

AFRICAN UNION

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OPENING STATEMENT

BY

HER EXCELLENCY MRS. TUMUSIIME RHODA PEACE

COMMISSIONER, RURAL ECONOMY AND AGRICULTURE

THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

ON

THE FIRST DAY OF THE HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON ENDING HUNGER IN AFRICA

AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION CONFERENCE CENTRE

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

30 JULY, 2013

Your Excellency, Mr. Luiz Inacio Da Silva, Former President of the Federative Republic of Brazil and Patron of Instituto Lula;

Your Excellency, Mr. Wondirad Mandefro, State Minister of Agriculture of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia,

Your Excellency, Mr. José Graziano da Silva, Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations;

Honourable Ministers of AU Member States;

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives of AU Member States;

Your Excellencies, the Ambassadors of Brazil, China and Vietnam in Addis Ababa;

Fellow Commissioners of the African Union Commission present in this meeting;

Dr. Ibrahim Mayaki, NEPAD CEO

Distinguished Executive Secretaries, CEOs and Secretaries-General of Africa's Regional Economic Communities;

Distinguished Representatives of Development Partner Organisations;

Distinguished Delegates;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All Protocols Observed.

I am honoured to welcome you on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, and on my own behalf, to this very crucial High Level Meeting on Ending Hunger in Africa. It is gratifying to note that you have attached importance to this event and its expected outcomes. Your presence is a demonstration of your unfettered acceptance of shared responsibility and commitment towards bringing the nagging problem of hunger to an end by 2025.

Excellences, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you all know, the theme of the High Level Meeting is, "***Toward African Renaissance: Renewed Partnership for Unified Approach to End Hunger in Africa by 2025 within the CAADP Framework***". This theme is grounded on five fundamental principles.

First, while celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the OAU/AU under the theme "Pan Africanism and *African Renaissance*", the African Continent has awakened to the clarion call of African Renaissance. Setting this vision is crucial for arousing commitment to positive change. The banner assures Africans that they are capable of developing their continent and confine the lifelong problems of poverty and the widespread and persistent hunger to history. Therefore, whatever we do should be for realizing the goal of reawakening our continent.

On "*renewed partnerships*", there is no doubt that disjointed efforts have contributed to rendering our continent to lag behind, which could make the renaissance dream elusive. Working together strengthens complementarities and leaves no stone unturned. Partnership is, therefore, a requisite cornerstone for bringing together state and nonstate stakeholders and partners who share roles and responsibilities and mutually account for their work. A massive problem such as the widespread hunger cannot be tackled from one angle only but through concerted effort.

On "*unified approaches to end hunger in Africa*", it is important to recognize that consolidating efforts, creating and applying common standards are necessary tenets for ensuring continuity and comparability. It is important that countries pursue same targets and indicators to achieve similar results within similar time frames.

It is our fervent belief that the target year of 2025 could enrich a post-2015 scaling up of operations toward systematic reduction in the incidence of hunger through increased resilience of the general population. Targets of indicators such as stunting and deaths from lack of food can be set from current baseline to zero by 2025. I am pleased to stress that the African Union Commission is leading the development of Africa s

common position for a post-2015 Development Agenda, while also steering the formulation of Arise Africa 2063 vision. It is imperative that the knowledge and ideas shared in this meeting for eradicating hunger will enrich these endeavours.

Excellences, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am glad to report that the CAADP Framework is steadily gaining recognition as a comprehensive, multi-sector approach for boosting production and productivity, but also for improving resilience and food security and nutrition by scaling up agriculture investment and increasing economic opportunities for the entire populations. It is, therefore advocated that CAADP provides the platform for building and facilitating the renewed partnerships as well as technically backstopping a unified approach for scaling up hunger eradication efforts at all implementation levels.

We are at the verge of marking the 10th Anniversary of CAADP and the 2014 AU Year of Agriculture and Food Security. Looking back, we are glad to report that the number of AU Member States endorsing CAADP is steadily rising, but also that the countries that are implementing their National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans are appreciating the framework as a catalyst for realizing the set six per cent annual agricultural growth rate and improving food and nutrition security of the general populations. I am sure my Colleague, Dr Ibrahim Mayaki, NEPAD CEO, will later share with you on CAADP Progress and the current plans for accelerating the CAADP Momentum towards results and impact. Suffice to mention that one of the aims of this High Level Meeting is towards appreciating the instrumentality of 'Accelerating the CAADP Momentum' for catalyzing the new partnerships for unified approach to end hunger in Africa by 2025.

Excellences, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I want to underscore that at the core of this meeting is the desire to do things differently. As an illustration, if you want to kill a giant marauding beast, you have to gather all your intelligence and work out a deliberate plan of attack. It also requires a belief in self and

optimism. I, therefore, call upon all present to think and do things differently in order for us to arrive at pragmatic, feasible, viable and unified approaches to end hunger on the continent. My reading informs me that belief and desire as well as determination and focus to win gave Brazil, China, Vietnam and other countries that conquered hunger in large sections of their poor and vulnerable populations. A radical national programme accompanied by resolute leadership drive of an all-sector response against hunger, might even lead to some AU Member States reaching the goal before 2025.

Before concluding my remarks, I wish to express my utmost appreciation to the FAO Director General and President Lula for their leadership and for their gesture in co organising with the AUC in this very historic initiative.

With this note, I wish you all fruitful discussions that will motivate and enrich the decisions of the High level meeting of Heads of State and Government on Monday 1st July 2013.

Thank you.