



Final Report of

The Second Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural

Development and Food Security

Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

2nd October, 2013

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The Second Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural Development
and Food Security

Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

2nd October, 2013

The Second Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural Development and Food Security was held on October 2nd, 2013 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The meeting was attended by the African and Arab Ministers, and representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture, African Union Commission (AUC), The League of Arab States (LAS), and a number of related organizations, institutions and associations.

Opening Session:

In his speech, **H.E. Dr. Ayman Farid Abu Hadeed– Minister of Agriculture and Agricultural Reclamation of Land–The Arab Republic of Egypt** (Head of the previous Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural Development and Food Security in 2010) stated that Egypt had hosted the previous Ministerial meeting in Sharm Elsheikh ,2010 where both the Joint Action Plan (JAP) and the Sharm ElSheikh Resolution were issued and that they mark the general framework for the Africa-Arab Co-operation towards Agricultural Development and Food Security. H.E. stated that this Second Ministerial meeting held in Riyadh would draw the future steps and the implementation mechanisms that would encourage this joint co-operation. Moreover, he called upon all the related parties to elevate the obstacles that face the Development Programs in the field of Agriculture and to

give priority to Agriculture within their Political Working Programs. He emphasized the importance of encouraging Agricultural Investment through the adequate use of the available natural resources that the two regions enjoy, in order to face issues of Food Security and bridge the Food Gap. In addition to the importance of unifying their concerted efforts to face the international and regional challenges specifically the Climate changes that affects biological differentiation and natural resources in a negative manner and hinder agricultural development. He also gave an overview of the steps taken by the Ministry to encourage the Agricultural sector and are encompassed within both their Agricultural Strategy for Sustainable Development until 2030 and the regional programs for it during 2013-2017. In conclusion, he passed over the chairmanship of the meeting to H.E. Fahd Bin Abdel Rahman Balghunaim – Minister of Agriculture – The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Head of the current Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural Development and Food Security , Riyadh 2013).

Mrs. Rowda Besi Tomosumi – Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture at the African Union, welcomed the delegates and expressed her gratitude to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their generous hospitality. She emphasized the importance of the agricultural sector to both the African and Arab regions indicating that the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural program (CAADP) which was launched in 2003, serves as a guidance tool for the policies and strategies of the African countries. Moreover, she added that this strategy should be implemented in order to achieve agricultural development and to ensure Food Security. H.E. stressed that this would full-fill this joint partnership and has participated in improving the performance of agricultural development in Africa to a very large extent thus making Africa one of the fastest growing economies in the world despite the fact that some of this countries do not produce oil. She stated that

the agricultural sector in Africa provides promising opportunities for trade and investment and has witnessed an increase in the inflow of foreign direct investments within the last few years. She added that the Arab investments in Africa can easily increase and that the tool of Africa-Arab co-operation can be used as a strong instrument for encouraging trade and investment through benefitting from the available concrete cultural, geographic neighborhood and natural resources in the two regions. She added that the theme of this meeting, "Strengthening Africa-Arab co-operation through supporting sustainable investment in Agricultural Development and Food Security" is extremely important and requires all the parties to exert their efforts to implement the JAP.H.E. emphasized the need to register the progress achieved and the obstacles that face the implementation specifically those related to establishing the Facilitation Unit that has not yet been operationalized indicating that the AUC has taken positive steps in this regard. In conclusion, she stressed the importance of the recommendations of the High Level Officials Meeting for the Second Joint Africa–Arab Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural Development and Food Security, whose aim is to catalyze the implementation of the JAP and that has been adopted by the First Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural Development and Food Security, Sharm El Sheikh 2010.

H.E. Dr. Ambassador Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al Twaijri – Assistant Secretary General for Economic Affairs, League of Arab States expressed his appreciation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their bountiful hospitality and stressed that the communication with our African brothers aims at increasing the depth of partnership between the Arab and African countries. He emphasized that the First Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural Development and Food Security, Sharm El Sheikh 2010, issued the JAP (2011-2016) that called for the

initiation of the Facilitation Unit as a tool for following up its implementation has not yet been activated.. He requested all the related parties to work towards initiating this unit , stressed the importance of the Steering Committee and the need to provide the required financial obligations for the unit so it may begin commencing its duties. H.E. added that the recommendations of the High Level Officials Meeting must be implemented in order to allow the establishment of joint programs that are of benefit to the people of both regions. He stressed the importance of encompassing the Private Sector and the basic role that it plays in investment within the Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SME's), to enhance the role of the Private Sector, the Farmer Organizations and Producers , to benefit from the currently existing entities in both regions and their enhancement. H.E. concluded the importance of encouraging the Africa-Arab co-operation in order to establish a solid Partnership that serves the goals of the past, current and future Summits whose main priority is investment in agriculture and is the main topic in National Programs, thus this Partnerships represent a strong factor in pushing forward Africa–Arab Economic cooperation.

In his speech H.E Dr. Fahd Bin Abdul Rahman Balghunaim – Minister of Agriculture – The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia welcomed the delegates from both the African and Arab sides, and he stated that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in November 2008 had the honor of also hosting the High Level Meeting of Experts on Agricultural Development and Food Security. This meeting discussed the primary and important steps for realization of mutual visions, methods, programs and required mechanisms for the reinforcement of Africa-Arab efforts and plans for coordination and integration in Sustainable Agricultural Development and Food

Security in both regions. H.E. clarified that this Second meeting convened in Riyadh is to follow-up and provide the necessary and intensification efforts for achieving Food Security and Sustainable agricultural Development. He also added that the meeting aims to review the current situation of Agricultural Development and Food Security progress in the two regions and the challenges facing agricultural cooperation, in order to reach feasible suggestions that will catalyzing the implementation of the JAP (2011-2016) that has been rectified by the Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural Development and Food Security, Sharm ElSheikh 2010 and approved by the Second Africa-Arab Summit in October 2010 , Sirte/ Libya. Moreover, he stated that the JAP aims at achieving Food Security and Sustainable Agricultural Development, and is based on the close proximity of the mutual visions and integration of the two regions' strategies. On the Arab side, this is represented by the Arab Strategy for Sustainable Development (ASSAD) and on the African side, by the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Plan (CAADP) within the framework of the New Partnership of Africa's Development (NEPAD). H.E. emphasized that the JAP also aims at establishing a mechanism for its implementation through establishing a Facilitation Unit, a Steering Committee and that necessary financial obligations should be provided by the existing Arab and African institutions.

