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CVF Leaders Meeting on a New Era of Accountability: An Adaptation Package, Debt Solutions, and Health Resilience for Vulnerable Nations

*24 September 2025, 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM (EDT)
Conference Room 12, UN Headquarters, New York City*

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, let me begin by congratulating Prime Minister Mia Mottley for her excellent, steadfast leadership in advancing reforms of international financial institutions. What was once dismissed as a fringe issue now stands at the center of global discourse, and that is important. This transformative opportunity can be realized through five strategic interventions, and I'll be brief about this.

One, leveraging the ICJ Advisory Opinion to raise ambition and accountability. Kenya intends to harness this momentum to elevate global ambition on climate action, advocate for a robust and enforceable New Collective Quantified Goal on climate issues, push for the repurposing of harmful fossil fuel subsidies, and accelerate the transition of affordable renewable energy systems. This will enhance climate justice and strengthen global accountability frameworks, particularly for vulnerable nations, like ours in Kenya.

Two, shaping the Baku-to-Belém Roadmap on actionable finance commitments. Kenya commits to actively engage in the Baku-to-Belém Roadmap process—to transform the US\$1.3 trillion annual climate finance target into concrete, time-bound, and transparent commitments, not just words; and to emphasize increased concessional finances tailored to developing countries.

Three, to champion urgent reforms of multilateral development banks to align the operations with climate and development imperative. This will unlock few new financial flows critical for national adaptation and mitigation priorities.

Four, mobilize resources for adaptation and climate-resilient health systems with climate change threatening public health. Kenya has prioritized scaling up domestic and international financing for climate-resilient health systems, integrating adaptation measures into national health policies and infrastructure, and positioning health at the core of the global climate development agenda. This will ensure communities are protected against climate-induced health shocks, improving overall resilience and productivity.

Five, advancing inclusive and responsive debt solutions. Today, at least 21 African countries are at high risk of debt distress. Fiscal space is limited, debt servicing is high, and both development and climate change flows are offset by the cost. On average, debt service consumes up to 13.5% of government spending, far exceeding expenditure on essential services such as health and education. Many of these countries have lost market access to secure new capital or finance at sustainable rates and tenures. This comes amid declining order and geopolitical tensions and sinking fiscal rooms. For most of our countries, market access is constrained, multilateral development bank resources remain inadequate, and development prospects are under severe strain. To address fiscal constraints, Kenya will continue to lead calls for: one, inclusive debt restructuring frameworks; two, adoption of climate-contingent instruments; three,

create new fiscal space for investment in climate education, such solutions are essential for economic stability and long-term development; four, strengthening advocacy for the CVF-V20 Observer Status at the UN.

Kenya will amplify its influence and solidarity with other climate-vulnerable countries by strengthening advocacy to secure UN Observer Status for the Climate Vulnerable Forum, enhancing the CVF visibility and engagement in global decision-making arenas, and ensuring that voices for frontline nations shape global climate governance.

Your Excellencies, as I conclude, by learning the demographic dividend, technological innovation, and climate leadership with bold international advocacy and transformative financing strategies, Kenya intends to play a pivotal role in building a future that is not only prosperous but also resilient and equitable, both for its citizens and for the broader global community, in the face of climate change threat.

Thank you.

DR. NYIKAL WAMBURA JAMES

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