



**STATEMENT BY MADAM ANYAA VOHIRI**  
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**AT THE HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT OF COP 23**

November 16, 2017

Mr. President  
Excellences  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

I congratulate you and the Government of Fiji on your election as President of COP 23. Under your leadership, we are certain to rally collective action for developing a comprehensive plan for the timely implementation of the Paris Agreement. I also extend my profound gratitude to the UNFCCC Secretariat for hosting COP23 at its headquarters in Bonn. We are indebted to the Federal Government of Germany and the City of Bonn for its generous support to this historic event.

In 2015 the global community took a significant step forward in the effort to combat climate change by reaching an agreement in Paris, which is intended to thrust the global community on the path to a low-carbon, climate-resilient future that keeps the average global temperature below two degrees Celsius. As we converge here yet again at another COP, the staggering challenges and threats posed by climate change both at the global and national level continues to stare us in the

face. **We cannot afford anything less than a comprehensive action plan, including timeline for the implementation of the Paris Agreement as an outcome of this assembly. Enough has been said and written, now is the time to act!**

Excellences, **kindly permit me to express our nation profound empathy with those nations of the world that continue to suffer severe disasters because of climate change.** As we sit here today low-lying coastal communities like West Point, New Kru Town and Buchanan in Liberia are being inundated because of sea level rise. This has led to sea erosion with several meters of our coastline lost, destroying important infrastructure and driving many of our people into homelessness. **These events represent an obvious and immediate threat to economic growth as well as affecting the most vulnerable of our population.**

The impact of climate change in Liberia has not spare the subsistence farming communities, which have witnessed erratic rainfall and shift in patterns affecting agricultural practice and livelihood that threatens our economy. Climate change compounds our existing socio-economic challenges such as poverty, poor infrastructure and limited access to finance.

In our most recent effort, Liberia developed a **National Policy and Response Strategy on Climate Change**, which addresses our adaptation and mitigation priorities. The policy recognizes forestry and wildlife, agriculture, coastal areas and water resources etc. as priority sectors for adaptation.

While Liberia's contribution to the pool of global emissions is relatively negligible, under our mitigation priority, we have committed to ensuring that we utilize adequately our potential as carbon sink. Liberia has a rich biodiversity and forest cover of about 40% in addition to a very important mangrove system of 11,000 hectares along the coast. These important systems are currently acting as sinks and the country has an interest in conserving them for the many benefits they provide to the population's well-being, including building resilience to the impacts of climate change, as a source of food, as habitat to biodiversity, as a source of freshwater and as a

contribution to global mitigation efforts. Our NDC, recognize forests and mangroves as crucial to adaptation and is additionally, carrying out REDD+ readiness activities.

Excitements, it is unfortunate to note that these critical systems will be lost –particularly the mangroves, which in some cases have higher rates of loss than terrestrial forests. If these important systems are not conserved and re-built then this important global carbon sink will be an illusion. Liberia needs adequate investment to avoid this!

**As a nation, we remain committed to the aspirations and positions of the African Group, Least Developed Countries Group and the Group of 77 and China.**

**I want to commend the Federal Government of Germany for the latest contribution of \$50 Million Euro to the Adaptation Fund. Meanwhile, may I to seize this moment to appeal to the global community including the GCF and other financial instruments of the UNFCCC to continue to support Liberia and other LDCs** as provided for in the Paris Agreement to fulfill our NDC commitments. While we call on countries to deliver on their international commitment to mobilize \$100 billion in climate finance per year, we are equally demanding improvement in access to these funds particularly for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

We call for continuous support for developing national data and MRV systems that can set the foundation for robust implementation, transparency, and increased ambition. **At the same time, we insist that increasing ambition should be matched with increased funding.**

We look forward to the immediate implementation of the third phase of the Technology Needs Assessment project, which will support 20 LDCs and SIDS. There is a need for further funding and support so that all LDCs might complete and update their technology needs assessments, as well as implement their outcomes.

Additionally, we call for **financial support for the implementation of a gender action plan**, which provides the means by which we can achieve the goal of gender balance, the active participation of women in UNFCCC processes and empowerment, and gender responsive action.

Finally, we want to reaffirm our commitment to the **Marrakech Action Proclamation for Our Climate and Sustainable Development**. We also want to reiterate the call made by our President, H. E Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf at COP 22 in Marrakech, for support to the African continent. This will breach the capacity constraints by **strengthening institutional and human capacity that is required to adequately access the various climate change funding mechanisms** such as The Green Climate Fund (GCF), that are crucial to speeding up implementation of NDCs in a tangible manner.

I Thank You All.