Furthermore, H.E. stressed that the issues of Agricultural Development and Food Security are major areas of priority within the structure of development in the Arab and African regions, and that in spite of efforts made to develop agricultural development yet the problem of food shortage still prevails. In this context, the Food Gap in 2010 (based on the figure of AOAD) is approximately \$34 billion in the Arab world and \$14 billion in Africa, hence requiring us to exert more effort and to allocate more resources to face these joint challenges through cooperation

that is based on a mutual vision and strategic partnership to achieve Agricultural Development and Food Security in both regions. H.E. gave an overview on a number of recommendations made by the Second High Level Experts Meeting on Agricultural Development and Food Security for the Second Africa Arab Ministerial Meeting. In conclusion, he stated that The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia allocates great importance to Africa- Arab cooperation where Africa is highly ranked within their programs on Food Security related to Saudi agricultural investment abroad, within the King Abdullah's Initiative for Saudi Agricultural Investment Abroad. Accordingly this Initiative encourages Saudi Investors to invest in countries that have promising agricultural potential and to provide the Kingdom with sufficient food supplies and to coherently develop agriculture in these countries. Lately, Saudi agricultural investment in Africa has witnessed a great increase.

The delegates and participants welcomed the speech of H.E Dr. Fahd Bin Abdul Rahman Balghunaim – Minister of Agriculture – The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and emphasized its importance and requested that it be added as one of the main official documents of the Ministerial Meeting (Annex II).

II. Work Organization

1. Election Of The Members Of The Office Of The Meeting:

After consultations between the Arab and African sides and in pursuance of the rules and regulations, Ministers approved the election of members of the Bureau, which was agreed upon in the High Level officials Meeting, as follows:

a. **The Africa Side:**

- Co-chairperson – Chad
- Vice chairman – The Gambia
- Rapporteur - Burkina Faso

b. **The Arab Side:**

- Co-chairperson – The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- Vice Chairman- State of Kuwait
- Rapporteur- State of Qatar

2. Adoption of the Agenda and Work Programme

The agenda and work programme were considered and adopted by the Ministers and representatives.

III . Final Report Of The High Level Officials Meeting In Preparation For The Second Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting On Agricultural Development And Food Security:

Ministers reviewed the final report and recommendations of The High Level Officials Meeting; and in light of the discussions, the final report and the recommendations were approved by the Ministers, as follows:

1. We call upon The League of Arab States, The African Union and Regional Organizations to implement the Joint Action Plan and activate existing mechanisms of African Arab cooperation in Agriculture Development and Food

Security and enhance their role in developing proposed agricultural projects and programs as follows:

- i. The Facilitation Unit should be composed of fulltime-qualified experts to work with businessmen, governmental bodies and financial institutions and provide suggestions to ensure cooperation in the field of Agricultural investment in both the private and public sectors. Also, the African Union and the Arab League should pay their contributions to the Facilitation Unit budget on a yearly basis.
- ii. The Facilitation Unit is tasked to provide full and integrated Agricultural investment information system in cooperation with member states and to define the most important and viable agricultural projects and disseminate them among businessmen, investors, governments and the private sector and promote agricultural investment in the two regions and identify competitive advantages for the countries within the two regions.
- iii. Call upon the Governments in the member States to designate focal persons in their Ministries to coordinate with the Steering Committee and to present information, programmes, investment maps and feasibility studies in the fields of agricultural development and food security.
- iv. Expand Arab and African cooperation mechanisms in Agricultural development and food security to include the private sector, investors, cooperative associations and farmers' organizations.

2. Call upon African and Arab States and their financial institutions to provide the needed financial resources to expand investments in the agricultural sector and other sectors related to food security, and encourage the private sector to increase its investments in agriculture especially those related to food and nutrition security,

3. Encourage scientific research, develop agricultural programmes and agricultural dissemination and technology transfer which are related to agricultural investment to develop agricultural inputs and post-harvest technologies.

4. Call upon Arab African and International financial institutions to contribute in supporting the African Union- Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign (AU-PATTEC) to create one million square kilometers of Tsetse free areas in affected countries by 2025 and to eradicate the Tsetse fly in the shortest time in the spirit of Africa partnership.

IV. Riyadh Resolution Endorsed By The Second Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting On Agricultural Development And Food Security

Ministers and Head of delegations of The Second Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural Development and Food Security discussed the Riyadh draft resolution, which was submitted by The High Level Officials Meeting, and in light of the deliberations, discussions, and modifications, Ministers and Head of delegations ratified Riyadh resolution.

RIYADH RESOLUTION

**The Second Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting
on Agricultural Development and Food Security
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
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RIYADH RESOLUTION

**The Second Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting
on Agricultural Development and Food Security
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
2nd October, 2013**

Ministers of Agriculture in the African and Arab States in their Second Meeting on Agricultural Development and Food Security hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia held in RIYADH, during 29-30 September to 1-2 October 2013 under the Theme" **Strengthening Africa Arab Cooperation through Promoting Sustainable Investment in Agriculture and Food security**" in the context of the Joint Action Plan (JAP).

