



REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

COUNTRY STATEMENT PRESENTED TO THE 38TH SESSION OF THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO) CONFERENCE

BY

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- Mr. Chairperson of the Conference
- Your Excellencies
- Distinguished Delegates
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Mr. Chairperson,

Permit me to convey best wishes and congratulations from Her Excellency Dr Joyce Banda, President of the Republic of Malawi, to Mr. Jose Graziano da Silva, FAO Director-General on the holding of the 38th Session of the FAO Conference.

May I commend the Director General and his team for the candid report on the state of food and agriculture which was presented. Indeed addressing issues of food security and malnutrition require integrated actions across sectors. Malawi places greater importance on its obligation to ensure that no person in Malawi goes to bed on an empty stomach. In this regard through the leadership of Her Excellency President Dr. Joyce Banda Malawi continues to undertake measures aimed at ensuring that food and nutrition security is attained both at household and national levels. The recognition Malawi received here a couple of days ago is a clear testimony that Malawi is on the right track to fight hunger and malnutrition.

Mr. Chairman, To address the challenges of food and nutrition security Malawi is implementing its agricultural development programmes through a home grown plan called the Agricultural sector Wide Approach (ASWAP) which is aligned to the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the World Food Summit outcomes and the Millennium Development Goals. The country is also fulfilling the African Union's Maputo Declaration which calls on Member States to allocate a minimum of 10 percent of their annual budgets to the agricultural sector. Malawi remains committed to this requirement as demonstrated by allocating 19 percent of its annual budget to the sector in 2012/2013 fiscal year.

Within the framework of the Presidential Initiative on Poverty and Hunger Reduction, Malawi has embarked on several programmes such as: promotion of legumes production to improve nutrition and income, production of milk through the dairy development and small animal stock on pass on basis; as well as fisheries and aquaculture development. In addition, the country has been implementing the Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP) for the past 8 years with remarkable success in improving food availability, particularly in rural areas. The Government has established under the Office of the President and Cabinet the Department of Nutrition and HIV/AIDS headed by the Principle Secretary to deal with issues of nutrition, HIV and aids.

Mr. Chairman, the group mostly affected by hunger and malnutrition includes women, the youth , orphans, the elderly and children. Malawi therefore includes these groups in its programmes to fight against hunger and malnutrition.

Due to the negative impact of climate change, it is increasingly risky to fully depend on rain-fed agriculture as occurrences of drought in some parts of Malawi are becoming a common phenomenon. In this regard, Malawi has established the Green Belt Initiatives which aims at promoting irrigated farming. Under this initiative, Malawi has targeted to increase the area under irrigation from the current 100,000 to 200,000 hectares by 2016. Apart from that Malawi follows good land, water and natural resources management practices for sustainable agricultural production.

Mr. Chairman, Malawi realizes the importance of Research development and technology dissemination for its economic development. The country has therefore embarked on improving its research and extension systems. To reduce postharvest losses Malawi is promoting various crop protection methods including use of metallic silos and approved pesticides with the support of FAO.

Mr. Chairman, the fight against hunger can not be won by government institutions only. Malawi believes in building strong partnerships. In this regard Malawi government wishes to commend the role Development Partners, Civil Society Organisations and the private sector are playing in

providing the much need financial and technical support to the country in agriculture. The CSOs have been playing a crucial role in the sector through provision of agricultural extension services following the reforms undertaken by the Government to allow for partnerships in delivery of services and promoting organization of farmers into groups, clubs and cooperatives to ease marketing and get bargaining power . This has paved the way for greater participation by Non State Actors.

In the save vein, let me commend the Director-General for the well-thought out Programme of Work and Budget for 2014-2015 which is under the consideration by the Conference. We have no doubt that the strategic re-orientation that has been proposed will enhance the impact of FAO programmes in our countries. However, this can only be achieved if requisite resources are put at the disposal of the Director General. Malawi, therefore, supports the draft budget.

Mr. Chairperson, Malawi Parliament recently passed the Public Private Partnerships Bill which will contribute significantly to the consolidation of the gains made in the achievement of the fight against hunger and malnutrition as this will encourage investment in the agricultural sector by the private sector for increased agricultural production and economic growth by participating in production, marketing, agro processing and value addition.

Mr. Chairperson, distinguished delegates, despite all these successes Malawi continues to face enormous challenges in implementing its programmes in terms of financial and technical needs. The country needs continued support financially and technically. I have no doubt that with concerted efforts, the battle against food insecurity and malnutrition shall be won.

Thank you for your attention.