Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I call to order the first meeting of the preparatory meeting for the 2 2 ! nited "ations #onference to \$upport the Implementation of \$ustainable De%elopment &oal '4(#onser%e and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable de%elopment, held in accordance) ith &eneral Assembly resolution *+, 2-2.

Ambassador Martin /illie Oermann of Denmar1 and I, in our capacity as #o2Facilitators appointed by the President of the &eneral Assembly to owersee the preparatory process and to conclude the intergo%ernmental consultations on a brief, concise, action2oriented and intergo%ernmentally agreed declaration,) ould li1e to extend a) arm) elcome to all of you.

I) ould also li1e to ac1no) ledge the presence at the podium of the President of the &eneral Assembly3
the Minister of \$ea of Portugal3

ready to raise our sails, chec1 the) ind and set our course to) ards the sustainable ocean that) e need.

I no) gi\(^{\text{9}}\) the floor to my fello) \(^{\text{9}}\) #o2Facilitator! Ambassador Oermann of Denmar1

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Excellencies, Distinguished, 6adies and &entlemen,

It is great to see so many of you here today. Ambassador 7 lai and I hawe wery much been loo1ing for) and to this meeting,) hich is the first chance for us to hear from all of you.

?he 7cean #onference in 6isbon in >une) ill be of critical importance. As) as made clear by the \$ecretary2&eneral / /ac1ground note, our oceans are facing a global emergency. \$ea lewels are rising, plastic pollution is increasing, the ocean is) armer and more acidic, fish stoc1s are o%erexploited and half of all liwing coral has been lost.

7 ceans, seas and marine resources are critical to sustainable de%elopment, including sustainable ocean2based economies and to the 2 + Agenda for \$ustainable De%elopment as a) hole. ?hey underpin po%erty eradication and food security and support the) ell2being of humans and planet.

As the \$ecretary2&eneral reminded us in his bac1ground note, oceans are inextricably lin1ed) ith climate change, regulating the global climate by acting as a giant sin1 for greenhouse gases. 7 cean) arming and

deoxygenation, sea2le%el rise and ocean acidification are increasingly ad%ersely affecting the oceans and their resources.

Se need greater urgency and greater ambition at all lewels if) e are to achiewe \$ustainable Dewelopment &oal '4. Se need more truly innowatiwe, entrepreneurial and science2based approaches to ocean and coastal restoration and protection. It is our sincere hope that all Member \$tates have come prepared to this meeting) ith concrete and ambitious ideas that) ill bring us closer to our common goal of achiewing \$D& '4.

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At the 2 '* 7cean #onference,) e adopted the declaration @7ur ocean, our future(call for actionA) hich sho) cased to the) orld our strong commitment to implementation of \$D&'4. ?he conference has significantly raised global a) areness of the problems facing the oceans and seas and cataly9ed nearly '4 %oluntary commitments, the number of) hich is still gro) ing today.

\$ince the 2 '* 7cean #onference, %arious actions hawe been underta1en at all lewels in support of the implementation of \$D&'4. Oo) ewer, progress is unewen among countries and regions depending on a%ailability of science and inno%ation, capacity2building and financing as) ell as the lewel of inter2sectoral and interdisciplinary cooperation. Inade4uate data collection and disaggregation remain a huge barrier to implementation of most targets of \$D&'4.

\$cience and inno%ation are essential tools of addressing the challenges to \$D&'4 and to achie%ing the goals of the 2 + Agenda, hence the theme

of the 2 2 7 cean #onference has been decided as @\$caling up ocean

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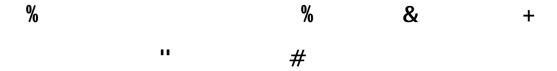
I than1 the Minister of \$ea of Portugal for his statement.



I no) gi\(^e\) the floor to Prof. Micheni >. " tiba, Principal \(^e\) to Fisheries, A4uaculture and the /Iue Economy, Bepublic of \(^e\) 5enya of \(^e\) 5enya to deli\(^e\) a statement.

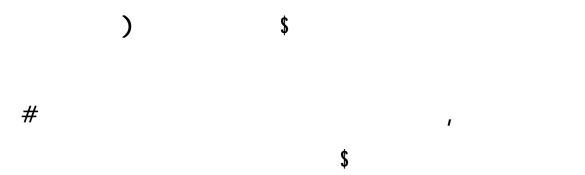
. . .

I than1 the Principal \$ecretary of 5enya for his, her statement



I no) gi\u00e9e the floor to Mr. \u00e9tephen Mathias, Assist

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Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, 6adies and gentlemen, 8e shall no) turn to our discussion on the themes for the interactive

representatikes being delikering their statements, the countdo) n cloc1 on the screen) ill begin. If representatikes go more than + seconds ower time they) ill be giken a) arning and after 'minute past the time limit) e) ill turn of the microphone. I assure you that this is not because) e do not) ant to listen to you, but because) e) ant to listen to

Bepresentatikes) ith longer statements or interkentions are encouraged to read a shorter kersion of their text and to submit their full2length statements to the \$ecretariat for posting on the #onference) ebsite.

Participants are 1 indly requested to press the button on the console before them in order to request for the floor.

In accordance) ith the modalities resolution, apart from \$tates Members of the ! nited "ations, members of the speciali9ed agencies and parties to the ! nited "ations #on%ention on the 6a) of the \$ea, other participants) ill be gi\(^{\text{en}}\) in the opportunity to spea1 as) ell at appropriate unctures during the meeting.

I also) ant to highlight that Ambassador 7lai and I held a) ebinar) ith sta1eholders last) ee1 to brief them on our proposed approach to these consultations. In addition to opportunities at this meeting,) e in%ite input from all sta1eholders in response to the bac1ground note on science and inno%ation in support of &oal '4. ?his) ill include an e2 consultation process and a further) ebinar in March, and further details on these modalities) ill be circulated separately.