



**23RD CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS
FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

STATEMENT

BY

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PRIME MINISTER AND

PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU

BONN, NOVEMBER 16, 2017

Your Excellences, Heads of State and Government,

Your Excellency, Madam Angela Merkel, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany;

Your Excellency, Mr. Frank Bainimarama, Prime Minister of the Republic of Fiji and President of COP23;

Honorable Ms. Patrícia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to thank the authorities of the Federal Republic of Germany, personally and on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, for organizing this important event, for welcoming us, as well as for the logistical support for this COP and their generous hospitality since our arrival in this beautiful city of Bonn.

I would also like to thank the Presidency of COP23, the Republic of Fiji, a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) like Guinea-Bissau. We are proud of Fiji for deciding to undertake this task with courage and much conviction despite their vulnerability and size. As a member of the SIDS family, we thank Germany for their support to Fiji in order to make this “Bula COP” possible, and are certain that the islands transparent spirit of negotiations will lead us to concrete results for Poland and concrete steps for the effective implementation of the Paris Accord.

The cooperation of Germany with Fiji and the hosting of this forum of inter-generational importance clearly and unequivocally demonstrate the firm cooperation among peoples in the struggle against the threats that climate change poses and its grave consequence for the future of humanity.

We would further like to thank the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Secretariat for their excellent organization of this event of universal importance.

Mr. President,

Heads of Delegations

Guinea-Bissau, the country that I have the highest honor of representing here, is, in effect, a coastal African country with territory that is, on average 5 meters below sea level, including both a continental portion and several islands and islets.

As an integral part of the Group of Small Insular Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs), the features I described expose and make Guinea-Bissau even more vulnerable to the phenomena of climate change, with grave threats to the subsistence of our population and negative impacts on economic and productive activities.

As an example, we have extensive climate variability this year with space-temporal of rainfall distribution which affected negatively the agricultural harvest and food security of our population.

Mr. President,

Your Excellences,

The Government of Guinea-Bissau, out of our concern with the situation I mentioned, is committed to the struggle against climate change and has developed a national strategy with sectoral policies and international partnerships to face these challenges.

As part of our internal efforts, our Government approved the INDC that sustain the process of Paris Accord with respect to the new climate regime.

We are also preparing the First Biennial Update Report and our medium- and long-term National Climate Change Adaptation Plan.

Also as part of our internal efforts, we have taken the following noteworthy steps:

- Extension of the National System of Protected Land and Marine Areas, which went from covering 15% to more than 26% of our territory;
- Preparation of the REDD+ Roadmap as a contribution to mitigate the effects of greenhouse gases;
- Integration of the “climate change” dimension in sectoral policy documents in agriculture, water resources, livestock, the National Poverty Reduction Strategy, and Local Development Plans;
- Preparation of our National Environmental and Sustainable Development Policy.

Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Government of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau undertakes, before this august Assembly, the commitment to continue to fight climate threats and to contribute to the global effort of reducing greenhouse gas emissions pursuant to our commitments to the international community.

To this end, we have taken some noteworthy steps in this COP23, namely:

- Reorganizing our forestry sector through sustainable management in order to strengthen its role as an absolute absorber of gases causing global warming;
- Fostering a system of smart and climate-resilient agriculture in order to increase productivity and ensure food and nutritional safety for our population;
- Implementing strategies and plans of action to promote and develop clean and renewable energy techniques;
- The recent establishment of the “MON NA LAMA” Foundation under the auspices of our President of the Republic with the purpose of achieving food self-sufficiency in Guinea-Bissau.

As you may understand, our determination in implementing these actions clearly demonstrates our Government's firm commitment with respect to minimizing the nefarious effects of climate change.

Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen

We hope that the repercussions of this Conference of the Parties in Bonn will allow us to:

- Remove barriers related to the financing of actions toward preserving climate;
- Strengthen institutional and human capacity of the Least Developed Countries and Small Insular Developing States (SIDS) to face the phenomena of climate change;
- Implement the decisions coming out of COP21 and COP22.

Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen

I could not conclude my remarks without aligning Guinea-Bissau with the statements made on behalf of the African Group, the Least Developed Countries, the Alliance of Small Island States, and the G77+ China. I would also like to express our gratitude for these groups' negotiators for their courage and firm determination in conducting the negotiations with dedication and commitment in order for us to leave Bonn with a solid document for the implementation of the Paris Accord.

Thank you very much!