



UN General Assembly Plenary Session



Remarks by
Amir Dossal, President, Global Partnerships Forum
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Thank you, Mr. President.

Distinguished guests, Excellencies.

I am honoured to have the opportunity to speak at this historic conference – it is truly a multistakeholder partnership, and we applaud the President of the General Assembly and his team, as well as all the participants for their leadership and commitment.

I am privileged to speak on behalf of the Global Partnerships Forum as well as the Ocean Sanctuary Alliance and Mr. Ted Turner, the media mogul who committed \$1 billion to the United Nations twenty years ago. The 20th anniversary of this generous donation coincides with the vision of the conference to benefit our common humanity. I am also honoured to serve as the Special Representative of the President of Palau for Global Partnerships. As most of you may know, he is *the* champion for marine sanctuaries, having designated 80% of Palau's ocean as marine protected.

We have heard many Heads of State and Government highlight the need for action to secure our planet for future generations. In this connection, I would like to offer three concrete actions that we hope can contribute in a small way towards SDG 14:

1. Mr. President, we have embarked on an effort to assist governments in creating marine sanctuaries and marine protected areas to achieve Target 5 of the goal. We are incentivizing the private sector as well as foundations to fund programs and projects to create at least 10% of oceans and seas as marine protected areas by 2020. The Ocean Sanctuary Alliance and the Global Partnerships Forum have brought together diverse stakeholders to invest in MPAs to protect not only the fishing communities but also millions of others who rely on the ocean for their livelihoods. We are proud to have many Member States behind the 10x20 Initiative, and I would like to thank the Vice Chairs: The Bahamas, Italy, Kenya, Palau, and Poland for their leadership. The OSA is also interested in the security of marine resources, especially relating to illegal fishing,

and we hope that one day the UN Security Council will host an Ocean Security Council meeting to address the challenges faced by Small Island States.

2. We at the Global Partnerships Forum are committed to building innovative alliances that can have a lasting impact in society and our goal is to show the value proposition to businesses, foundations, and social entrepreneurs the benefit of investing in the success of the SDGs. Mr. President, LDCs - Least Developed Countries should be seen as Least Discovered Countries. In the same vein, we have heard that SIDS - Small Island Developing States should be called Large Ocean States, so we have a new acronym LOS!
3. Finally, Mr. President, Ted Turner remains deeply committed to supporting the UN's agenda, including the vision of the UN Ocean Conference. In this regard, he is embarking on a global campaign to highlight the challenges relating to the diminishing supply of oxygen around the world. As we all know, when a child is born, the first act of living is to breathe and she or he needs oxygen before anything else can happen. Between 50% to 65% of the world's oxygen supply comes from marine resources, specifically phytoplankton. In other words, every other breath we take, the oxygen is generated from marine plants. Phytoplanktons are dying due to ocean warming and the exponential increase of pollution in the seas.

We call upon the UN to consider setting-up a Commission to bring together leaders and experts to take collective action on this important issue. We are confident that philanthropists like Mr. Turner and others will support this cause.

Mr. President, in conclusion, I would like to thank my colleagues in UN DESA for their leadership and efficiency in making this conference a huge success.