to unsustainable practices, the crisis shows no signs of slowing down. Biodiversity, which sustains life on Earth, is facing serious challenges that demand urgent and collective action.

Rwanda firmly believes that protecting our oceans and marine biodiversity requires ambitious, inclusive, and coordinated global efforts. Through strong multilateral cooperation, we can turn the tide of degradation and restore our ecosystems.

Although Rwanda is a landlocked country, we remain deeply connected to the ocean. Our rivers form part of an extensive network of waterways that ultimately feed into the ocean. This reality reminds us that marine ecosystem protection begins far upstream and demonstrates that preventing ocean pollution is not solely the responsibility of coastal countries. It is a shared obligation.

Rwanda is committed to playing its part by focusing its efforts upstream. We are actively rehabilitating wetlands, restoring river ecosystems, and preventing pollution at the source. These national initiatives directly contribute to safeguarding marine environments beyond our borders.

To underscore our dedication, Rwanda is currently in the process of ratifying the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement.

Excellency Chair,

Rwanda is also committed to upholding and enforcing international environmental agreements. We implement the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal to prevent illegal dumping and traffic of hazardous substances that could contaminate our rivers and, ultimately, the oceans.

Finally, Rwanda is honored to be a member of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). We welcome the opportunity to actively contribute to protecting our shared ocean and our planet through this global legal framework and collective action.

Let us continue to work together with unity and ambition for the health of our planet and the resilience of future generations. I thank you.