EXPRESSING gratitude to the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, represented by the Ministry of Agriculture, for their gracious reception , generous hospitality and providing all means and facilities to ensure the success of the meeting;

REFERRING to the outcome of the first Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural Development and Food Security, held in Sharm El Sheik, Egypt in February 2010, which approved the Joint Action Plan (JAP) on Agricultural Development and Food Security in the African and Arab Regions and called for the establishment of a Facilitation Unit to effectively follow up the implementation of the JAP;

NOTING WITH APPRECIATION that, with the exception of some areas of food insecurity, the general food situation in both African and Arab regions has improved in the past three years, while **NOTING** the fact that the effects of Climate Change continue to pose a challenge to agricultural production;

RECOGNIZING the potential role that, the Private Sector in the African and Arab regions can play in improving agricultural investment between the two regions;

EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER the non-operationalization of the Facilitation Unit; while **RECOGNISING** the establishment of the Steering Committee;

BEING CONVINCED of the fact that the eradication of Tse tse fly and Trypanosomiasis in affected countries is an important precondition for agricultural development and food security in the two regions and **APPRECIATING** the support provided by the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) to the African Union Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign (AU-PATTEC) in this regard;

CONSIDERING the Recommendations of the African and Arab High Officials Meeting held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 29 to 30 September 2013, based on the outcomes of the study on Agriculture Investment in the context of JAP and Sustainable Agricultural Investment to Strengthen Africa – Arab Cooperation conducted by the African Union Commission and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States;

HAVE DECIDED TO:

1. Take note of the Report of the Official High Level Meeting and adopt its Recommendations.

2. Endorse the official statement made by the Chair of the meeting, the Minister of Agriculture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to be part of the official documents of the meeting.
3. Call upon the Africa Union Commission and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States to take all practical measures to start implementation of JAP within the framework of the Arab Strategy for Sustainable Agricultural Development (ASSAD) 2005-2025 and Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) Strategies and prepare projects identified in the two strategies and monitor progress of implementation.
4. Call upon Arab African and International financial institutions to contribute in supporting the African Union- Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign (AU-PATTEC) to create one million square kilometers of Tsetse free areas in affected countries by 2025 and to eradicate the Tsetse fly in the shortest time in the spirit of Africa partnership
5. Invite the African and Arab governments to develop the infrastructure and support the efforts of the Private Sector, Farmers and Producers Organizations of African and Arab regions to participate in implementing JAP aiming to develop agriculture in the two regions;
6. Call upon governments of African and Arab regions to prepare project profiles that would serve as pre-feasibility studies of projects for investment.
7. Call upon the Africa Union Commission, the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States and the financial institutions in both the African and Arab regions to support the work of the Facilitation Unit and implementation of the Joint Action Plan.

8. Request the African Union Commission and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States to designate a Coordinator and Vice Coordinator to initiate the operationalization of the Unit as an Independent Africa-Arab Joint Mechanism by the first Quarter of 2014;
9. Endorse the composition of the steering committee, the chairperson would be alternately between League of Arab States represented by AOAD and the AUC. The committee members would be as follows:
 - Representative from AUC and Representative from LAS- GS.
 - Representative from NEPAD planning and coordination.
 - Representative from African Development Bank.
 - Representative from Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa.
 - Representative from Islamic Bank.
 - Representative from one of the Arab Financing Institutions and representative from the African Regions.
 - Representative from The Private Sector from the African Region and representative from the Arab Region.
 - Representative from The Farmer organizations from the African Region and Representative from the Arab Region.
10. Request the steering committee to submit progress report, its achievements as well as the challenges on biannual basis to the Ministers of Agriculture of both regions. The African Union commission and League of Arab States should follow-up the implementation of recommendations of the steering committee.

11. Call upon the League of Arab States and the African Union Commission to fulfill their financial obligations towards the budget of the Facilitation Unit in order to recruit a Coordinator and staff to implement its projects.
12. Request the African Union Commission and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States to closely follow up the implementation of this Resolution.

V. Place And Venue Of The The Third Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting On Agricultural Development And Food Security

Ministers and heads of delegations welcomed the proposal of the Republic of Uganda to host the Third Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural Development and Food Security which will be held in October 2015.

Annex (1)

List of participants



List of Participants - States

2nd Africa Arab Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural development & Food Security

MINISTERIAL MEETINGS

(2nd October 2013)

Riyadh – Saudi Arabia

S	Name	Country	Title	Email	Telephone
1	Amb. Abdel Wahab Derbal	Algeria	Head of Algerian Delegation	drwahab@yahoo.fr	+966517711843
2	El Mouloud Bousabia	Algeria	Minister Counselor	ebousbia@yahoo.fr	0564616485
3	Belhadad Hamdeine	Algeria	Counselor		
4	Dr. Juma Ahmed Al	Bahrain	Minister of Monoplist Affairs and Urban	jakaabi@gmail.com	+97317501500

