



# AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY UNION

## APU

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36<sup>th</sup> CONFERENCE  
7 and 8 November 2013, Libreville, Gabon  
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(R. 135/36/13)

### RESOLUTION ON “Enhancing private investment in the agricultural sector to achieve food security in Africa”

The African Parliamentary Union (APU) meeting at its 36<sup>th</sup> Conference in Libreville, Gabon on 7 and 8 November 2013,

*Recalling* that the right to food is a fundamental human right, recognized in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and other instruments,

*Recalling:*

- the commitment made by Heads of State and Government of the African Union at the Maputo Summit to allocate at least 10% of national budgets to the agricultural sector, the “Sirte declaration on the challenges of implementing integrated development of agriculture and water in Africa” (Sirte, Libya, February 2004), as well as the Resolution of the Abuja Summit on food security in Africa (Abuja, December 2006),
- the resolution on “The role of parliaments in ensuring sustainable development through the management of natural resources, agricultural production and demographic change”, adopted by the 124<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly (Panama, 20 April 2011),
- the resolution on “Development of agriculture in Africa to cope with the food crisis and contribute to poverty reduction”, adopted by the 31<sup>st</sup> Conference of APU (Kampala, 29 November 2008),

*Considering* that according to FAO, “Food security exists when all people at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”,

*Considering* that despite all the efforts made in recent years by African countries and the strides made in meeting the Millennium Development Goal to reduce hunger, many African people, mostly women and children, are still dying of hunger and diseases caused or aggravated by inadequate or poor quality food,

*Aware* that the African continent’s vulnerability in terms of food security, due to flawed food systems, inadequate access to water and modern inputs and equipment, lack of appropriate rural infrastructures, low technology, unattractive land property rights for the private sector and difficulties in access to credits, and recognizing that many countries have not adequately exploited the potential of the agricultural sector, due to these continuing constraints,

*Aware* that conflicts and wars and the attendant problems of refugees and displaced persons and destruction of infrastructures worsen food insecurity and thwart efforts by African countries to ensure their food security,

*Noting* that the food system is subject to increasing pressure from factors such as climate change, environmental degradation, population growth, volatile food prices, increasing energy prices, increased demand for meat and dairy products, competition for land and concurrent use of resources for biofuel production,

*Underlining* the major role played by the agricultural sector, whose rapid growth is a prerequisite for improving the food situation, in the face of increasing demand due to population growth and the rapid urbanization of the African continent,

*Taking into account* the fact that in spite of its adverse impact, the recent global economic crisis has positioned food security at the heart of national and regional development policies and programmes,

*Considering* that the growth of the agricultural sector is crucial to increasing food availability and stimulating economic growth to help generate jobs and revenue for improving food security,

*Affirming* that Africa needs proper sustainable development strategies to combat hunger and poverty, rather than rely on food aid every time disaster strikes,

*Contending* that in order to restructure the flawed food systems and efficiently meet the food needs of their people, African countries must invest heavily in the agricultural sector, as part of a policy of good governance,

*Affirming* that investment in public facilities in the rural areas such as education, rural infrastructures, telecommunications, water supply, power supply, health and social protection measures can create major advantages for the agricultural sector and improve its contribution to economic growth and poverty reduction,

*Contending* that interventions designed to improve land security, access to land and transferability of land increase the value of household assets, investments and agricultural productivity, as well as facilitate access to credit,

*Aware* that private investment in the agricultural sector can help limit the rise in prices of agricultural commodities and bring in technologies and financing to develop the agricultural sector, to achieve the goal of food security and poverty reduction,

*Aware* of the need for countries to supervise the private sector to put more emphasis on local food markets, work with producer organizations, respect the rights of smallholders, workers and communities,

*Concerned* with the low level of private investment in the agricultural sector and lack of an enabling environment for private investment, in particular, difficult credit access for smallholders, in spite of the vital role they play in supplying food, with financial institutions reluctant to provide loans when the collateral is small and ability to reimburse not certain,

*Also concerned* by the fact that women, who, since time immemorial, have played a key role in food crop farming, are disadvantaged compared to men, and have limited access to financial or social capital, marketing information and production inputs such as land,

*Aware* that gender equality in agriculture and the rural job market can generate major gains for agricultural and rural development, food security and the society as a whole,

*Convinced* that peace, stability and security are prerequisites for development policies, and *mindful* to contribute to fighting food insecurity, which is a source of conflict and instability,

1. *Affirms* that the high level of food insecurity in Africa is unacceptable for a continent abounding in arable land, water and labour, whose rational and sustainable exploitation, through appropriate policies can lead to food security;

2. *Urges* African governments to build a democratic, peaceful and stable society, politically, economically and socially, that will guarantee an enabling environment for sustainable development and the achievement of food security for the people;

3. *Contends* that food insecurity and poverty are linked and that an integrated approach should be adopted to manage natural resources, agricultural production and demographic change;

