

STATEMENT

BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY DR. GEORGE MANNEH WEAH
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA**

AT THE

UNITED NATIONS FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT

DURING THE HIGH-LEVEL WEEK

OF THE

SEVENTY-SIXTH (76TH) SESSION

OF

THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SEPTEMBER 23, 2021

His Excellency Mr. Antonio Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations

Excellencies Heads of State and Government

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies & Gentlemen:

On behalf of my Government, I commend you, Mr. Secretary-General, for your inspiring and visionary leadership; and in particular, for dedicating this year - 2021 - to the advancement of the vision of the 2030 Agenda through the transformation of our global food systems.

I also express profound gratitude on behalf of my Government for the opportunity given to Liberia to serve as one of the two representatives, along with Morocco, representing Africa on the Advisory Committee of the Food Systems Summit.

EXCELLENCIES, DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I strongly believe and I am aware that Food Systems are fundamental to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Food systems impact the lives and livelihoods of people around the world. It is also evident that the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed deficiencies in our food systems, and has had a negative impact on progress in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. Secretary-General, I am delighted to note that actions to transform our food systems will be informed by the outcomes of our national food systems dialogues. The dialogues are considered

vital thematic elements deeply embedded in our National Development Plan; the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD).

They focused not only on what the prevailing situation is for viable food systems in Liberia; but also on what needs to be done, and how it can be done. We must optimize the use of our scarce public resources in order to transform food systems while preserving our environment and biodiversity.

Mr. Secretary-General, we are hopeful that the summit will serve as an opportunity to generate bold and ambitious actions to transform our global food systems. Let us leverage the power of food systems to drive the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and galvanize our efforts to deliver on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

EXCELLENCIES, DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

My Government makes the following commitments; constituting a national plan for the transformation of our Food Systems and concrete actions towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda:

1. We will ensure that Women, who are widely considered a driving force of our country's food production, have direct access to basic support and resources – access to arable land through titled ownerships, financial loans and grants, market links, technology, training and extension services to ensure viable food systems.
2. We will act to ensure that Youths are encouraged to get more involved in food systems to reduce unemployment and enhance well-being.
3. We will move to have small-holder farmers supported with machinery needed to transform their tasks; as well as support to agri-businesses in the food value chains with financial grants to expand food production and processing.

In the same vein, Excellencies, my Government further commits to enlisting and advancing, the following “Summit’s Coalitions of Action”:

1. Youth Employment;
2. Making Food Systems work for women and girls;
3. School Meals: Nutrition, Health, & Education for Every Child
4. Resilient Food Supply Chains.

Excellency Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Government of the Republic of Liberia remains committed to the overarching goal of the Summit:

“Transformation towards a more healthy; more sustainable; more equitable and more resilient food systems”.

We count on your support in these endeavors.

I thank you.