STATEMENT
BY
HER EXCELLENCY MS. MARJON V. KAMARA
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

AT

THE HIGH-LEVEL SIGNING CEREMONY OF THE
PARIS AGREEMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK
22 APRIL 2016
Mr. President
Excellencies
Heads of Delegation
Distinguished delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen

I am honored to address this Special Assembly on behalf of Her Excellency Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia, who could not be here due to very pressing state responsibilities. I join previous speakers in commending the President of the General Assembly, the UN Secretary-General and the President of France for their leadership in facilitating the adoption last December of the Paris Agreement, a critical complement to the 2030 global development Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda adopted earlier in 2015.

In as much as financing and development goals are important, the issue that brings us together here is certainly the most essential of all, because it concerns the very existence of our planet. There is no denying that climate change and its effects present an existential threat to many members of our global community. Africa is threatened by an ever advancing desert, soil erosion on ocean fronts and unpredictable raining seasons. Ultimately we are all on the same boat. We either take the difficult steps and make the future of our planet a high global priority or we put future generations at risk. The one responsibility that we all share as humans is to leave this planet better than we found it.

In signing this binding and universal agreement today, we have renewed our commitment to pursue a set of policies and strategies aimed at addressing the
adverse impacts of climate change. Liberia has already initiated action towards the ratification of the Agreement this year. We encourage rapid action on the part of others as well to ensure that the agreement enters into force by end of 2016. Let us also forge ahead in the implementation of our intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs.)

Mr. President,

The Government of Liberia established a Climate Change Secretariat in 2014 and has developed a national low emission strategy which is being integrated into our national development agenda for transformation. This strategy targets reduction in carbon emission, climate agriculture production and defense against coastal erosion. It has an implementation period of five years, with the overarching objective of achieving the "well below 2 degree Celsius" target. Liberia has also established a national adaptation program of action for climate change and a national biodiversity strategy and action plan for the protection of biodiversity. We are working closely, with the private sector and civil society, including women and youth groups to provide education, training and heightened awareness, and to increase citizens participation in climate change activities. Working with our external partners we are conserving one of last rain forests in Africa.

Significant progress has been made in many places and several countries have embarked on developing efficient renewable energy. The Paris Agreement charts a new path for global partnership to ensure that all nations have a chance of producing and using clean renewable energy. However, significantly increased financial flows and investments will be required for the greening of our economies.
Let us rise to the challenge by taking urgent and robust actions using the Paris Agreement as an enabling platform.

I thank you.