



**COMMUNIQUE OF THE COMMEMORATION OF
THE 9TH AFRICA DAY FOR FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY (ADFNS)**

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 05 December 2018

INTRODUCTION

1. The African Union Commission and the Government of United Republic of Tanzania jointly organized the 9th African Day for Food and Nutrition Security (ADFNS) on 5th December 2018 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in respect of AU Assembly Decision [Assembly/AU/Dec.327(XV)]¹. Adverse circumstances led to the late organisation of the event beyond the mandated date of 30th October.
2. Commemorated under the theme “*Sustained Food Safety Action for Improved Nutrition and Health of Africans*” the ADFNS is to serve as a rallying point for political, technical and financial commitments at all levels to address contemporary challenges to food and nutrition security in Africa.
3. The organization of the ADFNS was made possible with substantial financial support from three UN Agencies: Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), which covered the budgetary gap of the AU Commission.
4. The commemoration ceremony of the 9th ADFNS was preceded by a Technical Event on 4th December 2018 in which experts from institutions concerned with food security, nutrition, food safety, health and agriculture showcased their activities, progress and perspectives by way of presentations informed by the theme of the ADFNS. A total of eight presentations were made by ECA and FAO, Tanzania Food and Drug Agency, Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre (TFNC), Agriculture for Nutrition of Health (A4NH) in conjunction with the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), WFP, FAO and Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA). The presentations and discussions generated recommendations which were elaborated into a synthesis paper presented during the ceremonial event.

¹ [https://portal.africa-union.org/DVD/Documents/DOC-AU-DEC/ASSEMBLY%20AU%20DEC%20327%20\(XV\)%20_E.pdf](https://portal.africa-union.org/DVD/Documents/DOC-AU-DEC/ASSEMBLY%20AU%20DEC%20327%20(XV)%20_E.pdf)

5. The event was participated by representatives from stakeholder organizations, including AU Commission, line ministries of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, UN Agencies (WFP, FAO, ECA, WHO and UNICEF), Tanzania Food and Drug Authority (TFDA), non-governmental organisations and the Tanzania Civil Society. Due to funding limitations, the organizers could not sponsor participants from outside Tanzania.
6. The ADFNS ceremony was officially opened by the Director for Curative Services of Tanzania Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children. Other speakers during the ceremony were representative of the AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, the WFP Country Director for Tanzania on behalf of Development Partners in Tanzania.
7. All speakers underscored the importance of sustaining and scaling up action towards promotion and implementing integrated food safety, nutrition and health strategies for achieving greater results and impact. The Government of Tanzania and its agencies, the Tanzania Food and Drug Authority and the Tanzania Food and the Nutrition Centre highlighted the gains attained in implementing national food security, nutrition and food safety.
8. Representing the AU Commission, the Head of Agriculture and Food Security Division of the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, Dr. Simplicie Nouala, commended the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania for being assessed “on-track” in improving food and nutrition security, creating job for youth in agricultural value chains and establishing intra-African trade policies and institutional conditions indicators, as shown in the inaugural 2017-2018 Biennial Report on the Progress toward the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Africa Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods. He urged for accelerating the momentum so that Tanzania scores more progress in the 2018-2019 Biennial Report on the Malabo Declaration. He added that goals for improving nutrition and health of Africans would remain a farfetched dream if the issues affecting the safety of our foods do not receive adequate and sustained action by governments and concerned organisations and institutions.

KEY MESSAGES

The following are the key messages from the Commemoration of the 9th ADFNS:

1. Despite renewed commitment, current progress, severely, requires the rethinking of present food security strategies and policies towards achievement of an Africa free of hunger by 2025. With the current progress, Africa is shown not on track to achieve the sought aim within the set timeframe.
2. Achieving the goal of a hunger-free Africa essentially needs to embrace an Africa free of unsafe food. If the ultimate aim of freeing Africa of hunger is to support enhance productivity and advance economic transformation in Africa, achieving it would not be possible without the integration of food safety policy and measures into food and nutrition development policies and strategies.
3. Giving the delicate linkage among food safety, food security and nutrition, meeting the Malabo Commitments of reducing stunting to 10 percent, halving poverty, and tripling intra-African trade in agricultural commodities by 2025, are challenging to attain.
4. The enforcement of food safety at national level as well as the harmonization of national food safety regulations in line with global, continental and regional guidelines are preconditions to the realization of and harnessing the benefits of AfCFTA.
5. Although recognizing the enormous hazards and damages of aflatoxin to human health, other food-borne hazards are equally important and, indeed, more serious necessitating special attention.
6. Achieving food safety would essentially require the development of regulatory framework and the enforcement of regulations. Enhancing the institutional capacity at national and regional levels is, thus, essential and crucial.
7. As food safety is a complex and dynamic process that spans from field to fork, efficiently addressing food safety would, therefore, require the involvement of all actors along the food value chains with a multidisciplinary approach, in particular to promote nutrition-sensitive value chains.
8. Despite the high costs accompanying food safety enforcement and adoption, improving food safety is fundamental to ensuring the availability of safe and nutritious food in Africa.
9. Programmes, such as WFP's Purchase for Progress approach, provide incentives for small-scale producers to upgrade their food quality and provide a sound platform to uptake food safety at root, and deserve to be up-scaled. The role of small-scale producers to realize food safety cannot be overemphasized as more than 80 percent of the food in Africa is produced by small-scale producers, largely by women.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussions generated the following recommendations:

1. African Union Member States, will benefit from joining efforts with development partners as a matter of urgency to step up efforts and mobilize sufficient resources to improve food safety.
2. The remarkable achievements of Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA) deserve a due up-scaling. Similar initiatives need to be developed to address other food-borne diseases.
3. There is a dire need to synergize efforts aimed at improving food safety at continental, regional and national levels through proper coordination set-up.
4. Related, concerted efforts are encouraged to reinforce the Continental Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Committee.
5. Development Partners are encouraged to support current effort led by the African Union Commission in developing Food Safety and post-harvest loss Indices within the integrated framework of monitoring progress toward the achievement of commitments of Malabo Declaration and the SDGs.
6. As Africa has remarkably managed to control HIV, Member States are encouraged to step in, leadership drive, and raise the profile to address food safety that is as serious as HIV/AIDs, tuberculosis or malaria.
7. National governments are encouraged to integrate food quality and safety measures into their Home Grown School Feeding programmes.
8. Given the gravity of food safety in Africa, and in line with the notable success of Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) and Inter-African Phytosanitary Council (AU-IAPSC) in the field areas of animal, and plant health, respectively, the AUC needs to accelerate action on creating an entity to be in-charge of addressing food safety issues.
9. AU Member States are encouraged to benefit from South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the food safety field.
10. Enhancing public awareness of food safety (with emphasis on women and youth as the most vulnerable groups) is urgent in order to persuade actors along the food value chains to adhere to safety regulations.

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