

Closing Statement

By

Dr. Abebe Haile-Gabriel
Representative of the African Union Commission (AUC)

Regional Consultative Workshop on Land Policy in Central Africa
Yaounde, Cameroon
06 – 08 August 2008

- Ö Excellencies,
- Ö Development Partners,
- Ö Distinguished Participants,
- Ö Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the AUC-ECA-ADB Land Policy Initiative, it is an honor and a privilege for me to address you at this closing ceremony of the Central Africa Regional Consultative Workshop on Land Policy. It is my sincere belief that following the intense debates over the last two days on the contents of the draft regional report on land policy in Central Africa, we have been able to accomplish our objectives for this consultation.

In particular, we have gained consensus on the main revisions needed to revise the regional background document for Central Africa, and designed modalities for enhancing information to allow consultants and the secretariat to produce a report that documents the realities of Central Africa.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The discussions here have helped us to also gain consensus on the key land issues in the region that should form the basis for land policy formulation in various countries represented here. These issues will also inform the continental framework and guidelines on land policy and the development of benchmark and indicators for assessing progress on land reform

Both the document and the issues raised by various participants have helped us identify the key lessons and gaps in land policy formulation and implementation and in Central Africa, allowing us to jointly explore mechanisms for addressing these challenges.

The consortium is highly encouraged by the level of participation and the passion that each participant brought to the discussions. Indeed, this region has a lot to offer in terms of lessons for the rest of the continent and we, the AU-ECA-AfDB secretariat will make efforts to ensure that these lessons are widely shared among the various regions in Africa. Judging from your enthusiasm and the dynamic nature of your participation, I have no doubt that we will continue to strengthen our partnership in this regard.

THANK YOU MESSAGE:

Y Thanks---- to Participants for the high quality of discussions which enabled us to accomplish the objectives of the workshop

Y Thank you---- to the Government of Cameroon for hosting this important workshop. We extend our special thanks to the Minister of State Property and Lands, the Minister of Foreign as well as all the other ministries that worked diligently to ensure the success of this workshop; Special thanks go to the planning committee.

Y Thank you--- to the regional partners including ECCAS and PROPAC for their partnership and assistance.

Y Thank you---- message to our supporters, especially FAO who worked under intense pressure to make the necessary arrangements for the travel and related care for participants. We also extend our thanks to our other partners who supported this workshop.

Y Thanks---- to our colleagues of the tripartite partner organizations the UN Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and the NEPAD Secretariat. Special thanks to those within our

institutions that have worked hard to prepare the workshop before and during the workshop here in Cameroon.

- Y In this regard, special thanks to AU Inter-African Phyto-Sanitary Council (IAPSC), UN-ECA Sub-Regional Office for Central Africa and African Development Bank offices in Cameroon.
- Y Thanks to our Task Force Members: Prof. Okoth Ogendo; Mme. Sue Mbaya; Mr. Gyan Kwame; and Mr. Ibarahim Mwathane. We also thank the Lead Land Expert, Dr. Hubert Ouedraogo and the three Consultants who prepared the regional report.
- Y Our special thanks go to the Interpreters for their patience and excellent job in ensuring that we were all able to communicate
- Y Thanks to Mont Febe Hotel for hosting us.

In conclusion, I would like to wish the participants a safe journey back to their respective countries and request them to continue to engage with the AU-ECA-AfDB Land Policy Initiative to ensure that resolving land issues are featured prominently in the quest to address Africa's development challenges.

Merci et bon voyage!

