

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



STATEMENT BY

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KENYA EMBASSY

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Chairperson,

Your Excellences,

Distinguished delegates,

Kenya joins others who have spoken before in congratulating the Director-General for his re-election for a second term. Kenya delegation wishes him success in his commitment to ending hunger and malnutrition.

Chairperson,

The Thirty-ninth Conference whose theme is: "**Breaking the Cycle of Rural Poverty and Hunger by Strengthening Rural Resilience: Social Protection and Sustainable Agricultural Development**" offers an opportunity to members to focus discussions on the need to address rural poverty and hunger through strengthening rural resilience, social protection and sustainable agricultural development.

Kenya is an agriculture-based economy and is dominated by smallholder farmers who account for seventy five percent of total agricultural output and seventy percent of marketed agricultural produce. Though food security at the household level has generally improved in recent years, about 10 percent of the population is still suffering from chronic food and nutrition insecurity, while about 1.5 million are always on food relief. This number tends to increase during times of shock to almost 3 million. It is worthy to note that over 50 percent of Kenya falls under arid and Semi-arid category. Erratic weather, droughts, floods, recurrent diseases, pre-harvest and post-harvest losses; food commodity price volatility and inadequate market infrastructure have kept Kenya's fragile food system under severe pressure, thus hindering attainment of food security for all.

Chairperson,

Given the importance of the Agriculture sector in Kenya, as the main driver for growth of the entire economy and ensuring food security and rural development, the policy of the Government, recognizes the need to give primary attention to this sector. The Government's Blue Print, Vision 2030, aims to increase annual GDP growth rate to 10% and to maintain it till 2030 and beyond. The Agricultural Sector Development Strategy (2010-2020) envisaged to transform the sector, lays special focus on smallholder farmers who are the majority of the Kenyan population in order to increase productivity, incomes, social equity, reduction of poverty and improved standards of living. Further, there are legal and institutional reforms that have been undertaken to revitalize the agricultural sector.

Chairperson,

The economic and social rights enshrined in the Constitution states that every Kenyan has the right to be free from hunger, and to have adequate food of acceptable quality and that the State shall provide appropriate social security to persons who are unable to support themselves and their dependents. Kenya also enacted the National Social Protection Policy in 2012 to guide actions and interventions to meeting the needs of the poor and vulnerable.

In recognition of this duty, the Government has initiated various interventions geared towards alleviating poverty and vulnerability among agro-based communities through: increasing household food production and access through targeted subsidies, cash grants, school feeding and nutrition, general food distribution under the Strategic Food Reserves, job creation among the youths and the rural community and promoting resilience of vulnerable communities. To manage risks and fragility of the agriculture sector and in order to improve resilience, the Government has initiated the Kenya

Insurance and Risk Management Program covering both crops and livestock enterprises through Private Public Partnerships at an initial cost **USD \$ 1.25 million**, which will progressively be increased to **USD \$ 0.02 billion** in five years.

The Government is implementing subsidized fertilizer program to increase access and utilization of fertilizer by the small holder farmers; to lower and stabilize fertilizer prices and to increase crop productivity. A fertilizer and seed development fund of **USD \$ 0.03 billion** has been established in the country. The fund will increase to **USD \$ 0.15 billion** by 2017. The fertilizer industry development is in process as a long term plan.

Fish production has increased progressively since the year 2010. The increase in production is mainly attributed to aquaculture which has increased tremendously from 1000MT in 2009 to approximately 50,000MT to date. While in Livestock production, the Government is establishing Disease Free Zones to ensure quality livestock production for improved market access in the rural areas.

Chairperson,

To reduce over reliance on rain-fed farming, the Government is increasing land under irrigation and expanding irrigation infrastructure through various programmes including the National Expanded Irrigation Programme where 44,386 acres have been put under irrigation in the last two years and the Galana-Kulalu Food Security Project (GKFSP) where a 10,000-acre model farm is being implemented. The Government plans to put up 20 new storage and drying facilities to support the irrigation schemes.

To support smallholders in increasing their access to affordable loans, the Government has put in place the Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC) that

provides loans to farmers. Under the Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme (ACGS), which is a risk sharing public private partnership, the Participating Financial Institutions have cumulatively disbursed approximately **USD \$ 0.04 billion** to 25,071 beneficiaries.

Agricultural mechanization has been identified as a critical input to enhance productivity. The Government has initiated bilateral contacts with development partners aimed at increasing agricultural machinery and equipment in the country.

Chairperson,

In conclusion, Kenya Government appreciates the support extended to her by FAO and is committed to continued cordial working relations. We also appreciate other development partners supporting the agricultural sector and rural transformation that will break the cycle of rural poverty and hunger and hence achieve the ultimate goal of ending hunger and malnutrition in the country.