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**Statement of H.E. Rhoda Peace TUMUSIIME,
Commissioner of Agriculture and Rural Economy
Africa Union Commission
at the
Regional Dialogue on Climate Change Finance,
Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa,
17-19 April 2012**

Thank you, Facilitator

Mr. Gerald Trogomann, Manager for UNDP Regional Service Centre

Distinguished Participants and high-level dignitaries

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- 1. It is an honor and a pleasure to be here in Johannesburg today and have the opportunity of addressing this Regional Dialogue on Climate Change Finance. I would like to first of all convey warm greetings and best wishes from the African Union Commission to our convener the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), our host the Republic of South Africa and collaborating partners for involving the Commission of the African Union in this important meeting.**
- 2. I am gratified that we have such a high-level participation at this meeting and the turn-up is impressive and quite diverse. This is, indeed, a demonstration of our collective commitment to this critical subject matter. The diverse nature of participants is an opportunity to share and learn from one another as our countries move the agenda on the continent.**
- 3. As we draw towards Rio+20 and other global engagements including CoP18, we need improve our ways of doing business to get climate finance high on agenda in our countries and move towards tangible outputs.**

Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

- 4. Funding is the key link, if not the driver of climate change adaptation in Africa and in the world as a whole. As you know, there are enormous costs associated with mitigating climate change , adapting to the impacts of climate change, and**

building climate resilience and mainstreaming all these into the development programmes of African countries.

- 5. The African Union Strategy for Climate Change which is nearing completion has identified funding as one of the key components in Africa's adaptation and mitigation efforts as well as building resilience against natural disasters especially those occasioned by climate change and climate variability. We have had an extensive consultative process.**
- 6. The issue of Finance in climate change was presented the first time in the Copenhagen Accord and later in the Cancun Agreement. As you would recall, in those meetings the following were adopted:**
 - Fast start financing. Under this item, a collective commitment was made by developed country Parties to provide new and additional resources approximately US\$30 billion for the period 2010-2012 to address the needs of developing countries;**
 - The 2020 Pledge made by developed countries to achieve the goal of mobilizing jointly US\$ 100 billion per year by 2020 to address the needs of developing countries. It was expected that the pledged assistance would be scaled-up, new and additional, predictable and adequate, and that it would be generated from a wide variety of sources, including public and private, bilateral and multilateral alternatives.**

Those who were in Copenhagen and those who were following up the events of the UNFCCC process, must have noted how the meeting was almost becoming a failure. Recall the demonstrations, the congestion, the expectations...

All the above was managed when the world's big leaders patched up the Copenhagen Accord with monetary pledges embedded. This is to say that finance is important.

There were, however, high-sounding promises relating to innovative funding with 'new', 'additional', 'predicable' money! How much of these pledges have been honoured? Should Africa really wait for these promises to materialize? These are some of the issues that may be reflected on during this meeting. Let Africa not 'wait and see', let Africa not lament if these billions of dollars are not forthcoming.

7. As you know, at COP17 the Durban platform was adopted and one of the important measures of this platform is the adoption of the Green Climate Fund (GCF). We all welcomed this development and we are keenly following its evolution. It is expected that this fund will assist developing countries in their efforts to combat climate change and its impacts through the provision of grants and other concessional financing for mitigation and adaptation projects, programs, policies, and activities.

8. The GCF is to be capitalized by contributions from donor countries and other sources, including both innovative mechanisms and the private sector. The private sector is coming in now; Africa is going to take the mantle. The GCF will come in to complement the existing multilateral climate change funds (including., the Global Environment Facility, the Climate Investment Funds, the Adaptation Fund...); however, as the official financial mechanism of the UNFCCC, some Parties believe that it may be better for the GCF to eventually replace or subsume these other funds and also envisage more flexible access procedures and processes.

Some of these funds are there but accessing them has been a problem. Let's think through how to package sound programmes both nationally and regionally.

9. Many issues remain to be clarified during the initial phases of the Fund's implementation, and some involve long-standing and contentious debates. As you may have been following, some include what role the CGF would play in providing sustained finance at scale, how it would fit into the existing development assistance and climate financing architecture, how it would be capitalized, and how it would allocate and deliver assistance efficiently and effectively to developing countries. We are keen to see these matters sorted out as soon as possible to pave the way for addressing the pressing challenges the Fund was set up for.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

10. Now, it's time for African countries to seize the opportunity presented by the emergence of all the funds allocated for adaptation to climate change to better prepare ourselves to these effects which are already ravaging many countries of the Africa region as exemplified by the Horn of Africa, the Sahel Region and others.

11. Initiatives have also been developed and implemented by some RECs, and even some at country level. How to capitalize on these experiences to benefit the greatest number of African countries is another issue we need to concern ourselves with? We may not need to borrow experiences and best practices outside the continent, we need to scale up and replicate where things are working out well. There are success stories on the continent. We need to collect data and build the necessary infrastructure. Climate change is not in one Ministry but cuts across different sectors hence the need for inter-departmental and inter-institutional interaction at national level.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- 12. Today's meeting should also help us to better familiarize ourselves with the instruments currently in place to ensure the financing of climate change benefits Africa. These instruments are international, regional, or national. We need to address constraints responsible for African countries' inability to access those finances to the desired extent.**
- 13. Secondly, this meeting and Africa in general should explore the possibilities of setting up either regional or national adaptation funds. Climate change knows no borders. Regional programmes which are concrete require regionally focused funding mechanisms. Again, countries should ensure strategic mainstreaming of issues of climate in the national planning. Countries' own sources of funding and traditional as well as non traditional partners need to combine. Africa cannot afford to wait for promises to materialize. Africa should steer the process and move on. In any case, climate change is advancing day after day.**
- 19. As far as the role of the AUC is concerned, we will continue to provide the much-needed political support. We will also follow up on whatever promises, through the Committee of Africa Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC). The programmes that we coordinate for the continent, be it AMESD/MESA, be it ClimDev be it the GGWSS or even the Congo Forest Basin Initiative all need, deserve and must have sufficient funding to make the desired impact on the livelihoods threatened by climate change and climate variability.**

The African Risk Capacity is one of the initiatives of the African Union Commission to enable countries to pool resources for risk management.

- 20. As I conclude, I would like to state that after the world wide recognition that climate change is one of the greatest externalities facing humanity and efforts are being made to tackle it, the next biggest challenge is to avail the necessary**

resources to address both mitigation and adaptation but particularly adaptation in the case of Africa. For us to make a better case to access these resources, we need big programmes and projects, preferably at regional level given the borderless nature of climate change and its impacts.

Secondly, I would like to say that on the resources to deal with this externality, the progress has painfully been slow when the devastating impacts of climate change and climate variability are getting more intense and more frequent. Hence the need for doubled efforts at resource mobilization and generation from all sources and at all levels.

We would like to see that the resources pledged get released and disbursed at the pace and in the amounts that can make the desired impacts in complementing national budgetary allocations for the purpose. However, country leadership is needed if Africa is to succeed.

I would like to thank you for your attention and to wish you very productive discussions at this important meeting. I wish to thank again the UNDP for inviting the AUC to this meeting.

All the best.