S	Name	Country	Title	Email	Telephone
	kaabi		Planning		
5	Shikh Khalifa Bin Eissa Al Khalifa	Bahrain	Undersecretary for Agriculture and Livestock	khbinsla@gmail.com	+97317796602
6	Shikh Mohamed Bin Abdel Wahab Al Khalifa	Bahrain	Advisor to the Minister for Agriculture	malkhalifa@gmail.com	+97317796748
7	Dr. Abdel Aziz M. Abel Krim	Bahrain	Wealth Management Plant Manager	amamahmed@mun.gov.bh	+97317796688
8	Mahama Zoungrana	Burkina Faso	Minister of Agriculture and food Security	mazoung@yahoo.fr	+22650499914
9	Bilola Gatien	Cameroon	General Inspector, Ministry of agriculture And Rival Development	biologatien@yahoo.fr	0023722239498 0023799823630
10	Iya Tidsani	Cameroon	Ambassador	iyatidsani@yahoo.fr	00966114880203
11	Tekeubeng Apollinaire	Cameroon	Charge de sous Programme	tekeubenga@yahoo.fr	0023799735423
12	Pepouna Ousmano	Cameroon	First Secretary (Counselor)	Ppo-nsangou.njova@yahoo.com	00966564328342

S	Name	Country	Title	Email	Telephone
				tyatispni@yahoo.fr	
13	Toure Dramane	Cote d'Ivoire	Advisor to the Minister of Agriculture	dramantoure@gmail.com	0022520335367 0022507212400
14	Toure Vazoumana	Cote d'Ivoire	Ambassador of Cote d'Ivoire in Riyadh	amb.vazoum@yahoo.fr	00966530077759
15	Bafacoura Diakite	Cote d'Ivoire	First Counselor	bafacoura@yahoo.fr	0535489304
16	Mr. Ngariera R.	Chad	Minister of Agriculture	zimngar@gmail.com	90000114
17	Dr. Ayman F. Abou hadid	Egypt	Minister of Agriculture and land Reclamation	abouhadid@ids.gov.eg	0020233373388
18	Dr. Mona Mehrez	Egypt	Head of Foreign Agric. Relations	monalay5@yahoo.com	00202222342373
19	Dr. Rafaat Salaheddin Zaki	Egypt	Director General, Foreign Agric. Relations	Zaki_rafafar2000@yhoo.com	0020233374811
20	Mohamed Omer Mahoud	Eritrea	Ambassador	mohamdomer@gmail.com	002914833743
21	Amanuel Negassi	Eritrea	Director General & Advisor to the Minister	amanuelinh@gmail.com	002917157563
22	Mohamed	Eritrea	Director, Office of the Minister	amihaliza15@gmail.com	002917151418

S	Name	Country	Title	Email	Telephone
	Aburahman				
23	Hon. Solomon Owens	Gambia	Minister of Agriculture	owens@moa.gov.gm	002209969350
24	Ezz Eddin Adola	Iraq	Minister of Agriculture	izzeddinaldola@yahoo.com	009647713333033
25	Akef Ahmed Al Zoubi	Jordan	Minister of Agriculture	akef.alzoubi@moa.gov.jo	00961798142222
26	Khalaf Saleh Ali Raggad	Jordan	Director of Relations and Parliamentary Affairs, Minister of Agriculture	Khalf1970@yahoo.com	00961799062616
27	Jasem M. H. Al-Bader	Kuwait	Chairman, Public Authority of Agric. Aff. & Reso.	jsemalbader@of.gov.qa	009652225001-4
28	Eng. Mohamed I. abou Zeid	Lebanon	Director of Plant Resources	moabzd@gmail.com	009611849627
29	Dr. Salah Hajj Hassan	Lebanon	Advisor for Minister of Agriculture	mmlabanon@hotmail.com	009613741894
30	Mr. Saleh H. Mahjub	Libya	Minister of Agriculture	sahama65@hotmail.com	00218213632336

S	Name	Country	Title	Email	Telephone
31	Mansour M. Elzawi	Libya	Director of Minister's Office	ma.ezwi@gmmail.com	0218912178085
32	Nasr Eldin Alahdi Alnaami	Libya	Head of Al Jazeera Arab Affairs Department and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation	n.m.n@hotmail.com	0021821913223673
33	Eng. Hadi ref Abaya	Libya	Director of Investment Administration	abayahdi@yahoo.com	00218925524644
34	Ali Ahmed Rahuma	Libya	Director, General Authority for grain production	alrahuma@yahoo.com	00218912109830
35	Mustafa M. Sghyer	Libya	Director of International Cooperation Office	mustafa.m561@yahoo.com	00218925158212
36	Salah M. Althabbet	Libya	Libyan Embassy in Riyadh		009610554977488
37	Ahmed Weld Abaah	Mauritania	Ambassador Mauritania the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	mouritaniarydh@gmail.com	09660535213267
38	Sidi Ahmed Mawloud	Mauritania	Advisor to the Minister of Rural Development	smamctd2000@gmail.com	0022244180604
39	Ahmed weld Abdllah	Mauritania	Starter embassy	mouritaniarydh@gmail.com	009664646749

S	Name	Country	Title	Email	Telephone
40	Raphael Kamoto	Malawi	Counselor Malawi Embassy in Kuwait	Raphael.kamoto@gmail.com	0096560042311
41	Abdel Salam Baraka	Morocco	Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco in Riyadh	ambassador@moroccoembassy.sa	00966114810092
42	Ibrahim Ajouli	Morocco	Counselor and Deputy Ambassador	brahim@moroccoembassy.sa	
43	Mohamed Eltazi	Morocco	Economic Advisor, Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in Riyadh	tazimed@yahoo.fr	
44	Fouad Bin Gaafar Alsagwani	Oman	Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries		
45	Seoud Bin Nasser albedate	Oman	Prime Minister's Office		24952015
46	Eng. Saleh Ben M. eleiry	Oman	Director General of Agricultural Development		24952500
47	Dr. Khalifa Ben Salem Alkeumi	Oman	Advisor in Office of Agricultural Research Minister		24952015
48	Dr. Hadi ben Mohsen El-Lwati	Oman	Director of the Veterinary Department of Health		24902633

