Statement of H.R.H. Princess Abze Djigma at the High Level SDG Action Event “climate Change and the Sustainable Development Agenda convened by the President of the UN General Assembly at the UN HQ New York on 23 March 2017.

New York, March 23 2017

Your Excellency’s, distinguished delegates, honorable guests, all protocol reserved, many thanks for offering me the opportunity to be here with you and to share my experiences.

I am the Initiator and leader of the ‘MAMA-LIGHT® Initiative for Sustainable Energy a bottom up multi stakeholder approach owned by de women and youth, selected by the United Nations at the Solutions Summit at UN General Assembly in 2015 as one of the 14 breakthrough solutions achieving the SDG.
We provide solar products that provide access to energy and vocational training to install and maintain the products. As important we teach them how to set up and manage their own companies with the MAMA-LIGHT® Management Tool Kit. From the moment they have access to affordable light and energy they are able to empower themselves and shape their own future!

Some concrete examples.
At the educational level we provided MAMA-LIGHT® Solar lanterns to the primary public school of Kalembouly, a village at the last mile. The school results improved significantly. The number of children with satisfactory and good school results a year ago was 10-15%. Since October 2015 this has increased to 90%.

Kalembouly has 1900 inhabitants. We wanted to know what would be the impact if every household has one solar lamp and we provided 1000 MAMA-LIGHT® lamps. The impact is that it generates additional income with extra businesses, and what I didn’t expect is that they decided to give 400 lamps to another village next door! They are inclusive, share and take care for each other!

This is what I want to share with you. And at the regional and national level the Initiative MAMA-LIGHT® supports the PNDES, the Plan National de Développement Économique et Social, in the Sahel region of Burkina Faso with 15,000 lamps. They are in a fragile situation. This is a way to bring security also in fragile areas.
Therefore, by leading by example, the President of Burkina Faso, H.E. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, committed to host the Initiative MAMA-LIGHT® for Sustainable Energy in the Ministry of Energy. This is an example we can share in South-South Triangular cooperation with other regions and countries. I am one of the examples of many African female entrepreneurs. I'm a tree with a whole forest behind me. Africa has many good people like me. I'm just one of them. Those concrete examples showcase that Africa has to be considered as a region of technology innovation developers. We do have a vision, we know where our needs are and we know the importance of investing in the next generation. They are our future. Living in the African countryside doesn't mean we are not able to think. That is why we are keen to implement international conventions like the historic Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals that support the women and unleash the potential of the youth and the informal sector. These are truly human centred and climate sensitive.

Our local people are the key stakeholders in combatting Climate Change and continuous sustainable development.

It is important to only bring sustainable solutions like solar to the bottom of the pyramid. By nature the countryside in Least Developed Countries is Green. For us Agenda 2030 is about building upon our good values and our good habits: it is about greening-up the value chain! This is something we want and need to do together with all the stakeholders: if we grow, they will grow, and we will all grow!

I will end with a wisdom from our Mossi Kingdom “...............”. It says: “Solutions are right there at the front-door. You walk in and out without seeing them until somebody takes it and gives it to you.

So let me help you. The Initiative MAMA-LIGHT is such a solution! The Initiative already committed a training of trainers of 5000 women and youth per country in Africa. Let’s further scale up together.

Leveraging our good local solutions and enabling local and informal business supported by the UN and by International business will be the fastest catalyst to empower the bottom of the pyramid and to realize both the climate and SDG objectives.

Thank you for listening to me.