



**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT**

**SPEECH BY H.E. DR. PHILIP ISDOR MPANGO, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA DURING THE OPENING AND PLENARY
SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS OCEAN CONFERENCE (UNOC 3)**

**NICE, FRANCE
9TH JUNE 2025**

- ***H.E. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic;***
- ***H.E. António Guterres, SG of the United Nations;***
- ***Excellencies Heads of State and Government;***
- ***Distinguished Delegates;***

Oceans are the lifeline of our planet. Yet, today they are under siege. The triple planetary crises of **climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution** continue to endanger marine ecosystems and the very survival of coastal communities.

Tanzania has a coastline of over 1,424 kilometres; its Exclusive Economic Zone covers over 64,000 km; as well as islands including Zanzibar, Pemba, Mafia and other habitable islets. About 25% of the country population (66m) depends on ocean and coastal resources for their livelihoods. The ocean and health of marine ecosystems are therefore key to our development efforts and prosperity. However, Tanzania has not been spared from the triple planetary crisis. For this reason, we have taken the following steps to strengthen marine governance:

- (i) We are expanding Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to realize the commitment of reaching at least 20% of our territorial waters by 2030. The MPAs are crucial for conserving critical marine habitats and biodiversity hotspots, restoring fish stocks, protecting coral reefs, seagrasses, and mangroves, and enabling ecosystems to recover from human-induced stress.
- (ii) Initiated community-led conservation initiatives and co-management that entails involvement of local stakeholders (artisanal fishers, women and youth) in decision-making, which has proved to foster a sense of local ownership, improved compliance, and built resilience of coastal communities. Important interventions include facilitating coastal communities to access microcredit, and promoting complementary activities such as farming of seaweeds, octopus and mud crabs, as well as processing.
- (iii) Enacted and enforced laws to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, alongside strengthening monitoring, control and surveillance systems.
- (iv) Invested in Marine Spatial Planning and building capacities in ocean science and data collection, aimed at guiding sustainable allocation of ocean space for various uses including conservation, eco-friendly maritime operations and sustainable fisheries.
- (v) Developed the National Blue Economy Strategy, which articulates a roadmap for enhancing marine infrastructure, attracting investment, promoting research and innovation, and ensuring environmental sustainability.

Excellencies,

The challenges confronting our oceans however, transcend national borders. Hence, collective action, global solidarity, and sustained investment are required to ensure sustainable ocean economies, reduce pollution, and protect marine biodiversity. We, therefore, call for bold and coordinated measures to ensure significant progress in ocean sustainability. It is also imperative to scale up financing for ocean action, with a particular focus on supporting low-income countries and Small Island Developing States, where limited fiscal space and debt burdens hinder the achievement of commitments made under SDG 14.

Equally urgent, is full implementation of the High Seas Treaty (BBNJ), to address emerging threats of unsustainable deep-sea mining, along with the establishment of legally binding instruments to combat plastic pollution. Strengthening science-policy interface is also essential to foster transfer of technology, harness the power of innovation, integrate traditional and indigenous knowledge, and leverage real-time data to inform sound ocean governance. We must also build inclusive and equitable partnerships that empower coastal communities to play a central role in shaping and advancing sustainable ocean solutions.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Let this Conference serve not only as a moment of stocktaking, but as a springboard for decisive action. Mobilization and engagement of all relevant stakeholders are vital actions for accelerating ocean action, transforming into sustainable ocean-based economies, and achieving SDG 14. Tanzania stands ready to collaborate with other governments, the private sector, NGOs, and civil societies to build a future where oceans are resilient and productive; where prosperity does not come at the cost of nature; and where development is driven by sustainability and justice.

Let us act now for our people, for our planet, and future generations.

I Thank you