S	Name	Country	Title	Email	Telephone
49	Yakub Ben Khebib alagi	Oman	Coordinator of the Minister's Office	y.rahbi96@gmail.com	24952001
50	Eng. Waleed Assaf	Palestine	Minister of Agriculture	wassef1960@yhoo.com	00970599803039
51	Dr. Nasser Jaghub	Palestine	Minister Advisor	jaghoub1@yahoo.com	00970598941337
52	Abdullah Saleh	Palestine	Deputy Minister	abdullah_slh@yahoo.com	00970599257806
53	Ahmed Bin Amer Alhemedi	Qatar	Minister for the Environment and head of the delegation	moedir@mow.gov.qa	009744127700
54	Faleh Bin Nasser Al Thani	Qatar	Director of the General Administration of Agricultural Research and Development	falthani@moe.gov.qa	0097455550975
55	Mohamed said Almohanadi	Qatar	Director of the Department of Fisheries	alshogeri@moe.gov.qa	0097444207486
56	Ali Mohamed Alneama	Qatar	International Relations Specialist	amnaama@moe.gov.qa	0097444207180
57	Abdallah Alousair	Qatar	A member of the Minister's Office	mowdir@me.gov.qa	0097444207700
58	Fahd A.bdel Rahman	Saudi Arabia	Minister of Agriculture	minister@moa.gov.sa	

S	Name	Country	Title	Email	Telephone
	Balghoneim				
59	Waleed Elkharejji	Saudi Arabia	D.G. Grain Silos Flour mills Org.	www.gsfmo.gov.sa	
60	Eng. Mohamed A. Al Sheha	Saudi Arabia	Deputy Minister for Res. And Agri. Development	shiha2000@hotmail.com	0096611417879
61	Saad Khalil	Saudi Arabia	Director of King Abdallah Initiative	drsasaa@moa.gov.sa	
62	Mishal Al Shoturi	Saudi Arabia	Director Office of Minister	alshtri@hotmail.com	
63	Abdallah M. Shaalan	Saudi Arabia	Director of the General Administration of Public Relations and International Cooperation	a.alshalan@hotmail.com	0505140305
64	Mohamed Hassan Gubara	Sudan	Undersecretary Ministry of Agric. & Irrigation	hassuni99@hotmail.com	0249912993867
65	Babiker Hassan Al Hag	Sudan	The Secretary General Of Food Security	Babikeribrahim55@gmail.com	00249918966985
66	Abdel Hafez Ibrahim	Sudan	Ambassador of Sudan to KSA	hafizibr225@yahoo.com	0099610533444000

S	Name	Country	Title	Email	Telephone
67	Peter Sinon	Seychelles	Minister of Natural Resources	peter.sinon@ov.sc	002482723900
68	Mohamed Bin Salem	Tunis	Minister of Agriculture		0021671785633
69	Lougma Zahbit	Tunis	Expert in Ministry of Farming	Izabet@yahoo.fr	0021671785633
70	Ali Bin Arafa	Tunis	Ambassador of the Republic of Tunisia in Riyadh		00966114887900
71	Ahmed Jarallah	Tunis	Secretary General of the Arab Peasants & Agricultural Cooperatives Union	jarallahahmed@hotmail.fr	0021623990000
72	Chyrine Sassi	Tunis	Engineer of the Arab peasants & Agricultural Cooperatives Union	sassi_chyrine@yahoo.fr	0021622568515
73	Seif Eldin Fels	Tunis	First adviser and deputy ambassador in Riyadh	seiflisse@yahoo.fr	00966114887900
74	Mehriz Altawati	Tunis	First secretary in charge of economic cooperation Tunisia Embassy in Riyadh		

S	Name	Country	Title	Email	Telephone
75	Seif Mohamed Al Shareh	U.A.E	Assistant for Agric. & Animal Dept.	smalshara@moaw.gov.ae	00971506295050
76	Dr. Hashim Saad Al Behbi	U.A.E	Manager of Admin	dr.hashim@economy.aae	00971507791777
77	Dr. Himoud S. Al Mansouri	U.A.E	Manager of programs	hamood.almansoor@fscad.ae	00971508187600
78	Nasib Khalifan Al Mansour	U.A.E	Manager of Business Promotion	naseebhmansoor@ascod.ae	00971504444121
79	Robert Sichinga	Zambia	.Minister of Government	sichingabob@gmail.com	00260977796600
80	Ibrahim Mumba	Zambia	Ambassador	mumba962@yahoo.com	00966531510899
81	Farid Ahmed Majour	Yemen	Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation		737555599
82	Wasel Ali Al Dhabyani	Yemen	Secretary Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation	wase1983@yahoo.com	773766294
83	Ali Genaid Abdallah	Yemen	General Manager of Planning and Follow-up	a-gnid@hotmail.com	771591869



List of Participants - Organizations

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MINISTERIAL MEETINGS

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Riyadh – Saudi Arabia

Organizations					
S	Name	Org	Title	Email	Telephone
1	Rhoda Tumusiime	African Union Commission	Commissioner,	tumusiimer@africa-union.org	+251 911510524
2	Dr. Abebe Haile-Gabriel	African Union Commission	Director, Rural Economy	aebhg@africa-union.org	+251 9115 770
3	Prof. Ahmed El Sawalhy	African Union Commission	Director AU - IBAR	ahmed.elsawalhy@au-ibar.org	+254 710888810

