

# AU Commissioner calls for equitable land based agricultural investments in seeking sustainable solutions to feed the world

London, UK 13 February 2014 (ECA) - The AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, Tumusiime Rhoda Peace, called for sustainable and inclusive models of land based agricultural investments that integrate smallholder, medium and large scale agriculture systems to enhance technology, innovation, value addition, infrastructure and market access. The Commissioner was speaking at an International conference on “Feeding the World: Sustainable Solutions for a Global Crisis,” on February 13, 2014, in London, UK, organized by the Economist and attended by global leadership in the realms of government, business, civil society research and academia.

In her keynote address on “FDI, Economic Growth and the Demand on Agricultural land”, Ms. Rhoda Peace said that African governments and stakeholders have resolved to improve the governance of large scale investments in order to reduce the risks that have surrounded the recent wave of land deals, following the 2008 food crisis. She noted that the AUC, ECA and AfDB – under the auspices of land policy initiative (LPI)--are providing the leadership and coordination, and developing the tools needed in this regard, including the Guiding Principles on Large Scale Land Based Investments (LSLBI).

The Commissioner decried the low rate of implementation of current land deals, but expressed optimism that governments, investors and stakeholders are beginning to work together to ensure the success of these and future land investments through increased transparency, accountability and mutual collaboration. She also noted that governments are already instituting reforms that guard against arbitrary appropriation of land, and facilitate partnerships among government, local communities and investors.

She called for international cooperation to strengthen synergies in implementing global tools such as the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of the Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VG) and the upcoming Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI) on the one hand, and AU instruments such as the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa (F&G) and the Guiding principles on LSLBI on the other hand.

The Commissioner expressed the hope that improved governance of LSLBIs would be supportive of efforts to increase agricultural production and productivity, food and nutrition security and, indeed, poverty alleviation on the continent in line with the theme of the AU Year of Agriculture and Food Security in the context of Africa Agenda 2063.

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