



ARAB – AFRICA ECONOMIC FORUM
“BEYOND PROMISES: MOVING FORWARD TOWARD AN EFFECTIVE AFRICA ARAB PARTNERSHIP”

HE Mrs. Rhoda Tumusiime

Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union (AU)/Chair of the Session on the Theme: Mutual Arab-African Cooperation in Food Security during the Africa - Arab Economic Forum leading to the Third Africa – Arab Summit, 11-12 November, 2013

The Secretary General of the Arab League, H.E Mr. Nabil El Araby,
The Director General of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, H.E Mr. Abdulwabab Al Bader,
Distinguished Representatives of Partner Organizations;
Honorable Ministers and Senior Officials and Experts of the League of Arab States and AU Member States;
Members of the Diplomatic Corp;
Invited Guests and Speakers,
Ladies and Gentlemen

Courtesies

I would like to add to the messages of all the previous speakers that conveyed appreciation to the leadership and people of Emirate of Kuwait, including the Kuwait Fund and also the Secretariat of the League of Arab States for organizing well the Arab – Africa Economic Forum on the Theme: “Beyond Promises: Moving toward and Effective Arab Africa Partnership” building up to the Third Africa-Arab Summit in a few days’ time.

Introduction

The theme of this Session which I am honored and pleased to chair is on Mutual Arab-African Cooperation in Food Security. It provides us an opportunity to discuss ways and means of enhancing cooperation within the context of Africa-Arab Partnership to accelerate investment towards ensuring that the populations of our respective regions enjoy a decent living with adequate food which is nutritionally secure and safe for health.

We are all aware that availing food will not necessarily mean that each and every person has to go to the field and cultivate; some will require purchasing power to access the food.



In order to attain this goal of a food and nutrition secure and poverty free populace for the two regions, we need to take advantage of the of the resources available from extensive arable land to large labour reserve offered by Africa and the financial and technical support coming from the Arab region.

As envisaged for this session, we can initially focus on three sectors, notably: crops, livestock and fisheries. In order to optimize mutual benefit for the people of our two regions, investment in these sectors should be based on comparative and competitive advantage of our regions and countries.

To this end, a lot of groundwork has been covered as evidenced by the deliberations and recommendations of the First Joint Africa-Arab Conference of Ministers of Agriculture and Food Security held in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt in 2010 and the Second Conference of the same Ministers held last month in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Areas of cooperation in food security have been agreed on through a robust process with the political level supported by the technical level.

In follow up, the African Union Commission and the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development have been coordinating the process since the Second Summit of Africa-Arab Heads of State and Government meeting in Sirte, Libya in 2010 agreed that a Joint Facilitation Unit be set up to take forward the areas related to agriculture and food security cooperation.

Three presentations on cereals, fisheries and livestock, which play an important role in our food security, will be made during the current session.

The three papers to be presented will inform us on the importance of how the promotion of: 1) production and supply of cereals; 2) the fisheries industry as well as 3) the livestock industry in Arab and African countries, can contribute to strengthening the mutual cooperation between Arab and African countries and open great possibilities for trade and economic development.

The African Union through the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) considers these as critical.

The first presentation by Dr Mahmoud Elsohl, Director General of the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas will be followed by the presentation by Dr Tarek Ben Moussa Zadjali, Director General of the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD) and then by the presentation by Dr Hassane H. Mahamat, Coordinator of the African – Union Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign (AU-PATTEC). The three presentations will show their complementarity for food and nutritional security and poverty eradication.



Bios

Dr Mahmoud Elsohl , International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), has a PhD , Genetics from the University of California , Davis. He recently stressed that "combining grain legumes and dryland cereals - both highly nutritious, drought-tolerant crops - in their diets are the best bets for smallholder farmers in marginal environments to achieve food and nutritional security and improve their livelihoods."

Dr Tarek Ben Moussa Zadjali is Director General of the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD) which was established in 1970, for coordination among Arab countries between their different policies in agriculture, natural and human resources as well as economic development, in order to achieve the ultimate goal of a fully integrated Arab economies with the aim of achieving a fully integrated Arab economy union, and food self-sufficiency. Dr. Tarek is at the helm of this Organisation and we have been working closely in pursuit of our shared mandate.

Dr Hassane H. Mahamat, Coordinator of the African – Union Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign (AU-PATTEC), a specialized technical office of the African Union.

Prof. Tandeka Nkiwane, Special Advisor to the Chief Executive Officer of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) Planning and Coordination Agency will be the discussant. Let us now listen to our first speaker, Dr. Mahmoud Elsolh.

N.B Attached is the Forum endorsement of Resolution
Resolution on Mutual Arab African Cooperation in food security
Africa Arab Economic Forum, 11 – 12 November 2013, Kuwait

1. On Food Security

- The Forum resolves to endorse the Riyadh Resolution following the 2nd Africa Arab Ministerial Conference on Agriculture on Agricultural Development and Food Security held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 2nd October 2013
- The Forum recommends supporting Research and Development in the area of food security. Africa Arab financial institutions need to enhance cooperate and invest in the sectors of Crops, Livestock and Fisheries to ensure that both regions will benefit from these areas in order to boost the availability of food in the regions through resolving the problems of production, productivity, diseases, and standards, among others.

2. On Cooperation in Implementation of the Joint Action Plan on Agricultural Development and Food Security in Africa and the Arab Region



The Forum calls upon African and Arab States to intensify their cooperation in the fields of Crops, Livestock and Fisheries through the development of Joint Africa Arab programmes/projects to increase investment and production of commodities and reinforce the establishment of the Joint Facilitation Unit.

3. On Investments

Public and private sectors should ensure complementarity in investments in the development of rural infrastructures (slaughter houses, storage facilities, roads, etc.) to improve the transformation of products and boost value addition for export market.

The Forum request the Arab Authority for Agriculture Development and Investment to widen its mandates and works in African countries

The Forum recommends feasibility studies to facilitate the establishment of Africa-Arab companies to collaborate in the establishment of commodities based systems.