					ahmedelsawalhy@yahoo.com	
4	Dr. Ahmed El Mekass	African Union Commission	Coordinator AU-SAFGRAD		elmekassa@africa-union.org	+226 50 306071
5	Hassane Mahamat	African Union Commission	Coordinator PATTEC		hassanemahamat@hotmail.com hassanehm@africa-union.org	+251115525854 +251913202213
6	Karim Toun Kara	African Union Commission	Director AU PANVAC		karim.touunkara@hotmail.com	+251114371286
8	Ibrahima Diallo	African Union Commission	Senior Policy Officer		ibramadiak@hotmail.com	+201005227829
9	Almaz Tilahun	African Union Commission	Deputy Chief of Protocol		almazt@africa-union.org	+251991201651
10	Djamel Ghrib	African Union Commission	Head of division private sector		djamelg@africa-union.org	+251 913 117943
11	Dr. Salah S. Hammad	African Union Commission	Expert		hammad@s@africa-union.org	00251913057711
12	Mrs. Habiba Mejri Cheikh	African Union Commission	Director Information & Communic.		habibam@africa-union.org	
13	Mourad Bie Dhiab	African Union Commission			dhiab@africa-union.org	00251910636564
14	Nadir Fath El aleem	African Union Commission	Ag. Head of AUPD-Cairo		nadirf@africa-union.org	00201150004944
15	Jonathan Nyarko Ocran	African Union Commission	Policy Officer		ocranj@africa-union.org	00251926783585
16	Girma Zewdie	African Union Commission	Senior Political Officer		girmazewdie2011@gmail.com	00251911227423

17	Abdel Rahman Khecha	African Union Commission	Policy Officer, Rural Economy	abdelrrahmanmek@africa-union.org	00251912214708
18	Nefaa Kamel	African Union Commission	Coordinator Interpretation & Trans.	nafaakmel@yahoo.com	00201018394351
19	Gamal Mohamed Seyam	African Union Commission	Counselor	Gamal_osiam@hotmail.com	0020101648575
20	Amb. Mohamed Ibrahim Al Twaigri	Arab League	Assistant Secretary General for Economic Affairs		
21	Ibrahim El Souri	Arab League	Coordinator for the Third African Arab Summit	ilelsouri@las.int	00201223930374
22	Amb. Saleh Mailoud Sahbon	Arab League	Head of, LAS Mission Adis Ababa	sasahboun@yahoo.com	00251116635350
23	Dr. Thamer El Aany	Arab League	Head of Economic Dept.	thameralany@hotmail.com	00201223311152
24	Eng. Osama Radwan	Arab League	Head of Conferences Dept.	oradwan@hotmail.com	00201222202202
25	Mrs. Hadia Sabri	Arab League	Minister Plenipotentiary Africa Dept.	hadia.sabry@las.int	00201223149667
26	Dina Kamel	Arab League	Head of Coordination Unit	dkamel@aucegypt.edu	00201001489106
27	Maha Gad	Arab League	Head of African Countries	mahgad@hotmail.com	00201223172827

				Division			
28	Rihab Hamid	Arab League		Counselor, Head of Int'l Relations Division	rihabkooti@yahoo.com		
29	Ali Dabouz	Arab League		Counselor, Africa Dept	adabouz@gmail.com		00201142225550
30	Adel El Sayed Ahmed	Arab League		Typing, Africa Dept.	adelelsayed2001@yahoo.com		00201005608188
31	Sherif Maged	Arab League		Typing, Africa Dept.	accsherif2@yahoo.com		00201116477645
32	Ayman Askalani	Arab League		Protocol Dept			
33	Nasser Ben Saleh	Arab League		Counselor	abujawad@kacst.edu.sa		00966505481524
34	Dr. Mohamed Hamdi Salem	Arab League		Expert	dr.hamdysalem@yahoo.com		002012733550033
35	Abdulmalik Binsuliman	General Federation of commercial, industrial and agricultural		Representation for Federation	aalsulaiman@csc.org.sa		00966505497516
36	Mohamed Rafaat	The Arab Investment & Export Guarantee Corp.		Chairman of the Regional Office	mraafat@dhaman.org		0096599013490 00966591881664
37	Al Arabi Mohamed Hamedi	Arab Authority for Investment		Economic Counselor	arabihamdi@gmail.com		09660504594525
38	Fahd Said El Shenifri	Arab Authority for Investment		Protocol Unit			

39	Dr. Essam M. Abdel Mawla	Arab Academy for Science	Dean of Water Research Center	esmawla@yahoo.com	0020106623970
40	Dr. Hassan Widadalla Elhassan	Arab Bank for Economic in Africa	Senior Export	badea@badea.org wlhassan.alhassan@link.net	00249183773646
41	Sherif Amin El Kheribi	Arab Economic Union Council	Representative	sheriff.elkharaiiby@gmail.com	00201222111473
42	Riyad Bin Galili	Arab Investment of Export Credit Guarantee	Head of Research & Studies	riadh@dhaman.org	0096524959500
43	Dr. Nasser Ali Al Komsan	Arab Organization for Admin.	Deputy Director General.	nalqahtani@arado.org.eg	00966503407292
44	Dr. Tarek Bin Moussa El Zadjali	Arab Organ. For Agric. Dept.	Director General	info@aoad.org	00249183472177
45	Dr. El Hag Attia El Habib	Arab Organ. For Agric. Dept.	Director General	info@aoad.org	00249910576111
46	Dr. Saleh Abdel Kader	Arab Organ. For Agric. Dept.	Director General	info@aoad.org	00249183472177
47	Abdel Latif Ahmed Mohamed	Arab Businessmen Union	Expert	ijaimizouad@yahoo.com	00249912336535
48	Dr. Hamdi Al Tabah	Federation of Arab Businessmen	President of the Federation of Arab Businessmen	hassanmahamat@hotmail.com	0096265337208
49	Mohamed Thabet Taher	Federation of Arab Businessmen	Secretary of General Federation of Arab Businessmen	jba@orange.jo	0096265338035

50	Hassan Osman	AMB	Icc Counselor	09660564043447
51	Mohamed Almazooei	AAAID	President of AAAID	

Annex (I1)

Speech of His Excellency

Saudi Minister of Agriculture

Dr. Fahd Bin Abdul Rahman Balghunaim

Speech of His Excellency

Saudi Minister of Agriculture

Dr. Fahd Bin Abdul Rahman Balghunaim

In

*The 2nd Africa Arab Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural Development & Food
Security*

Riyadh- Saudi Arabia

Wednesday 2/10/2013

n The Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

Your Excellencies, Ministers of Agriculture in the Arab and African Countries.

