

AFRICAN UNION
الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

Statement

by

**H. E. Mrs. Tumusiime Rhoda Peace
Commissioner for Rural Economy and
Agriculture
African Union Commission**

at the closing the
Inaugural Session of the Steering Committee of
the African-Arab Joint Action Plan (JAP) on
Agricultural Development and Food Security

**Khartoum Sudan
30 April – 1 May 2011**

**Your Excellency,
All Protocol observed.**

I have the please and honour to, once again, address you, this time, on the occasion of closing the Inaugural Session of the Steering Committee of the African-Arab Joint Action Plan (JAP) on Agricultural Development and Food Security.

I would like to reiterate the appreciation of the African Union Commission for the fact that despite the short notice of our request, H.E Dr. Tariq Al-Zadjali, the Director General of the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD) accepted to host this Meeting. We also thank Your Excellency for the excellent arrangements that you placed at our disposal for the smooth and interactive conduct as well as productive outcomes of the Meeting which you ably chaired and guided. I am sure Colleagues here will agree with me that H.E Tariq was able to rapidly and vigorously steer and focus the meeting drawing from his vast experience, leadership and managerial skills, versatile knowledge of African and Arab partnership and its institutional dynamics. We salute Your Excellency and appreciate your persistent insistence on concreteness all the way through the Meeting.

In the same vein, I would like to extend gratitude to all Member of the Steering Committee and through you to your respective Institutions, for according your precious time and attention to this Meeting and, indeed, to African-Arab Cooperation and Development.

I would like, at the same time to reaffirm the commitment of the African Union Commission to continue to work closely with you personally and, of course, with your esteemed institutions, to take forward our shared goal of business-like, results-oriented cooperation between African and Arab Regions with our focus on the Joint Action Plan for Agricultural Development

and Food Security adopted last year by the First Conference of African and Arab Ministers of Agriculture and, subsequently, endorsed by the Second Summit of African and Arab heads of State and Government.

In insisting on concreteness, we all noted the Chairman's highlight of most urgent activities relating to training needs and priorities, strategic commodities, joint book of agricultural statistics and basic information on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

In terms of strategy, I noted Your Excellency's emphasis on :

- (i) shortlisting institutions with potential to provide technical and financial support for the implementation of JAP;
- (ii) joint undertakings by African and Arab institutions approaching targeted agencies;
- (iii) targeting top echelons of those agencies;
- (iv) lobbying the Ministers chairing Governing Boards of the funding agencies;
- (v) engaging Member States to prepare and submit concrete projects capable of attracting funding;
- (vi) contextualizing JAP within the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the Arab Strategy for Sustainable Agricultural Development (ASSAD);
- (vii) Members of the Steering Committee linking institutions of LAS and AU for mutual support in guiding their respective Member States;

I have, in this connection, noted with appreciation, your proposal to invite me to attend opening sessions of AOAD General Assembly and its Executive Committee in order to interface with the Ministers the Ministers and some funding agencies.

We also thank you for your proposal that was adopted by all the Members of the Steering Committee here present that a temporary Facilitation Unit be set up to start off business while awaiting the formal establishment of the substantive FU. Above all, I would like to register gratitude for the offer by AOAD of 4 spacious offices and facilities for the FU and I can assure you that the AUC will participate in the temporary FU through Dr. Ibrahima Diallo who is AUC's focal point based at the Cairo AU Mission to LAS.

I would like to thank you all, Colleagues, particularly LAS and BADEA, for your active participation, valuable contribution and, above all, your continued partnership which the AU cherishes so much. I would like, at this juncture to commend BADEA for having opened a window to support African countries as they implement JAP.

On behalf of the African Union Commission, I wish to let you know that we look forward to our continued cooperation and collaboration in supporting Member States in implementing the African-Arab Joint Action Plan for Agricultural Development and Food Security.

Shukurani ghazil and bon voyage.