

**Statement delivered by
His Excellency Vincent Bamulangaki Ssempijja,
Minister for Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries of the Republic of Uganda
on the occasion of the
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Thank you Mr. Chairman,
Colleagues, Ministers,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

I bring you greetings from Uganda and of course from his Excellency the president Yoweri Museveni. Uganda associates its statement with the statement by the African Regional Group and that of the Group of 77.

I wish to start by congratulating his Excellency Dr Qu Dongyu upon his election to shoulder the responsibilities of FAO as Director-General.

I wish also to thank the outgoing Director-General - Mr. Graziano da Silva and the FAO Team for conducting the study on The State of Food and Agriculture 2018 under the theme: Migration, Agriculture and Rural Development. The Report and the Presentation Mr Chairman that the Secretariat has just made are quite instructive. The Report brought out important and interesting dimensions on migration that have so far not been considered to be important.

The issue of migration and Agriculture is very important to Uganda given the large number of refugees in the country. According to UNHCR 2017 report Uganda hosted 1.4 million refugees, but of course Mr Chairman the number has since gone up. We are the number one largest refugee hosting country in Africa and second globally.

Uganda operates a progressive and generous Refugee Policy. In 2016, United Nations Summit for Refugees declared Uganda's Refugee Policy as the model. Uganda's 2006 Refugee Act and 2010 Refugee Regulations allow for integration of refugees within host communities with refugees having access to the same public services such as schools and hospitals, as nationals. They have freedom of movement and are free to pursue livelihood opportunities in Uganda. They are given land to grow their own food, they are free to get employed as long as they qualify and also establish businesses. These refugees have an impact on agriculture and food security. Since this is a category of migration that rises out of conflict and not an ordinary choice. We need to work together to stem it through peace building and of course Uganda has been a champion of the peace building cause in the Great Lakes and Africa in general.

Mr Chairman, your Excellencies,

Another very important dimension of Agriculture and migration in Uganda is the largest Youths population in our demography. Uganda has the largest youth population in the world with about 77 percent of the population being youths.

Young people need employment, they need to adventure and experience life beyond their original homes. Their desire to fulfil these needs gives rise to migration in all its forms: rural to rural, rural to urban and even international migration. Uganda agrees that we need not stop, or even encourage such migration but provide conditions that enable such youths to live a life that fulfils their dreams. However, if it is distress migration, then we need to prevent it.

In Uganda, the Ministry, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries, with the support of FAO developed a National Strategy for Youth Employment in Agriculture (NSYEA). The Strategy was prioritized by the Government to ensure guided interventions related to youth in agriculture in the country. We have also implemented an Integrated Country Approach (ICA) for promoting decent rural employment to stem distress youth migration.

Globally, we must work together to prevent distress migration arising from extreme environmental and climatic conditions such as flooding, drought and landslides. Uganda has been a victim of such weather phenomena which has on occasions resulted into loss of lives.

Mr. Chairman, your Excellencies,

The above example sends a clear and unequivocal message that we cannot ignore environmental and climate change issues.

Environmental factors have for a long time had an impact on national and global migration flows, as people have historically left places with harsh or deteriorating conditions. However, the scale of such flows, both internal and cross-border, is expected to rise as a result of accelerated climate change, with unprecedented impact on lives and livelihood. Often times, Mr Chairman, agriculture is affected, leading to food insecurity and giving rise to migration.

Uganda has a big and growing population, we have risen from 34.6 million people in 2014 to 40 million people today. This means that land available for Agriculture continues to be subdivided to serve the increasing population. But also, the pressure to find jobs for this population or available land for agriculture, gives rise to migration between communities, across borders and globally.

So the report did not lead - The Report did a good job in categorizing migration, analyzing the causes of migration and proposing solutions that we can consider as global policy makers to mitigate the negative impact of migration while providing a human-ecosystem that allows people to live a happy life on planet earth including through migration.

Uganda therefore commends the report and its recommendations.