

**STATEMENT BY:**  
**H.E. AMB. DEE MAXWELL SAAH KEMAYAH, SR.**  
**MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA**  
**AND HEAD OF DELEGATION**  
**DELIVERED AT THE PRE-SUMMIT OF THE 2021 FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT**  
**HELD AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOOD AND**  
**AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (UN FAO)**  
**ROME, ITALY**  
**July 26-28, 2021**

**H. E. Luigi Di Maio, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic**  
**H.E. Madam Amina J. Mohammed, UN Deputy Secretary-General & Chair,**  
**UN Food Systems Summit Advisory Committee**  
**H.E. Amb. Omar Hilale, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of**  
**Morocco & Representative of Africa on the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit**  
**Advisory Committee**  
**Dr. Agnes Kalibata, UN Secretary General Special Envoy for the UN Food**  
**Systems Summit**  
**Excellencies, Ministers and Heads of delegation**

- 1. Let me begin** by extending warm greetings on behalf of His Excellency Dr. George Manneh Weah, President of the Republic of Liberia and the Government and People of the Republic of Liberia; and express our profound gratitude to the host country, the Republic of Italy, for hosting this Pre-Summit. We note with satisfaction the warm reception accorded us since our arrival in the eternal City of Rome. Similarly, we wish to thank the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); for its role and logistical support in hosting this Pre-Summit.
- 2. Excellencies; the Pre-Summit;** not only sets the stage for the upcoming summit in September 2021; but also provides the opportunity, to advance bold ambitions; and commitments to action; including innovative initiatives; that would drive the transformation of our global food systems.

3. **Certainly**, the transformation of global food systems is crucial for the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. The UN Secretary-General's Report - 2021; on progress towards the sustainable development goals highlights among others; increasing food insecurity; intensification of the vulnerabilities and inadequacies of global food systems; and also indicates that countries around the world continue to struggle with multiple forms of malnutrition.
4. **This grim reminder**; which has become more evident as the result of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic; underscores the need for concrete actions to address the existing vulnerabilities and inadequacies; aimed at accelerating the transformation of food systems; and delivering on the overarching goals and vision of the summit.
5. **To these ends**, Excellencies; I wish to reaffirm Liberia's commitment. Like many countries, Liberia has not been spared the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The disruptive trail of the pandemic on food security; in particular; strengthens our resolve for bold concrete remedial actions. Liberia therefore welcomes the UN Secretary-General's vision for a global food systems summit. This Pre-summit and the impending summit in September this year; will afford the opportunity to leverage evidence-based and scientific approaches to achieve our goal of food security; and transformation of our food system.
6. **In this context**; we wish to note, that the summit's objectives are in line with the vision of His Excellency President WEAH and our Flagship National Development Plan- the Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development - PAPD; which provides for; among others; improving agricultural innovations; innovative and safe farming practices; increasing agricultural production to create jobs; entrepreneurship opportunities; and a viable and inclusive national food system.

The PAPD also prioritizes the creation of innovative means to reduce food losses and waste; trigger resilient, sustainable and inclusive food systems that protect, enhance and restore our natural resources, sustain rural and urban livelihoods; provide access to nutritious foods; and promote sustainable consumption and production patterns.

7. **In this light**, following multi-stakeholder consultative engagements; our national food systems dialogues will be convened in the five agricultural regions of the country; ahead of the Summit in September. The dialogues will highlight among others; the following; which we believe have the potential to propel our drive towards transformation; and the achievement of the sustainable development goals:

**i). Food value chain development:**

This is in recognition of the implications for economic growth; social and environmental sustainability. This will include the design and implementation of policies to achieve sustainable production; climate change mitigation; enhance the governance of supply chains, technical assistance; and partnerships to advance sustainability.

**ii). Ending youth unemployment through agriculture:**

The Government of Liberia seeks to address youth unemployment through creation of viable opportunities in the agriculture sector; including via digital agriculture development; value-chains development; and opportunities in logistics, transport, storage and processing, linking to agricultural inputs and mechanization.

**iii). Mitigating climate impacts on farmers:**

This is intended to assist smallholder farmers cope with existing changes; and adapt to future climatic conditions. It would entail - Identifying adaptation strategies that are accessible to smallholder farmers; including building capacity, providing technical assistance; and facilitating access to credit and finance; to implement adaptation measures that enhance long-term resiliency.

**iv). Reducing child malnutrition through viable food systems:**

To achieve this target, the Government seeks to undertake initiatives in line with its vision of improving the social protection system and nutrition security. This entails developing nutrition programs to reduce malnutrition among the most vulnerable; including among children. These undertakings will also enable the food system to augment production; the supply of nutritious food and ensuring better food safety standards.

**8. In conclusion; Excellencies;**

I wish to acknowledge the support of our partners; in these endeavors; including; the FAO, WFP; the Resident Coordinator and UN Country Team in Liberia; as well as our bilateral and multilateral partners.

Finally, let me reiterate Liberia's unwavering commitment to the realization of our collective aspiration for a healthier; more sustainable; more equitable and more resilient food systems; and Liberia's continued engagement with the processes leading to the Summit in September.

**I THANK YOU!**