

**Statement of Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares
UN-Oceans Focal Point
Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs
and United Nations Legal Counsel**

**United Nations Conference to Support the
Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14:
Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and
marine resources for sustainable development
Plenary meeting, [xx] June 2017, General Assembly Hall**

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In my capacity as UN-Oceans Focal Point, I am pleased to address this Conference on behalf of the 24 members of UN-Oceans - the inter-agency coordination mechanism on ocean and coastal issues within the United Nations system which also includes the International Seabed Authority.

We, the UN-Oceans members, welcome the request addressed to the Secretary-General, in the draft "Call for Action", to enhance inter-agency coordination and coherence throughout the UN system on ocean issues, *taking into consideration the work of UN-Oceans.*

We are ready to build on the activities we have undertaken thus far to strengthen and promote coordination and coherence of United Nations system activities related to oceans and coastal areas. In particular, we developed an inventory of mandates and activities of participating members to help us identify further areas for collaboration and synergy and coordinated responses. The inventory can also assist States and relevant stakeholders in identifying the support available from UN-Oceans members, inter alia, towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In addition, UN-Oceans has been carrying out awareness-raising activities through joint side events and statements and in particular has called attention to emerging and pressing issues, such as the impacts of climate change on oceans and ocean acidification.

In fact, as a further testimony to our commitment to “deliver as one”, we are pleased to announce that UN-Oceans registered a voluntary commitment for this Conference that focuses on awareness-raising of relevant regulatory and policy frameworks as well as its members’ activities in support of their implementation.

Excellencies,

We consider that UN-Oceans has a great potential to further develop and become more than the sum of its parts. As a multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary partnership, if sufficiently empowered and supported, UN-Oceans is well placed to enhance in an integrated manner the required assistance to States. In particular, UN-Oceans members consider that they can, through joint projects and products, deliver effective assistance to support States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and relevant SDGs.

However, we note that such enhanced role for UN-Oceans would rely on the strengthening of its terms of reference, which are scheduled to be reviewed by the General Assembly, as well as sustainable funding.

In closing, I wish to reiterate UN-Oceans members' commitment to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

I thank you for your attention.