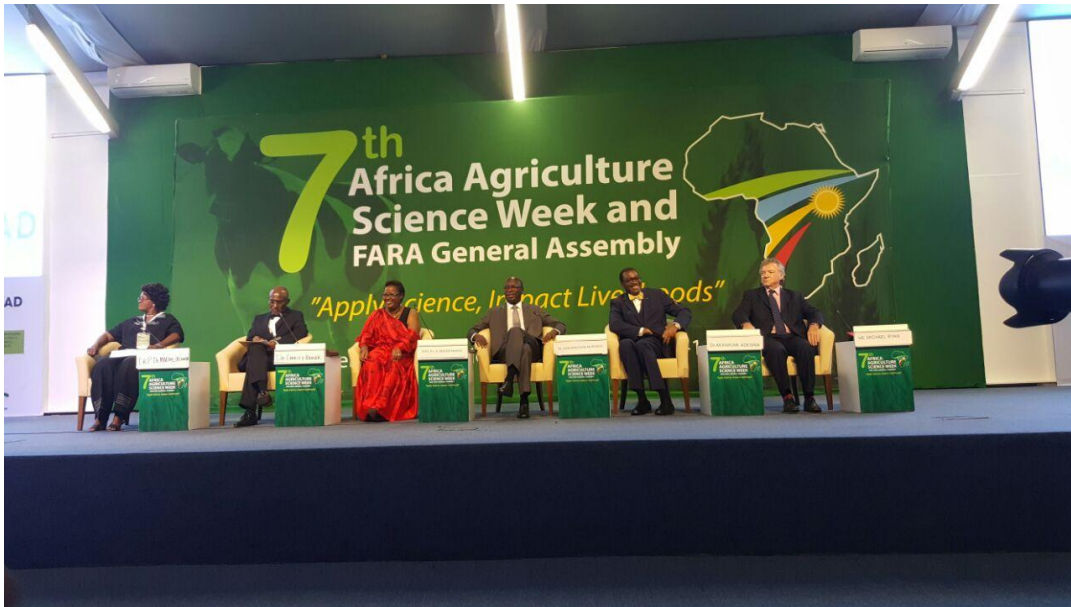


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7th AFRICA AGRICULTURE SCIENCE WEEK (AASW) and FARA GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 13-16 June 2016, Kigali, Rwanda



Kigali, 13th – 16th June 2016 – The 7th Africa Agriculture Science Week (AASW) and the Forum for Agricultural research in Africa (FARA) are taking place from 13th – 16th June 2016 in Kigali (Rwanda). This event has taken place under the stewardship of H.E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, represented by his Prime Minister. The event will feature plenary sessions, parallel side meetings and a High-level Panel Discussion on the topic: ***“Mobilizing Science, Technology and Innovation to realize the goals of CAADP and African Development Bank’s “Feeding Africa Initiative”*** The AASW and FARA General Assembly stand as a special forum enabling all stakeholders in African agriculture science, technology and innovation to take stock of their collective achievements over the past three years and design a common agenda along with ways and means for achieving their collective targets.



In his opening speech, the Commissioner in charge of Human Resources, Science and Technology of the African Union Commission, H.E Dr Martial De-Paul Ikounga, recalled that the AUC committed to strengthen Africa's capacity to mainstream research and increase

productivity towards knowledge –base economy. The strategies developed in AUC Department HRST include: the Continental Strategy for Education (CESA-16-25); the Continental Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training; and finally, Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024).

He hailed the presence of dignitaries such as the AfBD Chairperson, which, according to him, translated a strong political will. On this occasion, he said, “my message is ...Africa, your time is now”.

Further in his statement, the Commissioner mentioned the requisite Continental Policy Instruments developed by AUC and enumerated challenges that needed to be systematically addressed to be able to successfully mobilize STI towards the goals of CAADP and African Development Bank's “Feeding Africa Initiative”:

- Sustainable Funding STI to support R&D;
- Deployment of Research and Development in development sectors;
- International and regional cooperation;
- Growing and sustaining the critical human capital;
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship;

In his keynote address, President Akinwumi Adesina of the African Development Bank, stressed on investing in science and technologies to transform the agricultural sector in Africa not just to manage rural poverty but for creating wealth. “16. Today, Africa spends \$35 billion on importing food. This is projected to grow to \$110 billion by 2025.

Africa is importing what it should be producing” he said. He urged ministers of Finances to consider agriculture as a commercial activity and thus, it requires “comprehensive investments in rural infrastructure, market development, transforming the financial sector to lend more to agriculture and greater investments by the private sector in the agricultural value chain.

He further expressed excitement for the adoption of the new agricultural transformation strategy of the AfDB at the recent Annual General Meeting of the African Development Bank held in Lusaka, Zambia. He pledges the support of his institution towards NEPAD’s and FARA’s initiatives.

In order to guarantee food security in Africa, AfDB adopted an ambitious programme: Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT). Its objective is to scale up agricultural technologies to reach millions of farmers in Africa within ten years.

“Africa must feed Africa”.

Hon. Anastase Murekezi, the Prime Minister of Rwanda officially opened the 7th AASW and FARA General Assembly on behalf of H.E. Paul Kagame. He mentioned that the agriculture sector is very crucial for Africa’s transformation.

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