

**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER FOR LANDS AND
NATURAL RESOURCES, HON. SAMUEL A. JINAPOR, MP,
AT THE PRE-COP 28 EVENT, HELD AT THE KEMPINSKI
HOTEL GOLD COAST, ACCRA ON THURSDAY 23RD
NOVEMBER, 2023**

Excellency, the Second Lady of the Republic, and Chairperson of Africa Women and Children Conference (AFRIWOCC);

Hon. Ministers

Excellencies;

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

I welcome you all to this Special Pre-COP28 event, which we hope to institutionalise to bring all our partners together ahead of each COP, to share our plans for the COP and to seek your support and cooperation to accelerate action on forest and nature-based solutions to climate change.

Our sincerest gratitude goes to our Climate sensitive and determined Second Lady of our Republic, and Chairperson of the Africa Women and Children Conference (AFRIWOCC), H.E Samira Bawumia, for her continuous support and collaboration, which is manifested in her presence, here, tonight, despite her busy schedule, especially at this time of the year.

Excellencies, as you are aware, the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of Parties (COP28) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), commences next week, at the Expo City, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), and as it's customary, the President of the Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, will be leading a delegation from our country to attend this Conference.

This year's Conference is unique, and its importance cannot be over-emphasised. Article 14 of the landmark Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, provides for a Global Stocktake to, periodically, take stock of the implementation of the Agreement to assess progress towards achieving its objectives, and COP28 will serve as the first Global Stocktake since the adoption of the Agreement.

This Conference, therefore, presents a unique opportunity for us to review the effectiveness of our adaptation and mitigation measures, climate financing, and our country's Nationally Determined Contributions, with the aim of updating such Nationally Determined Contributions.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, regrettably, this Conference comes at a time when the climate crisis keeps worsening, when we are told that we are gradually moving from global warming to global boiling.

And the consequences are dire, particularly, on agrarian economies, such as ours.

In the past few months, we have seen, at first hand, the impacts of climate change on the lives and livelihoods of people; flooding, harsh weather conditions and pest outbreaks, affecting food production and local community livelihoods.

Clearly, the world is not doing enough to combat this crisis. But we, at the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, are encouraged by the fact that, forest and other nature-based solutions can deliver up to a third of climate solutions. And given that fifty percent (50%) of our national Green House Gas emissions are attributed to Agriculture, Forest and Land Use (AFOLU) activities, we are confident, that we can contribute to global efforts at halting climate change.

That is why at successive COPs, we strive to play a lead role in forest and nature-based solutions to climate change, through initiatives such as the Lowering Emissions by Accelerating Forest Finance (LEAF) Coalition, the Cocoa and Forest Initiative (CFI), the Voluntary Carbon Market Integrity Initiative (VCMI), the Ghana REDD+ Programme, the Forest, Agriculture and Commodity Trade (FACT) Dialogue, and the Marrakesh Partnership Programme on the Sustainable Development of the Oil Palm Sector in Africa.

As a sign of our renewed commitment to forest solutions, President Akufo Addo, joined World Leaders to sign the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use, at COP26, to work, collectively, to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030, while delivering sustainable development and promoting an inclusive rural transformation. And, last year, President Akufo-Addo, together with Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, launched the Forest and Climate Leaders' Partnership (FCLP), which we co-Chair with the United States of America, to deliver on the ambitious target of the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, as we have done since 2021, in Glasgow, we have secured a pavilion at the Expo City in Dubai to showcase our climate actions and hold strategic investment and partnership engagements. Last year, we had President Akufo-Addo deliver an inspiring Statement at Ghana's Pavilion on strategies towards Ghana's Nationally Determined Contributions. This year, the President will host a Presidential Event at the Pavilion, with other Heads of State and Government, and the United States' Special Presidential Envoy on Climate, Secretary John Kerry, on the theme, ***"Leveraging Nature-Based Solutions Towards 1.5°C: Monitoring Progress."***

The President will, also, lead Ghana to announce her Country Package dubbed ***"Resilient Ghana: Advancing Climate Action for Prosperity."***

The Country Package is one of the initiatives of FCLP to design, develop and implement an integrated system-wide holistic suit of interventions to address Forest Landscape Restoration, according to each country's Nationally Determined Contributions.

In addition to these Presidential Events, the Ministry will hold a high-level Ministerial event on ***"Accelerating Forest and Nature Finance Towards 1.5°C."***

We are, also, happy to announce that this year, we are partnering with the Africa Women and Children Conference (AFRIWOCC) Secretariat, under the outstanding and distinguished leadership of H.E. Samira Bawumia, to host a high-level event at Ghana's Pavilion on the implementation of the commune actions and roadmap of AFRIWOCC.

Other events to be led by the Ministry at Ghana's Pavilion include a technical knowledge sharing event on the Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme, a roundtable discussion on the Cocoa and Forest Initiative (CFI), and a forum on ***"Safeguarding Women and Children in REDD+ Processes: Financing What Works,"*** to be held in partnership with Hands Across the Oceans Foundation (HATOF).

As co-Chair of the FCLP, we will also lead a number of FCLP events where we will showcase Ghana's climate actions in addressing forest loss, and partake in other events organised by our partners, such as the Voluntary Carbon Markets Integrity Initiative (VCMI), the Food and Land Use Coalition, and the Wildlife Conservation Society.

Excellencies, Hon. Ministers, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, the first Global Stocktake Climate Change Conference, COP28, cannot be business as usual. It must deliver concrete and pragmatic efforts to achieving the target in the Paris Agreement, of reducing global average temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. It must be a wake-up call to deliver previous commitments towards climate action. And it must lead to new targets and revised Nationally Determined Contributions, with true dedication and fidelity to their implementation. For forest countries like Ghana, we will continue to play a lead role on forest solutions to climate change, and we are confident that our participation in this year's Conference will bring to the fore the importance of scaling up forest solutions to climate change.

We, therefore, call on all of you gathered here this evening, both from Government, private sector, diplomatic community and International Actors, to join hands with us, as we march towards 1.5 degrees Celsius, through accelerated forest and nature-based climate actions.

And if you will be in Dubai, do make time to join us at Ghana's Pavilion, as we share knowledge and experiences to build a better, resilient and sustainable planet for current and future generations.

Your Excellency, our esteemed Second Lady, Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, in conclusion, let me reference the instructive and inspiring words of the United Nations Secretary General, H.E. António Guterres, when he profoundly stated, ***"the climate emergency is a race we are losing, but it is a race we can win"***. Let us get on with it with courage and tenacity.

I thank you for your attention.