Your Excellencies,

Our esteemed guests,

Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon you.

It gives me a great pleasure to warmly welcome you in the capital city of Riyadh, which is honored to host this important meeting of the Arab and African Ministers of Agriculture over its lands.

In November 2008, Riyadh had also the honor of hosting the high-level meeting of experts on agricultural development and food security, which was jointly organized by the Arab League and African Union. This meeting discussed the primary and important steps for realization of mutual visions, methods, programs and required mechanisms for reinforcement of Arab-African efforts and plans of coordination, cooperation and integration in the sustainable agricultural development and food security in both regions.

This meeting is convened to follow and provide the necessary and intensification of efforts for achieving food security and sustainable agricultural development. It also aims at reviewing the present situation of food security and agricultural development progress achieved in the two regions, and specific challenges to agricultural cooperation with the purpose of having acceptable options to correct the

development track and speed up the implementation of the joint action plan, taking into consideration the learnt lessons from the past.

Accordingly, this meeting tries to provide the needed implementation suggestions that are required to provide a positive momentum to activate and speed up the joint action plan of the food security and sustainable development, which was approved in the joint ministerial meeting of the Arab and African Ministers of Agriculture, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, in February 2010; and rectified by the 2nd Arab-African Summit Meeting in Sirte in October 2010.

The joint action plan has been based on the close proximity of the mutual visions and integration of the two regions' strategies, which on the Arab Side was represented by the Arabian strategy for sustainable development 2005-2025 and on the African Side by the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development (CAAPD), which was formulated on the basis of the framework of the New Partnership of Africa's Development (NEPAD). The joint action plan tries to achieve food security and sustainable agricultural development through enhancing coordination in the areas of cropping intensification, improving productivity, research development, knowledge transfer, and trade development, and building up the strategic reserves, capacity building, and training and adapting to climate change.

The joint plan emphasizes the importance for improving the investment climate, to facilitate the private sector's effective participation in funding investments and other aspects of the joint action plan. It also aims at establishing a mechanism for its implementation and establishment of facilitation unit and a steering committee. . The financing of the joint action plan will also be obtained from the existing Arab and African institutions.

Honorable guests;

The sustainable agricultural development and food security challenges are top priorities of the development in both the Arab and African regions. In spite of the efforts put in agricultural development, food security and the relative improvement in food security in both regions over the past years, the challenge of food shortage remained one of the serious problems in Africa and the Arab world. This shortage was reflected in the steady increase in food imports, and rapidly widening food gap between production and consumption, as a result of the fast population growth, which was not met by equal rates of increase of food production.

In this context, the average food gap during 2010, according to (the Arab Organization for Agriculture Development (AOAD) reached about \$ 34 billion in the Arab World and \$ 14 billion in Africa. In addition, FAO indicated that about 290 million people (most of whom are in Sub-Saharan Africa) are still suffering from food acute shortage-attributed to low productivity and low agriculture production- sharp deficit in the food trade balance, decline in economic performance, Climate Variability, and recurrence of natural disasters. However, available projections indicate that a future food demand will increase at a faster and greater rate than production.

This, in turn, will lead to more reliance on the food imports under the risks of a new food crisis, restrictions of exports in international markets which are the impact of profound negative effects of climate changes, water scarcity, flaring of Transboundary Animal and Plant pests and Diseases risks, and price fluctuations internationally and regionally.

It goes without saying that our two regions are facing an uneven present and future food problem. This entails from us to exert more efforts, and allocate more resources, in order to overcome the tough challenges and obstacles that face us. We

can face this challenge threat through close coordination, cooperation to build mutual visions and a strategic partnership necessary for realizing food security and sustainable agricultural development in both regions.

Fortunately, there are many factors that made this strategic partnership between the Arab and African regions attracting, feasible and successful: Firstly, Leaders' and governments are committed to cooperate and coordinate in food security, which is very clearly reflected in the recommendations of the African and Arab Summits, as well as the Joint African-Arab Summits since 1977 till Sirtre (Libya) Summit in 2010. Secondly, there are broad bases of possible and successful agricultural integration between the two regions here Africa on one side has abundant natural resources but with limited financial resources, while the Arab side has financial surpluses but with limitations on agricultural resources, especially water resources, and the rising demand for food. Thirdly, both regions reap mutual benefits from this cooperation. The benefits of host countries of investment include: advanced technology which increases agricultural productivity and development and creates job opportunities. The benefits also include acceleration of the economic growth, improvement of the infrastructures and services, and support to the balance of payments through developing exports and minimizing imports, and development of areas where is the investment is taking place. This will increase income and living standards, as well as poverty alleviation of local hosting communities. On the other hand, benefits for the investing countries include improvement of food security conditions, through continuous and stable food supplies; in addition to providing profitable investment opportunities to the investors.

Honorable audience,

Despite the clear the objectives and political commitment for food security and agricultural development, the objectives have not been yet translated into definite practical, cooperation, regional projects or programs, with well known results and time dimensions, not to mention, the slow implementation of the joint action plan and poor media coverage especially for the private sector, local community organizations and farmers' unions.

