



# UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF LEGAL AFFAIRS

## World Oceans Day Reception

### Statement

By

**Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares**

Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs  
and United Nations Legal Counsel

General Assembly Visitors Entrance Lobby  
(Sputnik Lounge)  
United Nations Headquarters, New York  
8 June 2017, 6:30pm

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you this evening to our annual World Oceans Day Reception, on this very special occasion when it is taking place during the Oceans Conference.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the sponsors of this event, the High Seas Alliance, the National Resources Defense Council, and Blancpain. Without their support this event would not have been possible.

The official designation of 8 June as World Oceans Day by the United Nations is meant to raise global awareness of the benefits derived from our oceans, and the current challenges faced by the international community in protecting them. This whole week we have faced these challenges and developed new initiatives, partnerships and voluntary commitments to counter them. We have shown the world how much our oceans matter to us, and what we can do together to protect our common oceans.

This morning, we began our celebration of our oceans, in a very beautiful event in the General Assembly Hall. I wish to again thank the production sponsors and



partners, Parley for the Oceans, for the very generous contribution which has made that very successful event possible. This evening we continue to celebrate. But we must also remember that although World Oceans Days is celebrated on June 8, we must work to protect our oceans all 365 days of the year.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of my staff, in particular the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, which has worked diligently, together with partners, to organize this event, I invite you to enjoy tonight's festivities and to take this opportunity to join forces with the community of peoples determined to protect our oceans, our common heritage.

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