**UNON Director-General’s remarks for the opening session of the Tenth Africa Carbon Forum and Africa Climate Week, 11 April 2018**

* **H.E. Mr. Keriako Tobiko, Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Kenya**
* **Mr. John Christensen, Director of the UNEP Denmark Technical University Partnership**
* **Mr. Dirk Forrister, President and CEO, International Emissions Trading Association (IETA)**
* **Mr. Venkata Putti, Program Manager for Carbon Markets and Innovation, World Bank**
* **Mr. Anthony Nyong, Director, Climate Change & Green Growth, African Development Bank**
* **Ms. Luca Brusa, Lead of the Stakeholder and Regional Team of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change**

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* **Distinguished guests**
* **United Nations Colleagues**
* **Ladies and gentlemen,**

**On behalf of the UN family in Kenya, it is my honour to welcome all of you to the United Nations Office at Nairobi for the Tenth Africa Carbon Forum.**

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**The focus of this Forum -- including the role of future carbon markets to achieve enhanced climate action -- is of vital importance to our collective efforts to implement the Paris Agreement, thus advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

**I am pleased that this Forum is taking place as part of the first-ever Africa Climate Week.**

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**I have no doubt that the discussions and interactions you will have here will be extremely beneficial to the entire Climate Change community -- in terms of sharing experiences and knowledge, and identifying ways to overcome obstacles to achieving low carbon, climate-resilient development.**

**UNON is proud to be hosting your meetings this week.**

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**As the only UN Headquarters in Africa, and indeed in the entire global South, this is a very fitting venue for both the Africa Carbon Forum and the Climate Week. As the third largest duty station after New York and Geneva, Nairobi has become a key center for United Nations operations in Kenya, in the region, and around the world.**

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**In addition to serving as UNON’s home, this beautiful compound hosts the global headquarters of two very important UN programmes, the UN Environment Programme and the UN Human Settlements Programme. UNON is also the base for scores of offices of the UN agencies, funds and programmes that serve some of the world’s most vulnerable populations.**

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**And UNON also hosts UN Special Political Missions and peace support operations mandated by the Security Council, such as the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region and the United Nations Support Office for Somalia.**

**Altogether, on this compound, more than 3,500 dedicated UN staff members work on a daily basis to advance the goals and values of the Organization –**

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**from protecting the environment to promoting sustainable development, and from safeguarding peace and security to providing humanitarian assistance to affected populations.**

**The members of the UN community based at this headquarters in Africa have a special opportunity to advance the UN’s objectives.**

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**That is because, compared to the other UN Headquarters’ duty stations, we are living and working in closer proximity to the people who are most in need of our support and assistance, and where the most progress has to be made if we are to achieve the SDGs by 2030.**

**Collectively, the work carried out from this UN compound is essential for the success of the 2030 Agenda. This is the UN in the real world.**

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**UNON itself was created by the UN General Assembly in 1996 to provide administrative and other support services to UNEP and UN-Habitat. UNON now also provides common services to the many other UN entities based on this compound.**

**UNON will continue to do its best to service and support UNEP, UN-Habitat and our other partners, as they pursue their work in the service of humanity.**

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**And we will strive to carry out our work in an environmentally-friendly manner as much as possible. In this connection, I am pleased to be able to inform this Forum that UNON recently achieved “climate neutrality” in our operations, through the voluntarily purchase of Adaptation Fund Certified Emission Reductions, certified by UNFCCC.**

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**Ladies and gentlemen,**

**This gathering is taking place at a time when the United Nations is embarking on a set of ambitious reforms proposed by Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. These are aimed at making the UN more nimble, transparent, efficient and decentralized.**

**As the only UN Headquarters in the global South, UNON is playing an active role in these corporate reform efforts,**

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**with the goal of strengthening the UN’s place in Africa, and Africa’s place in the UN. We do so convinced that it is high time to change the narrative about this continent; this is also something Secretary-General Guterres has called for.**

**As the Africa Carbon Forum and Climate Week will help demonstrate, Africa is not only a place with problems that the world has to resolve; it is also, and increasingly,**

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**a place that actively contributes to solving global problems.**

**I wish you all the best in your deliberations this week, and I hope you will enjoy your stay on the UNON campus.**

**Thank you for your kind attention.**

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