



**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**MR. LAILA LOKOSANG, CAADP ADVISER FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY**

**DELIVERED ON BEHALF OF:**

**HER EXCELLENCY MRS. TUMUSIIME RHODA PEACE**

**COMMISSIONER FOR RURAL ECONOMY AND AGRICULTURE**

**THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION**

**ON THE OCCASION OF:**

**THE OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE ON MEETING AFRICA'S AGRICULTURE  
TRANSFORMATION AND FOOD SECURITY GOAL**

**UNECA CONFERENCE CENTRE**

**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

**01 OCTOBER, 2014**

**EXCELLENCY GARY QUINCE, HEAD OF EU DELEGATION TO THE AFRICAN  
UNION,**

**DR. STEPHEN KARINGI, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA;**

**MR. NEIL HUBBARD, HEAD OF EU JOINT RESEARCH CENTER, MARS;**

**MR. LUCA RUSSO, REPRESENTING FAO,**

**MR. ARIF HUSSEIN, REPRESENTING WFP,**

**MR. GARY EILERT, REPRESENTING FEWSNET,**

**DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES;**

**ALL PROTOCOL OBSERVED,**

I convey to you greetings from the Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union Commission, Her Excellency Mrs. Tumusiime Rhoda Peace who unfortunately could not make it at this time to open this auspicious Conference, as she travelled to New York to attend this Year's United Nations General Assembly. Commissioner Tumusiime had earlier expressed her willingness to attend this historic occasion, especially as it is one of the activities lined up for the Africa Year of Agriculture and Food Security. However, it could not work out due to competing priorities.

Excellencies, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to underscore the rise of Africa's quest for a common agricultural transformation and food security agenda as well as the expressed willingness for evidence to inform this agenda. In 2002 the thinking to transform Africa's agriculture emerged in the wake of the new Millennium and crystallised at the twenty-second Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa that noted that "African agriculture faces a major crisis, with large numbers of people facing food shortages, net dependency on imports and food aid, and frequent disasters requiring emergency food and agriculture interventions". It is in this view that the idea of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Programme (CAADP) was hatched. CAADP was adopted by the AU Heads of State and Government who endorsed the "*Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa*"

on 12 July 2003 Maputo, Mozambique. This Declaration started by the African Leaders expressing their concern with, and I quote “that 30 percent of the population of Africa is chronically and severely undernourished; that the Continent has become a net importer of food; and that it is currently the largest recipient of food aid in the world”, end of quote. Further, let me cap it up by quoting a statement made by His Excellency Olusegun Obasanjo, the Former President of Nigeria and Chairman of the NEPAD Implementation Committee, who said in the Preface to the CAADP Framework, “After nearly forty years of economic stagnation, with the current food crises in the Horn of Africa, Southern Africa, and in Central Africa, African leaders are applying themselves to finding sustainable solutions to hunger and poverty”. He further stated, “Improving agricultural performance is at the heart of improved economic development and growth”.

CAADP then went into gear in the last ten years resulting in 40 countries to-date signing their CAADP Compacts, after a rigorous process of political buy-in, stocktaking of its opportunities challenges, resources, institutional capacities and identifying priorities for investment in an Agriculture-led agenda. In noting the momentum that has picked up with AU Member States implementing CAADP rising from one in 2007, to 13 in 2009 to 21 in 2010, the notion of sustaining the momentum arose, especially so that the phenomenon known as ‘inertia’ is avoided.

This Year 2014 marks the 10th Anniversary of CAADP and combines as the Year of Agriculture and Food Security in Africa, as declared by the AU Heads of State and Government. The June 2014 Ordinary Session of the AU Summit, endorsed the Malabo Declaration on Africa Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation (3ATG). Included in the Malabo 2014 Declaration on 3ATG, are the recommendations of the 10<sup>th</sup> CAADP Partnership Platform on M&E, Data and Statistics.

Excellencies, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is in the view that the Malabo Declaration placed the need for generating evidence at the heart of formulation and implementation of the CAADP Results Framework 2013-2023. The Results Framework counts of investing in information systems, infrastructure

and use of information for improving mutual accountability and decision making. Therefore, this Conference on Information for Meeting Africa's Agriculture Transformation Agenda would not have come at a better time.

The African Union Commission is glad to have envisioned this Conference jointly with the EU-JRC and WFP which has culminated in the event we are about to convene today and in the next two days. I am glad to note that this Conference is participated by experts in information management and systems from within the continent and other parts of the world, to share experiences, brainstorm on opportunities and agree on where to go from here. I have full confidence that this Conference will produce the desired fruits, leading to making the transformation, hunger eradication and nutrition vision an easy task for all stakeholders. The expectations of the Commission and its Partners as you can see in the concept note of the Conference are not farfetched. I believe that at the end of the day will, together, crystallise our dialogue and discussions into what will benefit the continent as enshrined in renewed Africa's agriculture-led economic growth and food security Vision.

Thank you for accepting to be part of forward thinking.