4. *Underlines* the role that parliaments and parliamentarians play in preparing public policy and *commits them* to accord prime importance to food security and agriculture in development programmes, through deep reforms and institute an investment-friendly environment, backed by social protection, so as to reduce poverty and under-nutrition ;

5. *Requests* African governments to formulate strategies based on efficient policies and undertake institutional reforms to revive long-term growth and promote investment, especially private investment in the agricultural sector;

6. *Reaffirms* that public investment in agriculture is necessary to stimulate private investment and *requests* African governments to increase the budget allocation to agriculture, in line with commitments made by Heads of State and Government at the African Union Summit in 2003 in Maputo, in agricultural infrastructures, so as to create an enabling environment for private investment in the agricultural sector;

7. *Recommends* that African governments should introduce policies that promote public-private partnerships in the supply of goods and services, such as roads linking farms to markets, water for irrigation, wholesale markets and marketing centres, farm produce processing plants, appropriate waste management infrastructures to promote agricultural development, poverty reduction and food security;

8. *Calls on* parliamentarians and parliaments to act as agents of change in identifying priorities for agricultural and food policy and a coherent framework for promoting private investment in the agricultural sector to increase food production;

9. *Encourages* African governments to set up private investment promotion funds for the agricultural sector and guide them through targeted subsidies and bonuses, especially toward the development of food processing industries and activities that would lead to better exploitation of local potential;

10. *Encourages* parliamentarians and parliaments to use appropriate legislative measures to support the promotion of decentralized financial systems which accord importance to microfinance institutions to build financing capacities of smallholders, especially, women;

11. *Requests* the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and relevant development partners and financial institutions at the national, subregional and continental levels to provide sustainable support to States, including resources, to set up a private investment promotion fund for the agricultural sector;

12. *Advocates* continent-wide adoption of food systems that take into account the challenges of food and nutritional security, reduction of inequalities, preservation of health and preservation of the environment and natural resources, reduction of energy consumption and economic development;

13. *Commits* parliamentarians, governments, local government, private stakeholders and national and international bodies to organize awareness campaigns on the close relationship between climate change and food security and agriculture;

14. *Urges* African States to undertake, if need be, through truly participatory processes, consensual land reform, and adopt rural land measures to protect land rights and property rights for farmers, who are mostly smallholders, as well as coherent compensation policies for expropriation so as to improve the investment climate;

15. *Urges* parliaments and African governments to create a friendly environment for private investment in the agricultural sector through the adoption of favourable investment codes for family farm holdings and agri-business; and which also provide for duty, tax and VAT exemptions on agricultural machinery, inputs and plant health implements; the advantages of these codes is the protection they will afford private investors;

16. *Calls on* parliaments and parliamentarians to adopt legislation to protect rights and equality to possess land and other property, including right of inheritance for women;

17. *Reaffirms that* women in Africa play a key role in agriculture, and their emancipation can therefore contribute significantly to improving food security and *calls on* parliamentarians to strive for the elimination of discrimination against women and support and promote the rights of women, gender equality, access to production inputs, credit, education and training, family planning and maternal health services, the job market and technology; and their full participation in community decision-making;

18. *Calls for* an efficient parliamentary monitoring of state mechanisms of incentives for the creation of cooperatives by rural populations, in partnership with local governments;

19. Commits parliamentarians and parliaments to organize with the support of territorial communities awareness and information targeted campaigns ensuring if needs be the translation and dissemination of legislative and regulatory measures taken in the agricultural investment codes and in terms of rural land tenure;

20. *Recommends* African states to promote agricultural complementarity policies and *Invites* them to increase intra African exchanges of basic agricultural products as well tightening technology cooperation ties in the areas of food and agriculture and exchange of best practices in the formulation and implementation of private agriculture investment policies at the subregional, regional and international levels;

21. *Prones* the setting up of food insecurity observatories at the national, regional and continental levels, to identify obstacles to the achievement of food security and propose corrective measures;

22. *Believes* that it is necessary to protect small farmers and that foreign direct investors should not just acquire and develop vast areas of land and other natural resources, but rather implement the guiding principles for sustainable development;

23. *Hopes* for greater involvement of the African scientific community in activities of the agricultural sector and *urges* that its results should be taken into account to ensure good quality and sustainable production with professional and more competitive organizations capable of meeting the needs of the national and even international market;

24. *Encourages* parliamentarians and parliaments to initiate reforms, and with the support of relevant non-governmental organizations and civil society, promote awareness campaigns to help smallholders to adopt technological innovations that can help them increase their productivity;

25. *Requests* African governments to adopt concerted development policies to ensure sustainable agriculture, with measures to ensure knowledge transfer in improved technology crop and production methods, vocational training, capacity building and infrastructures, not only for large-scale agriculture but also for traditional and food crop farming;

26. *Makes a plea* for dialogue and cooperation between government institutions and other stakeholders on a coherent participatory approach to private investment.