



## **Government of Rwanda**

Statement by Dr Vincent Biruta

Minister of Natural Resources

### **UN Climate Change Conference — COP21/CMP11**

Paris, 7 December 2015

---

- Excellencies
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Climate change is a global problem that affects us all, and we have to deal with it together.

The world has overcome other serious challenges by applying technology and scientific knowledge. Slowing climate change and adapting to it, should be no different.

Indeed, continued progress in research and development may mean we do not have to choose between prosperity and environmental sustainability.

The key to making this a reality is increasing funding to develop more productive and efficient renewable energy technologies.

The many clean energy investment commitments made here in Paris send a strong signal that the time for energy transformation is now.

Rwanda is shifting towards renewable energy, including hydro, methane, and solar power. We have recently increased our targets for off-grid power connections to homes and small businesses, in order to keep up with the demands of Rwanda's rapidly growing and urbanising economy.

Rwanda's Green Fund, which invests in innovative approaches to climate change and sustainability, puts the environment at the centre of our policies.

The Green Fund has already mobilised 100 million dollars to invest in ground-breaking public and private projects that build climate resilience.

To meet the expectations of our citizens, Rwanda must continue to grow its economy. However climate action is not about sacrificing growth, but rather making sure that development gains can be sustained for generations to come.

Enhanced international cooperation is needed more than ever, in order to mobilise the funding, technology and partnerships required to speed up the pace of innovation, and further drive down the cost of renewable energy, versus non-renewable alternatives.

Rwanda is calling for an agreement that limits temperature increases to below 1.5 degrees Celsius. This target is not simply a number. It's about how ambitious we need to be to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

After this agreement is signed, the real work begins. The targets we are committing to are critically important, and they must be respected. But they are a floor, not a ceiling.

While there is a long way to go, there is every reason for optimism. As investments in scientific progress bear fruit, the more ambitious targets, that the fight against climate change requires, will appear more feasible and achievable.

Climate action will succeed when countries no longer face trade-offs between attaining prosperity and going green. We can get there, together.

Thank you.