OPENING STATEMENT

BY
HER EXCELLENCY MRS. TUMUSIIME RHODA PEACE
COMMISSIONER FOR RURAL ECONOMY AND AGRICULTURE
THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

AND ON BEHALF OF H.E. NKOSAZANA DLAMINI-ZUMA,
CHAIRPERSON AFRICAN UNION CHAIRPERSON
AT
THE 10TH CAADP PARTNERSHIP PLATFORM
and
AFRICA CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURE and RURAL DEVELOPMENT

DURBAN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE (DICC)
DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA
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Honorable Councillor James Nxumalo, Lord Mayor of Durban; 
His Excellency, Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, CEO of NEPAD Agency; 
Mr. Roberto Ridolfi, representative of our Development Partners; 
Mr. Nana Ose-Bonsu, representative of Private Sector; 
Mr. Djibo Bagna, President of PAFO, representative of Farmers Organizations; 
Distinguished Representatives of African Union Member States; 
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of H.E. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and on my own behalf, I welcome you most warmly to the 10th CAADP Partnership Platform meeting. It is indeed a pleasure to return to South Africa for this important meeting. We very much appreciate the hospitality and hosting support from South Africa, the Province of KwaZulu Natal, and the City and Mayor of Durban.

It is fair to say that by working together as stakeholders, we have made significant progress over the last decade. Today, 40 countries have signed Compacts which reflect a commitment to shared vision and strategy for Africa’s agricultural development. Most of these countries have moved ahead in the CAADP process to formulating National Agricultural and Food Security Investment Plans (NAFSIPs), and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are developing and moving ahead on Regional Agricultural and Food Security Investment Plans (RAFSIPs), which clarify priorities to bring the best returns to investment.
The deeper we commit to the CAADP process, the greater the level of coordination, harmonization and alignment to the strategy and priorities for Africa’s agricultural transformation.

I. OAU/AUC - 50 YEARS and 2014 YEAR OF AGRICULTURE and FOOD SECURITY

It is remarkable that the continued celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the OAU/AU is overlapping at least for these first six months of the year, with the commemoration of the 2014 AU Year of Agriculture and Food Security, Marking the 10th Anniversary of CAADP. It is also remarkable that we commemorate the Year of Agriculture and Food Security, themed ”Transforming Africa’s Agriculture for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, through Harnessing Opportunities for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development”, at a time when we are deliberating on the thrust of the African Union Agenda 2063, which shares a similar theme. The 10th CAADP Partnership Platform is unique as it comes at a critical reflection moment in deep consultations of the Year of Agriculture and Food Security.

II. AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION, SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, and POLITICAL STABILITY

As stated by His Excellency Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, President of Mauritania at the launch of the Year, “for most of our countries, agriculture, indeed, constitutes the development battlefield where we can win the war on poverty, hunger and indignity”. The agenda of agricultural transformation is strategically positioned to provide
enormous opportunities for inclusive and sustainable development in Africa.

The Chair of the Union further assured that “Agriculture has been, and will continue to be, at the centre of economic and also political stability in Africa”. If this were not to be the case, hungry stomachs, unemployed youth and poor citizens would end up influencing hungry and poverty-induce anger and, thus, fuel more political conflicts in our countries. It is, therefore, imperative that for us to overcome most of these conflicts on our continent, we must invest in agriculture. Agricultural development will certainly also be complemented by industrialization. Nevertheless, as Africa pushes for industrialization to generate the desired benefits, we must remember that Africa’s greatest potential and comparative advantage is in agriculture-based industrialization.

III. THE 10TH CAADP PARTNERSHIP PLATFORM

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the CAADP Partnership Platform (PP) has evolved to become a forum for those in the partnership to report on and discuss progress in a number of areas including collective financing and other public and private funding instruments. Discussions and outcomes of this year’s CAADP PP is integral to the systematic and inclusive consultative process that is characterizing the build up to the forthcoming 23rd Ordinary Summit of the Africa Union on the 21st – 27th June in Malabo Equatorial Guinea, and with a view to making well informed, guided, and evidence-based decisions to transform Africa’s agriculture in the next decade. This CAADP PP, therefore provides opportunity, to begin the shaping of what
the Ministers and Heads of States will discuss and commit to. Stakeholders will reflect on progress and identify, based on lessons to date, goals, actions and targets Africa and its development and investment partners commit to achieving over the next decade. The outcomes of the CAADP PP will be an input to the Joint Conference of African Ministers of Agriculture, Fisheries, Livestock and Rural Development Ministerial Discussions scheduled 28th April to 2nd May 2014 in Addis Ababa Ethiopia.

