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**Opening Remarks by**

**H.E. Tumusiime Rhoda Peace**

**Commissioner for,**

**Department for Rural Economy and Agriculture,**

**AMCEN Consultative Meeting in Preparation for UNFCCC COP**

**19**

**17th November 2013; 09:00 am – 04:30 pm**

**Radisson Blu Centrum Hotel**

**Warsaw, Poland**

**Honourable Minister of State-Environment in Tanzania, and the  
AMCEN President**

**Honourable Ministers of AMCEN Bureau**

**Executive Secretary of AMCEN**

**Distinguished Delegates,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Let me start by welcoming you and also conveying to you the warm greetings and best wishes from the Chairperson of the African Union, HE Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma. Her Excellency Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, is not here with us much as she would have wished to come. She is aware of and appreciates the important role you are playing in advancing Africa's common interests.

I would also like to register appreciation to UNEP and the AMCEN Secretariat and our other partners for the cooperation and collaboration with the African Union Commission and all the special efforts and hard work involved in convening this important meeting in preparation for the ongoing UNFCCC COP 19 here in Poland.

**Excellences,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Our meeting today is taking place just after the 5th AMCEN Special Session held in Gaborone, Botswana last Month, during which we discussed the preparation for the COP 19 and development of Flagship Programs.

Before that, in preparations for this COP 19, the Conference of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) met in New York on 24th September 2013 to ensure that Africa, as per our recent tradition, speaks with one voice, under the political leadership of H.E. Jakaya Mrisho Kwikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania and, the current CAHOSCC Coordinator; and H.E. Minister of State-Environment in Tanzania, and the current AMCEN President.

CoP19 matters a lot to Africa. It is a critical juncture to strategize our common position at the ongoing negotiations of COP19 here in Warsaw, Poland, towards a fair agreement expected to be concluded in 2015 at COP 21 in Paris.

**Excellences,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Part of our strategies include: maintaining our unity of purpose in the negotiations, having a stronger voice, and reaffirmation of Africa's interests in the global negotiations.

Our discussion today is at the right moment for Africa to take stock of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Sustainable environmental management, and adaptation to, and mitigating the negative impacts of climate change are some of the areas that require our joint efforts.

Meantime, I urge our Developed Countries Partners to consider the plight of the teeming African populace most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change and to take on more ambitious emission cuts for the Second Commitment Period and to further ensure the survival of Planet Earth from the different climate-related disasters. We treasure our partnerships with other regions of the world, we are keen to strengthen these partnerships and we wish to invoke their

sense of solidarity in respect of this common cause against climate change.

**Excellences,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Harnessing the opportunities offered by Pan Africanism strengthens our position in speaking with one voice and acting with a common sense of purpose in the global climate change negotiations here at COP 19. Pan Africanism is also very crucial for us to move together as a block looking forward to the global binding agreement.

African Renaissance on the other hand, gives us the sense of confidence that it is Africa's turn to be a global force. That feeling of renewed confidence in our own capabilities will act as a stimulus in driving us towards the achievement of Africa's Common Vision 2063 and we have to do everything possible to prevent climate change undermining this trajectory.

**Excellences,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is my conviction that the AMCEN has a critical role to play in steering the Ministerial process but also linking up with continental political engagements for effective synergies and drive to secure a fair Global climate change agreement. Unfortunately, the road ahead does not seem to be easy as we see limited commitment on the part of a number of State Parties and some recent pronouncements by some in the developed world have been disheartening.

In this regard, I wish to reassure you that the African Union Commission will continue to support AMCEN activities and African Group of Negotiators (AGN) towards promoting and strengthening African Common Position on Climate Change and in general, environmental sustainability on the continent and in marshalling partnerships to combat climate change and deal with its impacts.

For Africa, let us stay the course. We have more at stake than others.

Your Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen, Thank you for your kind attention.