

UNITED NATIONS FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT

23 September 2021

- Excellency, Secretary-General António Guterres
- Excellencies, Heads of State and Government
- Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

I commend the Secretary-General for his vision in convening this summit, the first ever focused on food systems as a driver of sustainable development.

The global food system is estimated at around \$8 trillion, which is one-tenth of the entire global economy. In Africa, 70% of adults work in agriculture and agri-business. But our continent's food systems are often fragmented and inefficient.

This represents a tremendous opportunity to speed up progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals.

Transformation of our food systems is therefore a necessity, including greater investment in digital technologies, biotechnology, accessible financial services, and other proven innovations.

This is especially true as we continue to work to mitigate the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

For Africa, the central goal is to halt our continent's over-reliance on food imports, end malnutrition, and create new jobs.

The African Union Development Agency, NEPAD, has worked to facilitate an African Common Position in advance of this Summit, with the following priority tracks:

- One, adopt nutritious food policies, establish food reserves, and expand school feeding programs.
- Two, support local markets and food supply chains, and expand trade within Africa.
- Three, work to increase agricultural financing to 10% of public expenditure.
- Four, facilitate smallholder farmers, and ensure women's access to productive resources.
- And five, expand social safety nets and climate data systems.

Accountability for advancing these actions will include regular reviews under the African Union's Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Program (CAADP).

This Summit lays the groundwork for a renewed commitment to the broad global partnerships needed in order to transform food systems, and meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

Now is the moment for the world to rise to this challenge, together.

I thank you for your kind attention.