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***STATEMENT***

***BY***

***Her Excellency Ms. Marjon V. Kamara  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Liberia***

***at the***

***High-Level Thematic Debate on  
Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)***

***New York  
21 April 2016***

**Mr. President**

**Mr. Secretary-General**

**Excellencies, Heads of Delegation**

**Distinguished delegates**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

Let me, at the outset, extend appreciation to you, Mr. President, for organizing this thematic debate which brings new impetus to our global development agenda 2030 and allows us to revisit the issues which are essential to its realization. I am honored to represent my President, Her Excellency Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, and to convey her deep regret for not being able to participate in this important forum due to pressing national engagements. She retains a strong commitment and resolve to ensuring that Liberia engages fully in the collective effort to improve lives and livelihoods through this universal Agenda.

In this spirit Liberia associates herself with the joint statement of the High-Level Support Group on implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, of which my President is a member.

Mr. President,

In September last year, the global community adopted an inclusive and ambitious development Agenda for the eradication of poverty, following an exceptionally consultative and participatory process. It is reassuring that we have come together again to discuss approaches to implementation of the SDGs. We hope that this debate will also strengthen political commitment.

In Liberia, we have initiated steps towards integrating the Agenda. Immediately following the conclusion of the global negotiations, the Cabinet reviewed the new agenda and endorsed the proposal for the alignment of the SDGs with the Liberian national development plan - Agenda for Transformation (AFT), which embodies the aspirations of the Liberian people for economic, social and political upliftment.

In January 2016, the sustainable development agenda was formally launched at the national level in Liberia. The Launch brought together representatives from the three branches of Government, as well as the media, academia, women and youth organizations, the private sector and civil society. This event provided the opportunity for an exchange of views on the role of all stakeholders in the implementation of the agenda, for promotion of national and local ownership. A key outcome of this event was the agreement to establish a national steering committee to guide the processes of domestication and implementation.

The Government of Liberia is currently engaged in a midterm review of its Agenda for Transformation, with the objective of aligning and synergizing the National Vision 2030, the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the global 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. We believe that the consolidation of development priorities and building consensus at all levels, will contribute to acceleration of the domestication process. These processes are all anchored in the Government's decentralization program aimed at enhancing democratic governance and engendering local ownership of national development.

Excellencies,

Success of our efforts to realize the new development goals requires enabling environments at the national and international levels. It is noteworthy that the current global economic downturn is impacting negatively on national economies. And major humanitarian crises threaten to distract attention from, if not retard, the forward

movement of the development agenda. We must therefore redouble our efforts to promote peace and security in all regions, which alone will bring the desired sustainability of development

In the case of Liberia, the drastic reduction in prices of our principal export commodities, iron ore and rubber has impeded our post-Ebola recovery and stabilization plan. These challenges underscore the imperative of strategic partnership at all levels. We have begun to forge such partnerships with agencies of the UN system, regional bodies, financial institutions and bilateral entities. We are encouraged by these initiatives. Our task now is to reinforce our outreach to the private sector, and capitalize effectively on the commitments and possibilities offered in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for development financing, capacity building and increasing domestic resources.

In conclusion, the continuing challenge for us all is to consolidate efforts and work collaboratively to ensure the successful implementation of our Agenda. We can and must meet this challenge for the present and future generations.

I thank you.