

**STATEMENT BY
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PRESIDENT REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
AT THE
INTERNATIONAL FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE
JULY 13, 2015**

Mr. President
Mr. Secretary General
Distinguished Colleagues
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is again a great pleasure to be in Addis Ababa, this fast transforming city and country.

I extend profound gratitude to His Excellency the Prime Minister, the Government and people of Ethiopia for the warm hospitality and the tremendous work that was put into organizing this conference. The decisions we reach here today will build upon the significant gains made in the last 15 years through unprecedented cooperation amongst nations. Because of the strong partnership between developing countries and their international partners, there has been enormous progress in developing countries around the world, undergirded by the MDGs. In Sub-Saharan Africa alone:

- Malaria mortality has been cut nearly in half since 2000;
- AIDS-related deaths fell by one-third in just eight years between 2005 and 2013;
- The mortality rate for children under five has fallen by nearly half since 1990, literally saving millions of lives every year;
- Primary school enrollments have jumped from 52% to 77% since 1990, with the biggest increases for girls. Primary school enrollments for girls are now almost at parity with boys, which is a huge difference from 25 years ago;
- The share of people in sub-Saharan Africa living in extreme poverty has fallen from 61% in 1993 to 47% in 2011;
- In more than half the countries across the region, average incomes are more than 50% higher than they were in 1990;

Very few people would have believed back in 2000 that this kind of progress was possible. But as Nelson Mandela once said, "It always seems impossible until it's done."

Much has happened and we have continued the dialogue of the Monterey Consensus and Doha Declaration. We have reached agreement and encountered challenges on many issues in the past but we have rarely attained the kind of hard earned political willingness to reach a consensus to conclude the global compact in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda that is before us today.

After the many years of consultations that took place throughout the world, with all stakeholders, we must now take on the daunting task of putting in motion the ideals that are at the core of this exercise: that our destiny as humanity is one; that we want to end

poverty, that we want to preserve the planet for future generations and we want a global order that cares for everyone. As we reach agreement on how to finance the new development objectives and goals, we must go beyond the old divisions that always stood in the way of achieving what we set ourselves to accomplish.

We take comfort in the fact that today, unlike in the past, we are attempting to find out how much resources we have and how to build a world of cooperation, around the agreed goals. We seek to nurture the potential for win-win solutions which the Addis Ababa Action Agenda holds. We have the means to do this and it can be done.

Excellencies, Distinguished Partners:

We are here, determined to take new measures to ensure that whatever wealth is derived from the continent, goes to make life better for our people. This is why in the Common African Position, we put emphasis on issues that have to do with local capacity and domestic resources, governance, accountability and the involvement of all in the exploitation and distribution of our resources. Our vision of a new development agenda is based on a transformative economic order; a people centered agenda; care for the planet, gender equality, technology transfer and a new global partnership that takes into account the special needs of least developed countries. These ideals are reflected in the sustainable development goals and in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda that is before us.

Financing For Development must not be seen through the narrow prism of aid, it must not be construed as gifts that the rich give to the poor. It must encompass mechanisms that bring together the resources from all who benefit from our planet's endowment. This is a compact that departs from developed to underdeveloped, from north or south but as one humanity with one destiny. This is what we want to bequeath to our future generations.

As a global community we must find a way to resolve issues of trade, taxes, environment and partnership.

Much has changed in our world since the Year 2000 when we embarked on the MDGs. Utilizing the more wealth and knowledge that exists today in our world than ever been.

In the clarion call of this new world order is to leave nobody behind, we must ensure that everyone contributes to the process – private sector, academia, foundations and civil society, media all have a contribution to make.

The SDGs, as we have them are bold, innovative and ambitious. They represent the aspirations of the people the world over. However good the intentions may be, as the MDG experience shows, implementation is the key. Capacity opens the door. This enables us to tackle and resolve issues that stand in the way of a truly global partnership and moving beyond the divisions that have plagued our world.

The target date for the realization of the SDGs may seem far and yet close, depending the perspective. What is certain is that the world has the resources and capacity to achieve every goal.

As we embark on the new development agenda, due consideration must be given to make sure that nobody is left behind in acquiring the adequate measurement tools. A data revolution is within our reach of today's technological advances.

Excellences, Distinguished Participants,

We have an opportunity to make Addis Ababa a turning point in the scope and character of global framework for development cooperation. Indeed many of the measures incorporated in the draft Agenda are long sought after goals.

In an imperfect world, let us not insist on perfection. Let us bring to closure the effort to make a good document perfect, restore trust, confidence and mutual respect in global partnership and focus attention on implementation, translating commitment into tangible action. In so doing we will bring changes beyond our expectation.

We now face the test and the challenge to bring the many years of research, dialogue, analysis and negotiations to successful conclusion by adopting the Addis Agenda. There is enough power in this room to take the decision that will change the world, to confront our fears and lay the foundation for a new just world based on mutual respect, acknowledging the strength in our diversity and working hand in hands to eradicate poverty. The future of our world depends on us. Let's make it happen.

I thank you for your attention.