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Press Release

The Kingdom of Lesotho signs CAADP Compact



Maseru, 6 September, 2013- The Kingdom of Lesotho on September 5 became the 34th African country and the 8th in Southern Africa to sign the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Compact after a successful roundtable conference culminating into the endorsement of the Compact.

Lesotho's CAADP Compact set the context for joint sector policy, budgetary and investment dialogue and commitments to align, scale up

and improve the quality of long term public investments and increased leverage of private sector investment financing in support of Lesotho's CAADP and broader agriculture development priorities.

The Compact was signed on behalf of the Kingdom of Lesotho by the Rt Hon, Dr Motsoahae Thomas Thabane, Prime Minister and Head of Government. Other signatories to the Compact included representatives of, the AUC, NEPAD Agency, SADC, development partners and the UN Agencies, private sector, civil society organizations and farmer organizations.

During the signing ceremony, Prime Minister Thabane reiterated Lesotho's commitment to ensuring a meaningful transformation of the Kingdom's agriculture. The Prime Minister also recalled that the Kingdom had in the past taken a number of measures to foster private sector investment in agriculture and would continue to work with partners to ensure that the required enabling environment was provided for effective private sector participation.

Speaking on behalf of the African Union Commission and the NEPAD Agency, Mr Komla Bissi, AUC Senior CAADP Adviser on Markets, urged the Government and

people of Lesotho and stakeholders in the agriculture sector to continue to work together in order to boost the growth and development of agriculture for the benefit of their people.

He described the signing of the CAADP Compact as a unique opportunity to complement government's efforts and catalyse the contribution of the private sector to the development of the country's agriculture.

By signing the Compact, Lesotho further strengthened its agricultural development efforts to achieve greater impact on the country's economy and food security. More specifically, signing the Compact accorded Lesotho the opportunity to set the framework and parameters for long-term partnership in the agricultural sector and demonstrated the resolve and commitments of government, national stakeholders and development partners to engage jointly and collectively in advancing Lesotho's agriculture development agenda.

The CAADP Roundtable that preceded the actual Compact signing was held on August 4, 2013 and was attended by more than 300 participants comprising senior Government officials from the Kingdom of Lesotho, representatives of the various ministries responsible for agriculture and rural development, agricultural experts, policymakers, representatives from farmer organizations, the private sector, development associations, Non-Governmental Organizations, representatives of the African Union Commission (AUC), The New Partnership for Africa's Development Planning and Coordinating Agency (NEPAD Agency), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Unlike many other countries that have signed the CAADP Compact, Lesotho's pre-compact preparations were led by a locally established Country Team under the coordination of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security with facilitation from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and with support from other development partners and the NEPAD Agency.

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