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Statement of

H.E. Mr Moussa Faki Mahamat

Chairperson of the African Union Commission

**Meeting of the Committee of African Heads of State and
Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC)**

18 September 2017

AU Permanent Observer to the United Nations

New York

Your Excellency, **Ali Bongo Ondimba**, President of the Republic of Gabon and Coordinator of the Committee of the African Heads of State And Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC),

Your Excellency, **Prof. Alpha Condé**, President of Guinea, Chairperson of the African Union,

Your Excellencies, Members of the Committee on African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC),

Your Excellencies, Chair of the Commissions established at the Twenty-Second Conference of the Parties (COP 22) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

Honourable Ministers and Ambassadors

Ladies and Gentlemen

First and foremost, allow me to congratulate His Excellency Ali Bongo Ondima, President of the Republic of Gabon, Coordinator of the Committee of the African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) on his assumption as the Coordinator of this esteemed Committee.

I also wish to express my gratitude to the CAHOSCC Coordinator for convening this very important meeting, and I add my voice in welcoming Your Excellencies to this unique occasion to deliberate on the issue of Climate Change that threatens to reverse our socio-economic development gains that our planet has worked so hard to achieve over many decades.

Excellencies,

Africa is blessed with abundant natural resources and a population of over one billion people.

This implies that more than ever before, the African continent needs to harness this natural gift to provide sustainable development; energy; and human security along with sound environmental management.

The Fifth Assessment Report of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC-AR5) projected a decrease in regional water availability and crop yields. Key risks that were identified include:

1. Food insecurity linked to warming, drought, flooding, and precipitation variability and extremes, – we have seen the effects of these dramatic weather patterns in Niger, landslides in Sierra Leone and DRC and also the devastating floods in South Asia and the United States, to name just a few. The effects are particularly devastating for the poor populations in both urban and rural settings.
2. The loss of livelihoods and incomes due to poor access to drinking water and irrigation; reduced agricultural productivity, especially for poor farmers and peasants in semi-arid regions and
3. The risk of loss of the benefits of the blue economy from global marine ecosystems that provide for coastal livelihoods, especially for fishing communities on the African continent.

The scope of these threats and risks to our planet demand new approaches. Our very survival depends on our ability to offer innovative and immediate responses. This requires the commitment and action of ALL actors, national, international and

regional organizations non-state actors including financial institutions, non-governmental organizations and civil society.

We must send a very clear message to the international community that the global community cannot continue in the business-as-usual classic simplified approach in the face of the threat of climate change. It is the most vulnerable in our societies, women and children, especially in Africa who are the prime victims. The Paris Climate Agreement represented the greatest united front in the fight against Climate change.

In order to galvanize this action, the African Union will mobilize all its organs and structures and all of its resources.

We must renew and reinforce our commitment.

Permit me to conclude that the African Union Commission under my leadership remains firmly committed in partnering with different organizations; and working with your Committee in advancing Africa's green growth the benefit of our populations.

I wish to reassure you of my personal commitment to this Committee and pledge my support to the new CAHOSCC Coordinator for a successful tenure.

I wish you fruitful deliberations and I thank you all for your kind attention.