



20 June 2013

38th Session of the FAO Conference

**Special Event On Gabon with
His Excellency Ali Bongo Ondimba,
President of the Republic of Gabon**

Your Excellency Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of the Republic of Gabon,

Ministers, Ambassadors, Permanent Representatives, delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to participate in this important event at the side of President Bongo.

Your Excellency, we are eager to hear your vision for your country, as laid out in “Emerging Gabon”, a comprehensive sustainable development strategy.

Before giving the floor to the President, let me highlight two things.

First, that there is political leadership at the highest level to implement a nation-wide development strategy. We need it. That is an important foundation to start from and that you are providing.

Second, the importance of looking at the sustainable development challenge from its multiple dimensions, as is presented in “Emerging Gabon”.

This strategy will play an important role in framing FAO’s cooperation with Gabon, so that we can better contribute to your efforts to promote sustainable development and guarantee food security and social inclusion.

I want to put emphasis on the ownership aspect. FAO’s role is to assist countries, to work under *their* leadership, to achieve the goals that *they* set.



I am pleased that Gabon and many countries in Africa and other regions are taking the reins of their own development. Please count on the support of FAO.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would now like to invite his Excellency Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of the Republic of Gabon, to take the floor. Thank you.