Even though, the bilateral investments cooperation among the countries of the two regions has continued unabated contrary to the absence of the collective programs and projects. This indicates that the joint action plan has been faced by certain difficulties and challenges that we hope had been overcome in the high officials' meeting in last two days. We hope that the applicable solutions are included in their report in the form of proposals which would be presented to your esteemed meeting later today for further consideration and approval to form a basis for the approval of the recommendations of activating the Arab-African action plan on the agricultural development and food security; in preparation for submission and consideration of approval in the Arab-African Cooperation Summit which will be held in Kuwait during November 2013.

Let's hope that our meeting will lead to recommendation that would improve our progress through activating and speeding up (but not rushing) the implementation of the joint action plan. This could be achieved by preparation of agricultural cooperation programs and projects, and effective follow-up mechanisms, which will improve efficiency and flexibility in facing the setbacks.

After this long preparatory transitional period of African-Arab cooperation in food security, concrete and effective collective actions - which reinforce our food security, have become a pressing need to prevent disappointment, and assist in the

realization of hopes and aspirations of our leaders and peoples to have fruitful and meaningful results, that could fulfill the objectives of the Arab-African cooperation in the field of agriculture. It will also build the trust to face the present the international and regional accelerating challenges and changes. The road for cooperation is very long but we are determined to achieve our goals of this cooperation by perseverance, hard work and continuous revision.

Accordingly, the delegates may find it relevant to take into their consideration the following points, when they consider and approve the suggestions of the high officials, which will be presented to them later today:

- 1- UN Secretary General has recently launched "ZERO HUNGER" challenge campaign calling for elimination of hunger. Thus, hunger elimination can be considered as one of the long-run strategic objectives of the Arab-African agricultural cooperation.
- 2- A report released by the FAO states that the world's food waste and loss was estimated at 1.3 billion tons. Since this is a problem which is facing both regions and is not getting much attention. We propos that it should be in the high agenda of the joint action plan. We see that the cooperation programs should focus on research, guidance, storage and marketing. The decrease in losses and waste would greatly contribute to food security and utilization of the natural resources.
- 3- Programs and projects should be prepared with effective participation of the private sector, which will include the investors, farmers and civil society organizations, and local communities in the hosting countries.

- 4- The emphasis should be given to the leading role of the private sector in implementing the action plan. This requires improving the investment climate in the provision of the investment hosting countries, including laws and policies, assistance and motivation; enhancing the government bodies and administrations performance.
- 5- Strict commitment to the efficiency criteria, and comparative and competitive advantage, so as to be a main element for project selection, and resource distribution according to the priorities of the joint action plan.
- 6- The agricultural investment should be acceptable by the local communities, taking into consideration their interests, and securing their rights in resources, as well deterring the land possession for the purpose of speculation.
- 7- The youth category in the Arab and Africa suffer from increasing unemployment, especially in Africa, in which more than (60%) of its population rely on agriculture. Therefore, we hope that the major investment projects (both of public and private sectors) will work toward creating job opportunities to the residents of receiving investment hosting areas. Among the other possible choices for creating job opportunities is to call upon every major agricultural investment project to cooperate with a number of small farms that may be located at the borders of the major project. They could be managed by local, small farmers; something called the "satellite farms". For these farms, the investor shall provide production inputs in return for the products of these farms at prices and specifications to be agreed upon in advance. This process is termed "contract farming". This choice strikes a balance between the large farming projects and small farmers, maintaining the many benefits of the economy of scale. In addition, the foreign investment could also employ the local people in the large farm run by him or his partners.

- 8- Benefiting from similar regional cooperation experiences at the world level, and adopting whatever is relevant to the conditions of both regions.
- 9- Definition of a clear methodology and action plan with clear objectives to fund the joint action plan by the existing Arab and African Financial institutions, which are specified in the approved recommendations.
- 10- Seeking ways to develop joint policies to insure and guarantee investment in both regions.
- 11- Setting a clear methodology and mechanism to follow-up and evaluate the recommendation's implementation of the Summits as well as meetings of the Arab and African Ministers of Agriculture, and the joint Arab-African Action Plan for Agriculture and Food Security.

Honorable guests;

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has always given a special attention to the Arab-African cooperation, which is in line with the Kingdom's belief of the importance of cooperation among brothers and friends to find out joint solutions, and work toward the integration of roles, in a manner that maximizes the mutual benefits for all.

Realizing the deeply rooted historic, geographical, cultural and economic ties between the Arab World and Africa, and the distinctive economic and cultural relations with the African countries, the Kingdom is ranking Africa high in its programs for food security within the King Abdullah s' Initiative for Saudi Agricultural Investment Abroad. It encourages Saudi Investors to utilize their resources and experiences abroad to achieve mutual benefits, by providing the Kingdom with the sufficient food supplies.

At the same time, developing and modernizing agriculture in the hosting countries, especially the rural communities in these countries. This, in turn, will further contribute directly to food security in the host countries themselves, and indirectly to the world and regional food security.

For this reason, the Kingdom is keen on assuring that the Saudi agricultural investments abroad work within the framework of a foreign, responsible agricultural investment, that achieves mutual benefit through observing and maintaining the interests of the other party. It is quite worth mentioning that the Saudi agricultural investments in Africa enjoyed a speedy and large increase in the recent years.

Dear guests,

In conclusion, please allow me to extend my deepest thanks and appreciation to the African Union Commission and General Secretariat of the Arab League for the efforts, thoughts and work in strengthening cooperation between the two regions in all aspects; and the follow-up of the joint action plan of agriculture and food security.

I wish all success to this meeting in its debates and discussions and results, wishing Africa, the Arab World and the participant countries all success, prosperity and progress.

Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon you.

