

As delivered

Statement by Hon. Vincent Bamulangaki Ssempijja Uganda's Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

The State of Food and Agriculture: *Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security.*

40th Session of FAO Conference, 3-8 July 2017

Mr. Chairman

Colleague Ministers, Excellencies,

This statement is aligned with the aspirations of the 134 countries of the Group of 77 and China. It also espouses the views so far expressed by those countries that have so far spoken before me. Much as members of the G-77 and China are at different stages of development, they in totality host the highest number of people affected by food insecurity and malnutrition and undernutrition. Their agricultural development is negatively affected by climate change. Therefore their quest to secure sustainable food security and nutrition should aim at climate change mitigation and adaptation

Mr. Chairman, we thank the Secretariat's presentation of this agenda item, focusing on the State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) 2016 report, with the theme of "*Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security.*" This fits well in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by Heads of State and Government in September 2015.

We also subscribed to the Paris Agreement commitments on food and agriculture adopted during the 21st session of the Conference of Parties (COP21). If well implemented, it would bolster the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The biggest challenges for smallholder Farmers in developing countries, Uganda inclusive, include lack of access to affordable credit and other financing instruments for investing in capacity building, new technologies and practices. Efforts should continue to strengthen developing countries' capacities to adapt to climate change, achieve food security and improve nutrition, including through South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

In the quest to address the challenges of climate change, Uganda supported by FAO and other development partners including the EU and Irish Aid implemented a climate change adaptation programme jointly spearheaded by the Ministries of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and that of Water and Environment. The project provided finance to private sector agents and built their capacity to multiply and supply high value and high yielding planting materials to smallholder farmers in climate sensitive areas.

Besides the smallholder farmers in climate sensitive areas, producers are provided with microcredit to purchase small scale equipment for agro processing and value addition in addition to training them in alternative small and medium Enterprise development. They are also trained in various income generating activities that enhance their income levels. This approach addresses the three pillars of development, namely social, economic and environmental.

Despite the above efforts, farmers lack access to markets, they are vulnerable to different types of shocks such as pests and diseases, droughts and floods. They are not sufficiently organized and lack adequate capacity to mitigate the effects of climate change. The youth and women are particularly affected, and therefore require conscious programmes to prepare them to participate in gainful agriculture employment.

At the moment, Uganda is a host to many refugees from some of its neighboring countries facing insecurity and conflict. With the obligation to help others in need, the host communities embrace the refugees and share with them the available meagre resources. The high refugee population however, exerts pressure on the environment therefore exacerbating the effects of climate change that is causing hunger and food shortages.

Mr Chairman, allow me to finally thank the FAO Office in Uganda that has supported us during the drought and other challenges.

We thank you very much and thank you for your attention.