

**Speech - Paula Francisco Coehlo, Secretary of State for Environment, Ministry of Culture  
Tourism and Environment (MCTE), Republic of Angola**

Good afternoon everyone, and thank you Tanya for your introduction and John your kind words. I am also sorry I wasn't able to join you today in Vienna, but it is great to see that many other delegates are there with you in person.

I'd like to sincerely thank Northumbria University and its partners for hosting this in-depth discussion on such an important topic for Angola; Angola has some of the richest and most diverse wildlife resources of any country in Africa, with iconic species, unique biological diversity and landscapes.

These precious natural resources are severely threatened by the illicit trafficking of wildlife, a form of transnational and organised crime that strips our beautiful country, and many others, of our natural assets and the opportunity for our people to prosper from their sustainable use. We are taking a strong stand against these crimes in Angola, but we cannot hope to end wildlife crimes without also seriously scaling up our international cooperation.

It is Angola's firm belief that a new international agreement to prevent and combat wildlife crime is urgently needed to turn the tide of wildlife trafficking, which is why we are working hard to advance our country's call for an additional Protocol under the UNTOC through the UN Crime Commission and we will be submitting a draft resolution to the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the CCPCJ in May 2022.

As our President, His Excellency João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, said in his speech of September 2021, where he joined the call by the Presidents of Costa Rica and Gabon for a new global agreement on wildlife crime: "The time has come for the international community to step up its collective response. The time has come for us to turn the tide on wildlife crime."

Angola is delighted to see that just last week, on 16 February, the President of Malawi also joined this call, with H.E. Dr Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera, reaffirming once again Malawi's commitment to tackling this critical issue, saying "I am now proud to join the Presidents of Costa Rica, Gabon and Angola in calling for a new international agreement to prevent and combat wildlife crime"

I sincerely hope you will also join Angola, as well as Costa Rica, Gabon and Malawi, in this important endeavour.

Thank you.