

**ADDRESS BY H.E. JOHN DRAMANI MAHAMA, VICE PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA ON THE OCCASION OF THE SIXTH
ITU SYMPOSIUM ON ICTs, THE ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE
CHANGE, HELD AT LA PALM ROYAL HOTEL, ACCRA, 7 JULY 2011.**

Mr. Chairman, Paarock Vanpercy,
Hon. Minister of Communications
Hon. Minister of Environment, Science and Technology,
The ITU elected Director of Standardisation Bureau,
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps
Distinguished Resource Persons and Participants
Members of the Media
Invited Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me take this opportunity to say 'Akwaaba' or welcome to you all and to wish you a very enjoyable stay in Ghana as you engage in this important ITU Symposium which is also part of the preparations towards the 17th United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 17), to be held in Durban, South Africa.

As part of our commitments to the Principles of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), Ghana has undertaken to use and deploy ICTs to create benefits in all aspects of our daily life. Indeed, every passing day reveals the benefits of ICT technology and, in this particular instance, we must not overlook nor take for granted the value of ICT applications in the protection of the environment, management of natural resources, and disaster prevention, as they support sustainable development.

rather becoming the norm rather than the exception, and for us in Africa, the lingering question is 'are we going to be ready for more disasters?'

I am therefore happy to observe that this Symposium is covering the critical issues of:

- Adaptation and Climate Change;
- ICTs as a Green Technology for Sustainable Development;
- Towards a Climate-Neutral ICT;
- Space and Climate Change; and also,
- e-Waste.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, permit me to crave your indulgence on one nagging issue that requires the concerted efforts of all stakeholders to control. I am referring to the issue of e-Waste and how this menace is threatening the gradual development of the ICT industry in the developing world. It is necessary that when electronic wastes from ICT equipments reach their end of life, they should be carefully managed and disposed off to avoid contamination of the environment, including water resources.

As the uptake of computers and mobile phones increase, manufacturers should disclose the expected lifetime of equipment when the Mean Time Between Failures (MTBF) of the equipment is published. For Personal Computers, this is often stated as three years in specifications data sheet. Hence, it would be inappropriate to allow the import of Personal Computer equipment older than three years into Ghana and Africa since they have no valuable useful life left and adds to the e-Waste in the country.

Similarly, Vendors and manufacturers of equipment should devise a systematic process of collecting old equipment and managing their disposal in such a way as to protect the environment. It would be preferable if the equipment owners who wish to dispose of the

With these brief words, I urge you to take advantage of your presence here in Ghana to savour the proverbial Ghanaian hospitality. You could not have come to Ghana at any opportune moment than now.

I wish you fruitful deliberations and God's blessings.

Thank you.