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REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

STATEMENT BY HON. MAMBURY NJIE

Minister for economic planning & industrial development, the Gambia at the high level segment of the 16th session of the conference of parties of the unfccc and 6th session of the meeting of parties to the kyoto protocol (cmp 6), CANCUN, MEXICO

Madam President, Your Excellencies, Heads of States & Government here present, Secretary General of The united Nations, Fellow Ministers here present, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,

It is indeed a great honour and delight for my delegation and I and The Government and people of The Republic of The Gambia that we represent, to participate in this sixteenth Conference of Parties on Climate Change in this beautiful city of Cancun. May I before proceeding, convey to all of you the greetings of The Gambian Leader and President, His Excellency, Sheikh, Professor, Alhagie, Dr. Yahya A.J.J Jammeh, his Government and the entire Gambian population. My delegation and I wish to register profound thanks and appreciation to the Government and people of Mexico for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to us since our arrival and the excellent coordination by the UNFCCC Secretariat.

Madam President, First of all, after our sincere congratulations for your election to the highest office of the conference, The Gambia would like to associate itself with the statements made by the distinguished delegates of Yemen on behalf of G-77 & China, Democratic Republic of Congo on behalf of the African Group and Lesotho on behalf of LDCs.

Madam President, My Delegation expects to see to it that we learn lessons from the short-comings of Copenhagen, and ensure that Cancun is able to deliver balanced outcomes between the Ad-hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action and Ad-hoc Working Group on the Kyoto Protocol, as well as rebuild confidence and establish a pathway for legally binding outcomes in South Africa.

The Gambia would like to reaffirm that any outcome in Cancun must be based on:

- The principle of common but differentiated responsibility and respective capability to be implemented in the spirit of global cooperation and partnership
- Providing special priority to the special situation and needs of developing countries, particularly the Least Developed Countries and the Small Island Developing States and Africa,
- The reflection of the polluter-pay-principle, and
- The fulfillment of the right to development in an equitable and sustainable manner.

Madam President, We expect Cancun conference therefore to deliver concrete results on REDD+, on adaptation framework for implementation and the associated means of support for implementation and on effective and accountable institutions under the authority and guidance of the COP especially for adaptation, finance, technology transfer and capacity building.

The Gambia as an African Country; the only continent mentioned in the Convention and as an LDC; the most vulnerable group of countries, Madame President adaptation is the priority of the Gambia and we cannot understand the rational of committing USD100 billion yearly up to 2020 for the purpose of meaningful mitigation, preventing countries without greenhouse gas emissions to access those resources.

With regard to the impact of climate change, we in The Gambia have experienced since the 1970s a change in rainfall and other climate related variables that have profoundly modified the natural environment and our people's ways of life. In response to this situation, significant efforts to adapt to drought and the resulting land degradation have been undertaken for several years and in many sectors at local and national levels through various plans of action for the three Rio Conventions such

as the National Adaptation Plan of Action. A major challenge that we have been facing and continue to face however, is limited resources constraining our ability to provide the much needed response towards adapting and addressing disasters which have been on the rise in the country.

The recent floods in the country that led us to declare a state of disaster are a testimony of the challenges we face as a nation. As a country, we had to mobilise resources internally thanks to a 10 million Dalasis assistance provided under the leadership of H.E the President Sheik Professor Alhagie Dr. Yahya A.J.J Jammeh for onward assistance to flood affected victims all over the country. Despite our appeal, external assistance was virtually nil.

Though we fully appreciate the support of some countries to the LDCF, We call on the international community to honour their commitment by providing support that can easily be accessed, in particular for the Least Developed Countries like The Gambia in the implementation of their NAPAs.

Madam President, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates

Climate change scenarios for the country indicate that the climatic variability currently being experienced is likely to increase and intensify. This constitutes a fear that is as relevant to my country as to others in similar situations. The threats are real challenges to the country because important economic activities such as tourism and fisheries are located in the coastal zones. With 1-metre sea level rise, it is projected that about 92 km^2 of the coastal zone of The Gambia will be inundated and the whole of the capital city of Banjul will be lost due to the fact that the greater part of the city lie below 1 m.

Madam President, Your Excellencies,

I would like to conclude my statement by reminding this august gathering that Paragraph 6 of Article 7 of the UNFCCC States that 'the United Nations and its specialized agencies such as the International Atomic Agency, as well as any state member therefore or observer thereto not party to the convention, may be represented at the Conference of Parties as Observer.' In May *2009 and also in 2010*, the Republic of China on Taiwan was invited to the World Health Assembly "WHA" as an observer. This has been a pleasant, welcoming and acceptable precedence, which should be extended to Taiwan, a country of Millions of people, in other international fora, such as the UNFCCC COP 16 and all related global climate change mechanisms. It is The Gambia's unequivocal position that Taiwan should be allowed unconditionally to participate in this and all other UNFCCC fora.

In the past, the PLO, was invited to participate in the UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP) as an observer under the category of "entities". The Cook Island, and Niue, both non-UN member States, were likewise made parties to the UNFCCC indicating that an invitation for Taiwan to participate in the COP as an observer would be in line with the UNFCCC spirit of an all inclusive participation and justice.

Taiwan's bid for participation in the UNFCCC is based on a sound rationale, which includes the facts that:

- Taiwan's exclusion for political reasons is contrary to the spirit of the UNFCCC
- Taiwan and its environment are vulnerable to climate change
- Taiwan's meaningful participation in UNFCCC has won increasing international support, and that,
- As a vital part of and player in the world economy, Taiwan can provide support to combat Climate Change.

Against this background, The Gambia fully calls for and supports, the participation of Taiwan at future COPs as an observer.

In addition, it is our position that the UNFCCC Secretariat should discontinue and disregard the listing of Taiwan's NGOs, such as the Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI), from China's category, and take immediate remedial action on all UNFCCC correspondence, publications, and official website.

I thank you for your kind attention.