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## Talking Points- World Food Day at the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) High Policy Event

15 October 2020

### Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Nearly 690 million people were hungry in the world before the pandemic with 250 million of them living in Africa. The ability of many Africans to access sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs has been disrupted by climate change and successive natural disasters and epidemics. Cyclones Idai and Kenneth, locust outbreaks in Eastern Africa, and the recent droughts in Southern, Eastern and West Africa are some examples. The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to push an additional 130 million people into food insecurity globally the majority of these will be in Africa according to projections by the World Food Programme.

In order to avoid on the one hand an unprecedented food crisis as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and on the other hand to win the battle against hunger and malnutrition by 2025, the continent need to fully embrace the African agricultural transformation agenda and strengthen the resilience of its agriculture and food systems. The goals and target on this transformation agenda are well articulated in the Malabo declaration. While the 2<sup>nd</sup> CAADP BR report revealed that only 4 countries were on track to meeting the Malabo Declaration goals by 2025, it was noted however that 32 other countries have made significant progress since the 1<sup>st</sup> BR report in 2017.

Accelerating actions for results and impacts call for continued political commitment and engagement around the CAADP Agenda. To this end the AUC, FAO and partners convened two high level ministerial meetings in April and July this year. The first meeting brought together ministers responsible for agriculture in AU Member States to assess the impacts of COVID 19 pandemic on agriculture and food and nutrition security. Because the

successful implementation of these actions required the involvement of other sectorial ministries, the second meeting brought together AU ministers in charge of Agriculture, Trade and Finance with the objectives of identifying priority actions to strengthen the resilience of Africa's food system through trade and investment. The ministers in a joint declaration agreed on priority action to transform agriculture, facilitate intra-regional trade and increase investment to transform the African food systems. Some of these actions include improving access to inputs and inputs services, investing in agro processing, prioritization of policies aiming at reducing risks to food security, strengthening ability of farmers to withstand shocks, take advantage of the AfCFTA, increasing public and private financing and investment in agriculture.

The meeting further requested the Commission to develop and facilitate domestication of continental policy, strategies, frameworks and tools to support the implementation of the agreed actions.

Over the years, the formulation of policies, strategies, frameworks and tools by DREA is informed by global best practices and build where available on global instruments.

Speaking on the policy products of CFS, the domestication of the Malabo Commitments into NAIPS is not only driving by the desire to increase investments in Agriculture, but more importantly to ensure that these investments achieved their intended outcome which is accelerating African agriculture transformation for livelihoods and shared prosperity. And this is guided by the principles of responsible Investment in agriculture and food systems. The implementation of the African Union land policy initiative and the African Union Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative are all informed and guided by the principles and policy recommendations of the Voluntary Guidelines for Governance in Tenure and the Agro ecological and other Innovative Approaches for Sustainable Food Systems that ensure Food Security and Nutrition.

You will agree with me that because of our long standing cooperation and partnership with FAO, WFP and IFAD, deliberate steps are taken by the AUC to translate CFS policy recommendations into policy options taking into consideration the specificities of the continent and submitted to AU policy organs for endorsement and subsequent implementation by AU MS. This is in my view the only to ensure policy coherence not only between AU MS but more importantly between the global, continental regional and national levels

for efficient use of the scarce resources allocated to agriculture to achieve the maximum impacts.

I look forward to strengthening this partnership for the continent to win the battle against food insecurity and malnutrition and achieve the AU vision of the Africa we want.