



**Permanent Mission
of Ukraine**
to the UN

Check against delivery

**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine at the Ocean conference
(7 June 2017)**

**Mr. President,
Excellencies, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen,**

At the outset, we would like to commend this extremely important and timely endeavor, and to express our gratitude to the Governments of Fiji and Sweden for co-hosting this conference to promote the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14.

Oceans, seas and their resources support the well-being of humanity and underpin the health of our ecosystems. They are essential to poverty eradication, food security, trade and economic growth. They provide mankind with water and oxygen, while also serve as primary regulator of the global climate and an important sink for greenhouse gases.

Lamentably, the issue of the marine environment continues to be a matter of our most serious concern due to climate change, marine- and land-based human activities, marine debris, over- and illegal unreported and unregulated fishing. All abovementioned increases pressure on marine ecosystems leading to their gradual disruption.

Thus, it is of paramount importance for international community to pay much needed attention to these problems and take concrete steps to address them. We also have to continue fulfilling our commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular, in regards to Goal 14 which recognizes the importance of conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and their resources.

Mr. President,

The outcomes of this high-level conference can give a strong impetus for innovative and concrete new partnerships to advance the implementation of Goal 14.

Ukraine supports the declaration “Call for action” planned for adoption during this conference, which will provide the inclusive framework for cooperation and coordination of joint efforts.

My delegation strongly believes that the document will serve as a clear signal to all stakeholders on the urgent need to implement a more constructive approach towards the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources.

The importance of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals is one of the main priorities of international cooperation for Ukraine. We continue our efforts

to fulfil commitments under the SDGs, Goal 14 in particular, at the national level despite the challenges my country is facing today.

Due to the temporary occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol by the Russian Federation Ukraine is now unable to use a substantial part of its potential as a maritime state, including its research facilities and vessels.

Nevertheless, within recent years several joint EU-Ukraine expeditions have been held to assess the state of marine environment of coastal and open sea areas in the economic maritime zone of Ukraine.

It is worth to mention that my country is actively developing the following areas in the field of marine research: biosafety and biodiversity, ecology of the seas etc.

Moreover, according to the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, we have already started the implementation of the EU Framework Directive on marine strategy on improving the marine environment and sustainable development. The initial assessment of the state of marine environment, definition of the good environmental status, development of the program of integrated monitoring of the marine environment of exclusive maritime economic zone are among the priority tasks of the mentioned Directive.

Mr. President,

The international law, as reflected in UNCLOS, provides the strong basis for cooperation among states at different levels. The States Parties to the UNCLOS have recognized the desirability of establishing through this Convention, with due regard for the sovereignty of all States, a legal order for oceans and seas which will facilitate international communication, and will promote the peaceful use of oceans and seas, the equitable and efficient utilization of their resources, the conservation of their living resources, and the study, protection and preservation of the marine environment.

Regrettably, nowadays the UNCLOS legal order faces great challenges in Ukraine and its adjoining maritime areas. In view of the temporarily occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine's rights as the coastal state in maritime zones adjacent to Crimea in the Black Sea and Kerch Strait have been undermined and usurped by the aggressor state.

In this context, acting in a good faith, Ukraine is taking reasonable steps to resolve the existing dispute with the Russian Federation by peaceful and legal means by instituting the arbitral proceedings under the UNCLOS on May 12, 2017. We are convinced that the Tribunal will take an appropriate and fair decision.

Mr. President,

My delegation strongly believes that we, as member states, should keep a steady focus on the implementation and realisation of the existing commitments at national, regional and international levels in order to promote peaceful and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources.

Ukraine stands ready for cooperation and new partnerships with the view to advance the implementation of Goal 14.

I thank you.