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**ABRIDGED STATEMENT**

BY

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CABINET SECRETARY MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA

DURING

THE

**UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 14**

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*Check against delivery*



**STATEMENT BY PROF. JUDI WAKHUNGU CABINET SECRETARY MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA DURING THE OCEAN CONFERENCE TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL (SDG) 14 JUNE 5-9 2017-NEW YORK.**

**President of the Conference**

**Secretary General of the United Nations**

**President of the General Assembly**

**Excellences**

**Distinguished participants**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First, I thank the Governments of Fiji and Sweden for co-hosting of this Conference.

It gives me great pleasure to join this important Conference to implement the Sustainable Development Goal 14 on Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

In 2015, the international community adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, including a goal on Oceans (SDG 14). The intergovernmental process that put in place the Sustainable Development Goals noted the central role of Oceans and Seas in safeguarding the planet and the wellbeing of its people. A stand-alone SDG 14 remains a clear demonstration of the importance of this subject to sustainable development.

We all recognize the fact that SDG14 needs to be ambitious because the health of our Oceans is vital for sustainable development. This ambition needs to be followed by urgent action as reflected in the five SDG14 targets, which are to be met by either 2020 or 2025.

**Ladies and gentlemen,** Kenya is one of the many Western Indian Ocean (WIO) states. The region is world-renowned for its vast range of beautiful habitats, spectacular biodiversity and rich natural resources. Kenya's coastline has a total length of 1,420 km with coral reefs running for more than 480 kilometers. The reefs are a home to our marine national parks and reserves

The coral reefs of the Indian Ocean are under severe pressure from climate change and a number of human activities that have degraded their condition. Consequently, there is a decline in the availability of fish and other resources throughout the Indian Ocean. This calls for urgent and ambitious action from all parties.

In this regard, the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) governments signed the Nairobi Convention and its protocols as the framework for collaboration in the management of our oceans to sustain cultural and economic opportunities provided by our marine resources in the region.

We believe that the implementation of SDG14 targets will enhance the work under the Nairobi Convention. However, our success in developing a Blue Economy is equally dependent on effective management of the coastal and marine environment at national level of which Kenya has made some progress.

Ladies and gentlemen, Plastics consistently represent the major categories of marine debris by material type on a global basis. **To prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, particularly from land-based activities, including**

**marine debris and nutrient pollution by 2025,** First, the government of Kenya, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2017, imposed a ban on plastics. The objective of the ban is partly to reduce the impact of plastics in our water ways and other objects that contribute to Marine debris. We call upon our WIO states to join us in banning the use of plastics to save our Ocean.

Second, we are in the process of developing a new standalone solid waste management act, to strengthen our Solid waste management regulations. Furthermore, The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) through the revised EIA and Environmental Audit Regulations of 2003, has listed mandatory projects that must under-go an EIA, which include activities that have an impact on Oceans.

Third, The port is an important regional hub to its landlocked neighboring countries. To respond to and address the potential risk of oil pollution, Kenya developed a National Oil Spill Contingency Plan (2007).

Fourth, as a signatory to the International Maritime Organization IMO's MARPOL Convention, we intend to explore cost effective

options to address pollution from Marine Vessels. We intend to review our Merchants Shipping Act (2009) to domesticate and implement the requirements of the MARPOL Convention.

Fifth, we are also proud to announce that one of our universities "*Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology*" won an international competitive bid to host the regional Maritime Technology Cooperation Centre (MTCC) for the Africa. The centers will constitute the Global MTCC Network (GMN) and will further IMO's efforts towards effective implementation and enforcement of the global energy-efficiency regulations related to international shipping. It will work in close collaboration with our Kenya Ports Authority to ensure control of water and air pollution at the port.

**Ladies and gentlemen, to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems by 2020,** the government of Kenya has developed and put in place an Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Policy and ICZM Action Plan 2015; established four Marine National Parks, Reserves and RAMSAR sites; developed strategies for conservation of critical marine and coastal ecosystems; put in place an Oil Spill Contingency Plan and

a Sensitivity Atlas, to protect critical habitats in the event of an oil spill, and; proclaimed an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) as per the provisions of UNCLOS and the Kenya Maritime Zones Act (1989).

**To minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels,** we are proud to announce that Kenya was among the first Countries in the world to pass a Climate Change Act in May 2016 and also ratified the Paris Agreement on the 28<sup>th</sup> of December 2016.

**To effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, by 2020,** the Kenyan government created the ***State Department for Fisheries and the Blue Economy in 2016***. The objective was to strengthen the Blue Economy Platform for sustainable development of blue spaces.

Kenya is also in the process of ratifying The FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing Agreement of 2009 and is in the process of implementing its requirements.

**To conserve at least 10 percent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law based on best available scientific information by 2020,** we are proud to announce that our current area of marine protection is at 6% and intend to establish more. Kenya is also member of the steering committee of the 10X20 initiative which advocates for the voluntary establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). We have made significant progress in providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets.

**Finally ladies and gentlemen,** to enhance the conservation and sustainable use of Oceans and their resources under **SGD 14c**, Kenya is making progress in implementing the provisions of the UNCLOS, recalling paragraph 158 of "The Future We Want". These efforts are in addition to implementing all international agreements that are directly or indirectly related to SDG 14 and Oceans such as the International Maritime Organization IMO's MARPOL (International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships); Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks; United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Convention on

Biological Diversity and others. In this context my delegation joins others to stress the importance of appointing a Special Representative of the Secretary General for Oceans to help galvanize efforts to support the implementation of this goal.

**In conclusion,** we welcome the provision in the outcome document which lays the basis for future follow up on SDG 14. This complements resolutions 70/226 and 70/303 on the possibility of holding future Conferences. My delegation has already expressed interest to host the next Conference and looks forward to your support in this regard. I strongly believe that there is a real momentum for change that should not slow down. I wish you a successful and fruitful 2017 Ocean Conference.

**I thank you.**