

**Address by Her Excellency Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
President of the Republic of Liberia
To the Conference on Sustainable Development
in Latin America and the Caribbean: Follow-up to the
Development Agenda Beyond 2015 and Rio+20
7-9 March 2013, Bogota, Colombia
Colombian Ministry of External Relations and ECLAC**

Excellencies;
Honorable Ministers;
High-Level Panel Colleagues;
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I regret that my schedule does not permit me to be with you to participate in the consultations at this all-important *Conference on Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*, building upon the Rio+20 Outcome Document.

This meeting presents an opportunity to identify collective interests and share experiences, as we all work to set the framework for global well-being.

The Post-2015 High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons, set up by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon last summer, has held many consultations around the world. We convened full Panel meetings to coordinate views on how to frame the next global agenda beyond 2015. Several Panel members are amongst you today, and I am sure, along with members of our New York Secretariat, they will bring you up to date on our progress. The Panel will continue its work by holding worldwide consultations, so that the final report reflects the views of all.

These consultations give us a better understanding of the issues and concerns of stakeholders in a world that has evolved since the year 2000, when the Millennium Development Goals were launched.

The High-Level Panel is more than halfway through its process. Our first working meeting was held in London, which discussed issues regarding the challenges faced by the vulnerable in society. We reached many conclusions on personal safety, empowerment and well-being. London paved the way to Monrovia, where our focus was on economic transformation and national building-blocks, and endorsed the Monrovia Communiqué.

We agreed, in that document, that the global community should continue to work towards achieving the MDGs and to carry them forward after 2015. We also agreed to foster long-term sustainable growth and reduce economic volatility, and that the global community must promote good governance, invest in stable and accountable institutions, fight corruption, ensure the rule of law, and build resilience to shocks in all countries.

Our vision is to see an end to extreme poverty in all its forms. The new agenda will be global, people-centered and planet-sensitive to address common challenges. The new framework will emphasize sustainable development; support growth that creates jobs; seek to protect the environment; and ensure peace, security, freedom and equity.

The Panel will put forward recommendations for a single and cohesive post-2015 development agenda consisting of three recurrent themes of economic growth, social inclusion and environmental sustainability.

There is widespread agreement that pursuing these priorities will require a fundamental rethink of current global partnerships. We need to establish a new compact based upon mutual responsibility and respect, and we need to find new ways of financing development. This will be the focus of our discussions at the fourth High-Level Panel Meeting in Bali, Indonesia, later this month.

There is a continuum in our consultative process. From individual to national issues and to global partnerships, we are following a thread that encompasses all aspects of our lives. In Bali, we will be mindful that regional organizations are the building-blocks to global cooperation.

Latin America has played a pioneering role in bringing greater attention to the importance of South-South cooperation, for example through the Buenos Aires and Caracas Declarations. We can all learn much from Latin America's efforts at regional integration. For example, we closely follow the progress of The Bank of the South, which aims at boosting the regional financial pool to increase investment in social programs and infrastructure. Similarly, we admire Latin America's efforts to pursue pooled procurement of medical commodities.

These are all excellent initiatives that should inform any discussion about partnerships and cooperation in the context of the post-2015 agenda, and we hope that our Latin American Panelists will highlight such examples during future discussions.

We consider today's meeting a major stepping-stone as we move towards establishing a post-2015 global development agenda. The consultations taking place around the world are a clear indication of a new synergy towards cooperation. Therefore, the conclusions you reach will help to facilitate our ongoing deliberations.

I wish you a successful Conference and look forward to joining you in Bali.

Thank you.