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Financing for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women

*By Vabah Kazaku Gayflor
Minister of Gender and Development of the Republic of Liberia
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Madam Chairperson;

Excellencies, members of the NGO community and distinguished delegates:

Firstly, I bring you warm greetings from Her Excellency, Madam

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia and the people of Liberia.

Two years ago, at this very forum, we laid out the challenges

These might not be impressive statistics when compared to other countries but in two short years we were instrumental in strengthening women's participation in political and reform process and are in the right direction to ensuring more qualified women occupy public offices and are more than optimistic that over the next couple of years we will be able to reach the

minimum benchmark of 33% women's real representation in political as well as public positions.

With regards to reform measures, Liberia has also undertaken critical legal reforms for protection and empowerment of women – including the **Rape Law** (December 2005), which criminalizes gang rape, and the **Inheritance Law**. The

As you all are well aware, Rape is one of the most widely reported crimes in Liberia and Gender Based Violence is

prevalent as the consequence of two decades of conflict. Women in post-war Liberia not only continue to bear the brunt of war years – the continued prevalence of gender based violence is debilitating women and girls physical and psychological well being. To eradicate this scourge that causes so much suffering not only to survivors, but their families, communities and the country at large, we have developed the

National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Management of Gender Based Violence in Liberia'.

This Plan of Action aims to reduce the high incidence of Gender Based Violence as well as provide quality care to

survivors using a multi-sectoral and inter-agency approach. This comprehensive plan addresses GBV holistically through focusing on five thematic areas – psychological care, economic empowerment, health, legal/justice, protection and coordination. Through a coordinated implementation of this plan we sincerely hope to transform attitudes and behaviors that contribute to high incidence of GBV as well as strengthen mechanisms to prosecute perpetrators of GBV and provide

The two decades of conflict and civil unrest has severely affected Liberia's social infrastructure and capacity. The education sector faces immense challenges in terms of

development. We also hope to ensure that all public institutions and ministries set the standard by adopting code of conduct

sexual harassment policy and gender sensitive human resources policy. These steps, we are sure, would enable women to participate fully in public offices. We are also

mainstreamed. Mainstreaming should be based on comprehensive gender analysis for which appropriate resources should be allocated.

We also recognize that this simple change in priority allocation of funds to understanding access patterns and priority needs of

men and women would ...

opportunity to hold governments accountable on their promises

On that note, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the organizers of this forum for prioritizing this particular theme

