



SOLOMON ISLANDS
STATEMENT BY
HONOURABLE JEREMIAH MANELE
PRIME MINISTER
OF
SOLOMON ISLANDS
AT THE
3RD UNITED NATIONS OCEANS CONFERENCE
NICE
9TH JUNE, 2025

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I bring warm greetings from Solomon Islands.

Allow me to congratulate France and Costa Rica as co-chairs of the third UN Ocean Conference under the theme **“Accelerating action and mobilizing all actors to conserve and sustainably use the ocean”**.

As a big ocean state, our culture, identity and heritage is tightly linked to the ocean. Our future, stability and wellbeing rest on the health of the ocean.

Today the ocean is confronted by the three planetary crisis – loss of biodiversity, pollution and climate change.

Despite these, some are pursuing deep-sea mining with minimal regard for scientific understanding, environmental risks and global consensus.

Mr. President,

SDG14 is off track, and underfunded. We must move beyond rhetoric, to concrete actions that matches the scale and urgency to address today’s crisis.

This includes mobilizing finances, technology, science, and capacity building particularly for SIDS.

We must also reform our global ocean governance architecture - and shift from harmful exploitation to sustainable use of the ocean.

Mr. President,

The Honiara Summit on SDG 14.4 this year called for stronger compliance by fishing nations, support for science based precautionary fisheries management approaches, and adaptation to climate change.

The Pacific has the largest and healthiest tuna stocks in the world – supplying 60% of global catch. However, we must continue to combat IUU fishing to sustainably manage our fish stocks.

Marine pollution including oil spills and plastics are accelerating marine degradation. We call for the finalization of a legally binding plastic treaty in Geneva and support for the polluter/producer pay principle.

Financial support is needed to address the legacy pollution from World War II wrecks and unexploded ordnance.

Mr. President,

Solomon Islands is working to deposit all our maritime boundaries with relevant UN bodies. This is to preserve our territorial sovereignty in the face of climate change.

We recognize the importance of science, in sound decision-making, including supporting the submission of our continental shelf claims. Only 10% of our EEZ is being surveyed.

Mr. President,

In line with the theme of this gathering:

First - we must bring BBNJ into force. Solomon Islands will deposit its instrument of ratification on the Agreement this week. We urge all to do likewise.

Second I am pleased to announce the Melanesian Ocean Reserve initiative. This is an indigenous led partnership with Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu that will cover 6 million square kilometers of

ocean. We appeal for global support in finance and technical partnerships.

Third, we have placed a moratorium on Deep Sea Prospecting and Mining - in line with the Melanesian Spearhead Group position.

Fourth, we continue to invest in our 2022 voluntary commitments. This includes progressing indigenous marine conservation initiatives. Two of our provinces, Temotu and Makira have registered their interest for marine protected area declaration.

And fifth, the 'scientific discovery of the World's largest standalone coral '*Pavona clavus*' in Solomon Islands' last year, highlights our rich marine biodiversity. We reaffirm our commitment for the protection of blue ecosystems such as coral reefs, seagrass and mangroves.

Mr. President,

In closing, we support the Nice political declaration that calls for **bold and accelerated action**. We **MUST** deepen our commitment to multilateralism on SDG14. The urgency to do so cannot wait.

I thank you!