**Moving Beyond Pledges to Action**

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In the word of Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-General, United Nations – ‘’If we can’t all swim together, we will sink. There is no plan B, because there is no planet B.’’Climate change is one of the greatest challenges the world faces. And a collective effort is needed to overcome the impacts.

‘’According to Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations about thirty-three percent of the land used for agriculture is moderately or severely affected by soil degradation. Erosion, compaction, low soil organic carbon, nutrient mining and salinization are increasingly common. This is undermining farmers’ productivity and resilience, as well as the long-term health of the ecosystems on which the entire rural populations depend. The degradation and loss of forests is proceeding at a similarly alarming rate. About 13 million hectares of forest were converted to other land uses or lost every year from 2000 to 2010’’.

As we gather here today, we owe our people a duty of care and fidelity to ensure that all people, particularly those in vulnerable situations, have the capacity to adapt to changing climatic conditions. The effect of tree planting to the mitigation of climate change in our world today is so enormous. It is a truism that tree planting helps to extract CO2 from the atmosphere and correspondingly releases oxygen (O2) to the atmosphere. This follows to say that while the extraction of carbon dioxide (CO2) is done to reduce the effect of climate change; it also releases oxygen (O2) which in turn is an essential component for the very survival of man and its environment.

It is also worthy of note that beside the extraction of CO2 and the release O2 into the atmosphere, the very act of tree planting reduces the impact of desertification in our planet, it is cost saving, it reduce pollution, and it corresponding health risk, it create jobs, clean air, promotion of forestry, it promote or contribute to the beautification of the environment and act as a resilience to climate impact in our world.

As rightly observed by the Intergovernmental panel on Climate Change (IPCC)”Human influence on the climate system is clear and growing, with impacts observed on all continents. However, many options are available to adapt to climate change and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to ensure the risks from climate change remain manageable’’.

Flowing from the above, pertinent questions come to mind and my recommendations are as follows:

1 Whether tree planting will help to mitigate the effect of climate change in our planet?

2 Have we harness the vast mitigation potential in this regard?

3 How can we incorporate it into the agreement by parties having regard to the fact that a gap exists between the scientific assessment of the problem and the ambition of parties existing pledges?

It is my submission or recommendation that if emissions continue to rise unabated, the impacts is better imagine than seeing. Therefore, we should incorporate tree planting into the school curriculum or system in other to help educate and ensure full participation of persons and groups vulnerable to climate change in the relevant policymaking is vital to avoid costly mitigation actions in the future.

A legislation or legal framework is a fulcrum to the success of these, without such instruments, facilitating effective climate action will be impossible if not dead on arrival as the agencies charged with the implementation or overseeing a successful action program on tree planting need to be well-equipped with appropriate resources and clear mandates to carry out its functions

**Paper presented by:Mr. Emmanuel Umohinyang @ world conference center, Bonn, Germany 26th may,2016.**