

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY THE MINISTER OF
TRANSPORT AND AVIATION, HONOURABLE
LEONARD BALOGUN KOROMA DURING THE
CONFERENCE OF PARTIES MEETING (COP 23) IN
BONN, GERMANY FROM 7-18TH NOVEMBER, 2017**

Mr. President;

Your Excellency's

Ministers;

Member of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps;

Members of the Fourth Estate

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is with great sense of pride and self-fulfillment that I stand before you this morning to deliver a statement on this auspicious occasion of Conference of Parties Meeting (COP 23).

Mr. President, I am pleased to bring you greetings from His Excellency the President Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma and from the People of the Republic of Sierra Leone to your Presidency, the People of Fiji and the Government of the Republic of Germany.

Mr. President we appreciate the hosting of this decisive conference which aims at advancing the Paris Agreement signed in Paris in 2015 and ratified by participating states.

As a government, we are committed to the Paris Agreement and we need not emphasize its devastating effect when climate change occurs.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, it is with heavy heart to report to this gathering that on the 14th August, 2017, Sierra Leone suffered one of the worst impacts of Climate Change in West Africa due to mudslide event at the outskirts of the Capital city of Freetown. The mudslide claimed the lives of more than 700 people and displaced thousands of people. This great loss of lives and property was due to our inability to sufficiently determine disaster-prone areas and identify appropriate early warning systems.

Ladies and gentlemen, in addition to our Environmental Protection Agency, the Government of Sierra Leone has transformed the Meteorological Department into an Agency with added responsibility of advising the government on meteorology, climatology, Climate Change and its related issues.

Mr. President, in order to adapt our ability to climate impacts, my Government will be grateful for Technical and Financial assistance for national Programmes and the newly created Meteorological Agency through the United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Mr. President, it is Critical to note that we recognise the United Nations Frame Work Convention and Climate Change as a comprehensive, fair and inclusive framework for the adoption of the Paris agreement and to advance its implementation, that's why we are gathered here today to discuss mitigating measures in achieving the overall objective of the Paris Agreement. Sierra Leone looks at this COP23 to establish a collective moment for countries to reflect on their current status of implementation for future action and support to finance the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

The years ahead are crucial for all actors to take greater action in order to respect the objectives of the Paris Agreement and closing the gap between nations in the implementation of climate changes that are occurring in the world to be a safer place.

The writing is on the wall as we have experienced the mudslide when least expected. We therefore need to increase our collective efforts for urgent climate action as well as assisting nations in need.

Mr. President, Sierra Leone has the utmost confidence that we will achieve our collective goals under the convention of the Kyoto Protocol and the implementation of the Paris Agreement. We must bear in mind the level of countries in the context of negotiations to enhance transparency and flexibility as we focus on the development of guidelines on how the Paris

Agreement's provisions will be implemented across a wide range of issues including transparency, adaptation, emission reductions, provision of finance, capacity-building and technology during this very important Twenty Third Session of Conference of Party (COP23).

I thank you all for your kind attention.