



**REPÚBLICA DE MOÇAMBIQUE**

**MINISTÉRIO DO MAR, ÁGUAS INTERIORES E PESCA**

Honorable Ministers,

Distinguished Head of Delegations and Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to, on behalf of the Government of Mozambique, begin by thanking the Government of Mauritius for hosting this important event and the World Bank for its continued engagement with Africa in its strive for development. I would like also to extend a particular gratitude to the World Bank Vice – President for Africa Mr. Makhtar Diop for having extended his invitation to Mozambique.

It is indeed a great pleasure to be able to engage with such a distinguished gathering from all over the world and I

believe we can all share the efforts undertaken by each of our countries in our common endeavour towards developing blue economies in particular context of climate change.

The participation of Mozambique in this Conference, as that of so many leaders from a variety of fields, is a testimony of shared understanding that innovation and creativity are imperative for the protection of our Oceans linked to future progress of our nations.

The ocean economy is a national priority for Mozambique, a country with a total area of about 786,000 km<sup>2</sup> of mainland 572,000 km<sup>2</sup> of EEZ, with a coastline of about 2,400 km territory which hosts more than 60% of the more about 24 million habitants, who entirely depend on the ocean services for their livelihood, putting extreme pressure on the ocean and its resources resulting in reduction of its contribution and aquatic and coastal ecosystems degradation.

Historically, Mozambique has been one of the most affected countries by natural disasters in Southern Africa, its vulnerability to floods and draught, associated with coastal

erosion and raising sea levels that threaten coastal areas and cities. In addition to these natural events, the recent discovery and development of deep water oil and gas extraction as well as the heavy sand extraction, makes the challenges of climate change a paramount priority for the current Government of Mozambique.

It was with the view to strengthen the ocean economy in 2015 that the government of Mozambique created the Ministry of Sea, Inland Waters and Fisheries (MIMAIP) so that the issues pertaining sustainable development of the sea and its related activities and ecosystems merit proper treatment with regards to utilization, conservation and restoration.

When addressing these challenges the government is grateful to count on the support of cooperating partners such as the World Bank through SWIOFish 1 Program (The South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth) aimed at increasing the economic, social and environmental benefits to the South West Indian Ocean Countries from sustainable marine fisheries. It is also

counting with Nordic Developing Fund (NDF) on building capacity for local communities to couple with challenges resulting from climate changes.

In general, our gratitude goes to all our cooperating partners that have been supporting Mozambique in its climate change adaptation plans such as the World Bank, International Development Association (IDA), Global Environmental Facility (GEF), the engagement of FAO on combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing to reduce the destruction of the marine ecosystems, to the NDF (Nordic Development Fund) support on the FishCC (Project on Climate Change managed by the World Bank), aimed at finding adaptive solutions for Small scale fishery communities on creating resilience to the impacts of climate change as well as identify other sources of livelihood to reduce pressure on fishery resources.

Aware that these actions are not enough in the face of such huge challenge, the Government is currently engaged in the elaboration of our National Sea Policy as well as the review of our Law of the Sea in order to have a guide and a legal

base for a coordinated planning of all activities in the sea from Transport, Tourism, prospecting, scientific research, culture, mining, environmental protection, etc., and promote the sea as route for transport and Ecotourism.

We know the potentials of our oceans, but in order to fully take advantage of those we need to educate our people on the dangers of degradation, and for that we need scientific research to back this awareness and national plans for investments. We currently have an ongoing initiative on reforestation of mangrove to create awareness of its importance in the renewal of fishery resources.

Like many African coastal states, Mozambique still needs to accomplish a comprehensive knowledge of the existing marine living and non living resources which will then enable the country to promote a sustainable investment and development of its ocean economy through rational and equitable exploitation of its natural capital. This requires a strong investment on human capacity building thus the call to strengthen our research institutions and for regional and international collaboration.

The coastal countries of Africa need to, effectively, incorporate the sea economy development actions through the conception of comprehensive Sea Policies and their Implementation Strategies, socialized with all relevant stakeholders and to serve as a planning tool; on the basis of that, the countries need, also, to carry out human capital development programs in related areas; planning based result from prospecting and research; reformulation of national statistical systems in order to reflect the contribution of the ocean economy in the national economies.

The creation of a statistics scheme in the African countries will bring a full inventory on all activities occurring at sea, as well as the creation of regular international forums that encourages the participation of all countries, can contribute for the engagement of all countries with concrete and integrated actions to ensure that, after all utilization in the context of a blue economy, the ocean can still fulfill its tradition role of providing food to the people.

Thank you very much for your distinguished attention.

Balaclava, Mauritius, September 1<sup>st</sup> 2016.

The Minister of Sea, Inland Waters and Fisheries of  
Mozambique