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” **REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY MUSA MBENGA GAMBIAN  
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
TO THE MINISTERIAL SEGMENT OF THE FIRST  
CONFERENCE OF PARTIES (COP 1) OF THE CLIMATE  
CONVENTION.**

**BERLIN GERMANY, 5<sup>th</sup> TO 7<sup>th</sup> APRIL 1995**

**Mr. President  
Your Excellencies  
Distinguished Delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Mr. President, permit me first of all to extend my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Framework Convention on Climate Change (INC/FCCC) for convening the 1<sup>st</sup> Conference of Parties to the Climate Convention.**

**Mr President, in the same vein, I would like to thank, on behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of the Gambia, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for offering to host the 1<sup>st</sup> Conference Of Parties (COP) in Berlin and the excellent spade work done in providing these excellent facilities at our disposal. This conducive environment I am sure will enable distinguished delegates to effectively and efficiently deliberate on the issues at hand.**

**Mr President, last but by no means the least I wish to acknowledge the excellent quality of documentation put to the disposal of COP by the interim secretariat and this is a living testimony of their efficiency.**

**I would like to thank you all very much for giving me the opportunity in this august gathering of the first Conference of Parties in Berlin to share with you my concerns and views on climate change issues.**

**May I be allowed to recall that it was the 1979 first World Climate Conference that the issue of atmospheric emissions of Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) and their greenhouse effect entered into the International environmental agenda. This in principle, effectively set the stage for a number of meetings some of which were devoted entirely to the examination of the nature, properties and climate effects of greenhouse gases.**

**These meetings culminated, inter alia, to a formal request by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution GA 43/53 of 6 December 1988 to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to set up a panel of technical experts to provide information on the sciences, impacts and policy response options in respect of the climate change issue. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was thus constituted**

**in 1988 in response to this request. Scientific evidence presented by the IPCC and from other various meetings brought a number of issues into sharp focus.**

**The first was the realization that the effects of global warming will be felt in every region, some more severely than others; irrespective of where responsibility for its genesis lies.**

**The second was the acceptance of the fact that any strategy for its amelioration or mitigation will require the collective response of the International community as a whole. The question to be answered by the International community is not whether to do something about global warming, but what response mechanisms should be adopted on the basis of the scientific evidence available and vastly varied and differentiated capabilities and resources endowments of the world communities.**

**By 1990, a series of International Conferences issued urgent calls for a global treaty to address the problem. In the month of June 1992 in Rio De Janeiro, witnessed the gathering of world leaders and citizens of 176 countries to agree on ways of working together to preserve and enhance the global environment. This in effect arouse and set in motion ambitious plans to address the planet's greatest environmental threat and to provide a higher quality of life for ourselves and our children.**

**Mr. President, The Republic of the Gambia has joined other countries in signing and ratifying the UNFCCC with the ultimate objective to achieve stabilization of greenhouse gas concentration in the atmosphere at levels that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. The ensuing treaty is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) the first party to which we are opportune to witness now.**

**The objective of the convention is broadly defined with corresponding strategies, targets and time frame for its achievements, particularly for Annex 1 parties. Secondly, it places emphasis on GHG concentration and emission, the stabilization of greenhouse gases to 1990 level, and enhancement of sinks. The stabilization should be such that the process will allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, ensure that food production is not threatened and allow economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner. The FCCC calls upon parties to "periodically update, publish and make available to the Conference of Parties national inventories of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all green house gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, using comparable methodologies to be agreed upon by Conference of Parties.**

**Mr President, my delegation upholds the view that the commitment was duly included in the convention because it was clear to all countries that any effective**

climate policy must begin with an accurate inventory of gases that may influence global warming. This inventory Mr President, must take into account the global warming potential of the various gases and analyse their production by different sectors of the economy, as well as account for the sequestration by carbon sinks such as forests.

Mr President, between 1972 and 1992, the world's population grew from 3.8 billion to 4.5 billion, an increase equal to the total population at the beginning of the century. The revelations from the IPCC report indicates that our children and grand children will live in a world of higher temperatures and changed climate patterns. Droughts, floods storms and other climate and weather extremes may become more frequent. People living in risk or marginal areas could well add to the ranks of refugees, and social and political stress could worsen as competition for water and other scarce resources intensifies. These conditions and problems will make it even more difficult to resolve the kinds of crisis that we are already experiencing today.

Fortunately, just as new political initiatives have created opportunities for concerted International humanitarian and relief efforts, a growing consensus about the need to protect the global environment has spurred governments to signed and ratified the climate change convention. While the most difficult tasks still lie ahead, we must continue to improve our scientific and technical understanding of the causes and

impacts of climate change and of the various options for responding to these circumstances. The fundamental aim is for industrialized and industrializing societies to shift to sustainable patterns of production and consumption that will protect the national and global environment while improving the well being of their people.

Indeed, what makes this convention so central to humanity's future is that it is more than an environmental agreement; it is a commitment to sustainable development based on a required spirit of partnership between the developed and the developing countries. In effect, The Gambia took account of the commitment very seriously and therefore began a national inventory of green house gases in 1992 with the UNEP/GEF funding. According to this inventory, Co<sub>2</sub> is emitted most with a total of 1,932,913 tons (1,932,913Gg) followed by Carbon monoxide (36,614 tons), methane (31,142 tons), nitrogen oxide (655 tons) and nitrous oxide (28 tons).

Mr President, landuse change and forestry are highest emitters of greenhouse gases in the Gambia contributing 89% of the Co<sub>2</sub> and 26% of Carbon Monoxide emitted.

The energy sector accounts for 11% of the Co<sub>2</sub> and 63% carbon monoxide emitted.

Using the 100 year integrated Global Warming Potential(GWP) as an index of effectiveness, the contribution of these gases to the greenhouse effect and global warming indicates that carbon dioxide will contribute about 74% of the warming,

methane 26% and Nitrous oxide less than 1%. Considering the population of the Gambia (1,025,867 - 1993 census), the percapita emission is equivalent to 2.559 TCO<sub>2</sub>/Capita/year.

Mr President, preliminary results of the collaborative study undertaken by the National Climate Committee(NCC) and US Country Management Team indicate that the 70KM of open ocean coast and approximately 200KM of sheltered coast line is expected to retreat at an average rate of 3.25 meters per year for every meter of sea level rise. With a metre of sea level rise, 92.32 square kilometres of land is expected to be lost , more than half of this area are classified as mangrove systems, agricultural lands and wetlands. The most important and threatening is that the whole capital city of Banjul, even with a 0.5m rise per century in sea level, the capital city of Banjul is most likely to completely lost to the sea. The results further indicate that yields of crops are below expectations although by the end of next century, about 2% increase in production of coarse grains is likely but cropland area is expected to drop significantly. The full text of the inventory report is submitted to UNEP for reference by Parties.

Mr President,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is our firm believe that the developed countries will have to take the lead in responding to climate change, both through actions at the national level to limit emissions of greenhouse gases and by making available financial and technological resources. For our part as a developing country, there is the urgent need for us to build our research and management capacity to enhance our participation in the design, implementation and monitoring of greenhouse gas related projects.

This climate is a global resources that all humanity shares; therefore to protect it will require that all countries cooperate for the benefit of the present and future generation the latter to which we owe an obligation to. The climate change convention is a framework for cooperation towards a common goal.

Mr President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, once more, please allow me, on behalf of my delegation to thank the mayor and people of the Federal city of Berlin for hosting this very important conference and for the warm welcome extended to us since our arrival in Berlin.

Mr President, I beg to leave.