

## **FINAL SPEECH:**

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### **UNOC-3 discussion on 22 August 2024 in Antananarivo, Madagascar**

**Ambassador, Secretary General,**

**Excellencies, Friends,**

It is a pleasure to share some remarks on behalf of UNEP, particularly at this moment, while there are so many ocean conversations currently taking place keeping our ocean in the spotlight; and keeping all of us accountable to stay on track.

UNOC-3, in particular, in 2025 is an opportunity to take a close look at what we need to accomplish, within the second half of the decade because we know what actions are essential; we know where we need to go the roadmaps already exist; KM-GBF is a road map, Paris agreement, Regional Seas Action plans, Decade on Ocean Science, Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, SDGs.

These are roadmaps that point the way forward to navigate our journey; they have a number of things in common.

For one thing: they each recognize that progress in this decade is critical they wouldn't have called for results by 2030 if we in fact had plenty of more time, if in fact we have the luxury of time, to just visualise commitments today and hand over the work to our children.

So they recognize the urgency of action now and another thing they all have in common:

The compass of all of these roadmaps leads us to the water. They recognize that to reach our destination requires progress on protecting and managing our ocean; they understand that we will not achieve any of these goals without a healthy ocean.

Now, while this is well understood by all of you, is it well understood by everyone who has a role to play? Are we reaching other Ministries and stakeholders? Are we doing enough to get the message to them?

The question before us today, is how far will we progress during the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of this critical decade? To find our common voice on action for our ocean; to respond to the ambition of the UN Environment Assembly Resolution adopted earlier this year; to strengthen ocean efforts to tackle climate change, marine biodiversity loss and pollution.

UNOC-3 is our moment to act decisively and urgently, encouraging countries, stakeholders, everyone - to engage; to engage on existing commitments; to advance on ratifying BBNJ, reaching our goalpost for BBNJ to enter into force by Nice; and to reach an agreement this year, to end plastic pollution;

Across all of these, we recognize the critical role of Regional Seas; these Conventions that have 50 years of experiences supporting global commitments through regional actions

Its seems like just yesterday at the 2<sup>nd</sup> UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon, the UN Secretary General reflected on the Swahili proverb: 'Bahari ita – tufi - kisha popote.' *"The ocean leads us anywhere."*

A reminder that the ocean connects us all; it is a reminder that our ocean is an essential element of our success to combat all global challenges.

At UNOC-3, with only half the decade of action remaining, "Let's Be Nice to the Ocean" means achieving SDG14 by 2030 because this progress is essential to all of the SDGs.

France and Costa Rica as our hosts, are bringing us all together, calling on us to arrive with ambition serious about getting it done, rapidly move from commitment to action,

And we need to continue inviting more people into the boat, learning from each other, Youth, women, indigenous peoples, all stakeholders; and empowering each other for progress, because: the path to Nice is a critical journey, our massive opportunity for ocean governance the critical moment for our planet,

THANK YOU

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