It is because this meeting is part of the preparations for specific actions for the next decade that we are challenged in this CAADP PP, to reflect on “what” actions, as well as the “how” of implementing those actions, to achieve goals that will form the foundation of Africa Agenda 2063 which is premised on the 50 years of existence of the OAU/AU. All African stakeholders seek equal opportunity to play their part in a growing, peaceful, prosperous Africa that innovatively transforms natural endowments into assets for future generations.

Sustaining or leap-frogging the CAADP momentum, through the lens of mutual accountability, anchors the trust that stakeholders have imbued us with. The issues and challenges that characterised agriculture at the beginning of the last decade are still relevant to-date. However, this wakeup call serves to remind us to effectively utilise the current improved policy and political environment to give clear guidance to Africa’s governments about the mix of policies that will foster resilience and investment for Africa’s population, through value-chain and rural development.
III.A. 10th CAADP PP - Objectives

The Sustaining CAADP Momentum (SCM) Results Framework (2014-2024) is the conceptual framework guiding discussion and consultations during the 10th CAADP PP. The CAADP Results Framework is designed for results based programming and performance assessment in agriculture and related industries. It also provides a visionary beacon of the desired change and impact from agriculture-centred investment on the trajectory of broad-based socio-economic development and growth on the Continent. To serve as a benchmarking framework for national level processes and practical guidance to foster alignment and harmonization at all levels for the priorities of intra- and inter-Africa trade, the CAADP Results Framework integrates cross-cutting themes with specific workstreams.

The specific objectives of the 10th CAADP PP over the next two and a half days, are:

(i) To share lessons and experiences from the last 10 years of CAADP implementation;

(ii) To set goals, actions and targets for the next 10 years, and indeed for Africa’s “AGENDA 2063 – The Africa We Want” based on lessons learnt and emerging challenges and opportunities; and,

(iii) To suggest concrete policy proposals to integratively, raise the platform of support for agriculture, value-chains, and rural communities; that will shape the declarations and investment in governance actions that Ministers and Heads of State and Governments should commit to for the next decade.
African leaders strongly embrace the transformation agenda and are looking for guidance from this broad-based stakeholder consultation to re-commit to doing their part.

Moving forward and looking into the next decade, our success will be measured by how best we coordinate and build the necessary resilience to any of the factors that may destabilise Africa. From the African Union side; we are putting in place instruments that will guide all actors to effectively deliver better, of which the CAADP Results Framework is one. At the Special Meeting of the Agriculture Development Working Group (ADWG) Leaders and CAADP Managers of NAIPs on Country Post-Compact and Investment Plan Implementation, we clearly heard the call for African leadership at the member states level of donor coordination on implementing our national investment plans so comprehensively formulated.

Now, more than ever before, it is pivotal that our efforts be efficiently and effectively be applied through coordination. I urge us to grow in working together and invest public and private capital to scale-up pilot and multi-phase projects that deliver on the five sub-themes of the Year of Agriculture and Food Security, namely:

(i) Increased agriculture production, productivity and value addition;
(ii) Functioning agricultural and rural markets;
(iii) Increased investment financing (public and private) along the agriculture value chains;
(iv) The challenges of ending hunger in Africa by 2025; and
(v) Building resilience to address vulnerability to risks.
It is by pulling these proven levers, while embedding cross-cutting issue related to gender, youth, smallholder agriculture and the environment, that we lay the foundation for the bigger picture of a resilient, prosperous, peaceful and secure Africa by 2063, to be realized.

IV. CONCLUSION

As I conclude, let us remind ourselves that the CAADP Partnership Platform is an instrument for rallying commitment and partnership alignment and harmonisation of efforts in support of African agriculture. As we journey through these days of the 10th CAADP PP, let us keep in mind that instruments like Joint Sector Reviews will better characterize our CAADP roll-out in countries to make sure that resources, policies and institutions get in better position to deliver these results and impact. Surmounting challenges such as ending hunger in Africa by 2025, closing the education and leadership gaps, reducing Africa’s vulnerability to naturally occurring or man-made shocks, having high performing, deep and broad market – at the same time as the benefits of transformation are experience by all segments of Africa’s populace – is within our reach when CAADP better serves member states.

Excellences, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen, Once again welcome to Durban. I wish you deliberations that will reflect your best thinking on the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of a decade-long plan to structurally transform Africa’s agriculture.