

STATEMENT BY

HER EXCELLENCY MRS. ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

AT

**THE TWENTY SECOND SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE
CHANGE (COP 22), THE 12TH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES SERVING AS
THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE KYOTO PROTOCOL (CMP 12)
AND THE 1ST CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES SERVING AS THE MEETING
OF THE PARTIES TO THE PARIS AGREEMENT (CMA 1)**

TUESDAY

NOVEMBER 15, 2016

MARRAKECH, THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary General
Excellences, Heads of State and Government
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

I thank, His Majesty and the people of the Kingdom of Morocco for graciously hosting the first historic UN Climate Conference after the coming into force of

the Paris Agreement. We appreciate the warm reception and courtesies accorded my delegation. I congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election as President of COP 22. We have confidence in your leadership and optimism that the outcomes of Marrakech will provide a comprehensive plan of action for implementation of the Paris Agreement.

We thank the outgoing President of COP 21 under whose stewardship the Paris Agreement was consummated and we acknowledge, the pivotal role of the UN Secretary General, BAN Ki-moon in steering the world to adoption of the landmark Paris Climate Change Agreement.

Mr. President,

Climate change poses enormous threats to mankind and nature. It threatens human health and wellbeing of mankind.

If nothing is done to mitigate the negative impact and its vulnerability, the gains made by mankind could be seriously undermined if not reversed.

Mr. President,

Liberia continues to experience severe impacts of climate change due to erratic rainfall, flooding and sea erosion. More than 70% of Liberia's population relies on agriculture for subsistence livelihood. The sector also contributes almost 39% to the country's GDP. Recent predictions indicate that the sector will be heavily impacted thus posing a risk to the economy and livelihood of the population.

Moreover, coastal erosion represents a significant threat to Liberia's shoreline, with serious risks to coastal cities, displacement of populations and loss of major economic assets.

Despite these challenges, we have made progress in combating climate change at the national level. Liberia's draft Climate Change Policy intends to strengthen national institutions, communities and initiatives that have a strong capacity for adaptation, mitigation and disaster risk reduction.

In mitigation, we have set aside almost 20% of our national forest as protected area. This serves as a hub for carbon sequestration and protection of our biodiversity which includes threatened and endangered species.

Liberia commits, through its Nationally Determined Contribution, to increase the share of renewable energy through hydro-electricity and solar power. There is still a need to do more, to address Goals One and Two of the SDGs.

Mr. President,

At the regional level, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has established a Climate Change Unit within the Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources Department to oversee the implementation of a robust Climate Change Action Program. This Program aims at reducing vulnerability and adaptation to climate change in the sub-region.

A study shows that large parts of West Africa will be seriously affected by the negative impact of climate change with a strong variability of rainfall, the disappearance of animal and tree species and the recurrence of calamities such as flood, storms and drought.

A key priority of our sub-region is the strengthening of capacities to mobilize much needed resources to implement Member States commitment in the

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). We are pleased that one year after the signing of the Paris Agreement, 11 of the 15 countries in ECOWAS have ratified the Agreement. Liberia has made it 12.

Mr. President,

Pledges made so far under the Paris Agreement are insufficient to achieve targets for reducing global temperature to 2 degrees Celsius.

We therefore call for speedy actions to implement the Paris Agreement to address global environmental challenges, to support developing countries in the formulation and implementation of national adaptation plans, the development of gender action plans in the agriculture sector and the acquisition of climate change technology.

Let us go forward from Marrakesh with renewed determination and collective will to harmonize our approaches for implementation of the Paris

Agreement. Let us respond to the challenges of climate change and make this world a better place for current and future generations.

I thank you.