



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES

NAMIBIA OPENING STATEMENT AT THE 20TH SPECIAL
MEETING OF THE ICCAT

BY

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AT

VILAMOURA

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PORTUGAL

***Mr Chairman
Distinguished delegates and Observers***

Ladies and gentlemen

Namibia would like to express her gratitude and appreciation to the government of Portugal and the European Union for hosting this 20th Special Meeting of ICCAT and for the warm welcome they have received us in this beautiful city of Vilamoura. For many in my delegation, this is our first visit to this wonderful city and we are deeply delighted to be here with the rest of other delegations. We would also like to welcome Guinea Bissau as a new contracting party to this Organization and we are convinced that as more fishing nations join this Organization, this will positively contribute to the attainment of the aims and objectives of this Organization.

Mr Chairman, this Commission has a huge task to complete the agenda of this 20th Special Meeting. Amongst these, the Commission will have to allocate the TACs for the next three year rolling fishing seasons and we thank the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) for their valuable effort to come up with scientifically based recommendations to guide the work of this Commission. We sincerely hope that the Commission will discharge its responsibility fairly and equitably when allocating quotas to different fishing nations, as all nations have the right to benefit from the fish resources managed by this Commission.

We are also cognizant of the fact that this Commission will have to deliberate on the outstanding issues of the Working Group on Convention Amendment. Again we are thankful to this Working Group for the excellent work they have done during the past few years and we look forward to fruitful discussions on this matter. Namibia fully agrees with many delegations here that the ICCAT Convention need to be amended, in order to cater for the changing dynamics in the fishing environment. We are particularly grateful that ICCAT sees the need to extend the scope of the Convention to cater for other species, such as Sharks, which are believed to be biologically threatened with extinction in many parts of the world. Additionally, we hope that this Commission will find an amicable solution to some outstanding issues, such as Dispute Settlement and Non-party Participation.

Finally, Mr Chairman, Namibia is looking forward to fruitful deliberations of this Commission and given the beautiful atmosphere in which we are operating, we are hopeful that such deliberations would lead to decisions which will have a meaningful impact on the work of this Commission.

I thank you.