

**Joint Statement of the African Union Commission and the World Economic
Forum
Co-Conveners of the Leadership Council
19 September 2016**

This Joint Statement is issued by the Co-Conveners of the Leadership Council as a record of key discussions and agreed actions from the meeting held on 19 September, 2016 in New York, USA. The Co-Conveners state the following:

The Leadership Council is an informal platform for high-level coordination to a) align the work of the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition and Grow Africa in support of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the Malabo Declaration on *Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods*; b) review progress in implementing commitments developed through these initiatives; and c) discuss lessons learnt, challenges and solutions to enable the initiatives to contribute effectively and to inclusive growth and reduced poverty and hunger.

Since our last meeting, the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition has established a Secretariat at the African Union Commission at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and the Grow Africa Secretariat has transitioned to be hosted at the NEPAD Agency in South Africa.

In the spirit of mutual accountability to the joint commitments made by Member States, private sector, and development partners, progress has been measured against commonly agreed benchmarks in the context of Country Cooperation Agreements (CCAs) overall continental targets for the reporting period 2015-2016:

Through Letters of intent, companies intending to invest over \$9.2 billion in 12 countries, reported US \$579 million private-sector investments for the period 2015-16: contributing to a total of US \$2.27 billion invested to date; benefiting over 10 million smallholder farmers; and creating over 88,000 jobs since the launch of the Grow Africa partnership. African Governments made progress on 205 policy commitments in 10 countries. 178 policies were due for completion by June 2016, while 27 were due for completion after June 2016. Overall, 34 percent of policy commitments were completed, 59 percent had made good progress, whilst 7 percent had made no progress. Development Partner commitment to fund African countries to undertake policy reforms in the agricultural sector, showed a 3.3 % improvement over the previous year, with support of US \$6.5 billion through CCAs.

Specific commitments agreed by the group to action in advance of the next Council meeting include:

- **Alignment and synergies in support of National Agriculture Investment Plans (NAIPs):** We reaffirmed the importance of engaging all relevant stakeholders in constructive collaboration to further advance the African agricultural agenda through CAADP and Malabo, building coherence and synergies in our actions to support the implementation of National Agriculture Investment Plans (NAIPs). Specifically improved coordination at country level should be considered. Distilling lessons learnt from the New Alliance CCAs, and applying best practices to a wider range of countries with NAIPs, should be considered.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** There is strong interest and need for continued support to implementation of CCAs to bring transparency to, and anticipate changes in, investments in African agriculture. There is commitment to streamline and improve the review and performance

measurement mechanisms, ensuring independent evidence, increased awareness and analytical support on responsible investments.

- **Genuine inclusiveness:** We recognized the role of non-state actors (civil society, farmers associations, private sector) in the realm of responsible private sector investment and the need for genuine inclusiveness and ownership of public policies for their effectiveness in the most pragmatic way.
- **Resilience to climate change:** We recognized the need to develop strategies to mitigate the impact of climate change particularly on smallholder farmers, including the significance of working across sectors to develop socially and environmentally sustainable business models, and focusing on science and technology solutions that would result in a more resilient sector.
- **Role of women and girls:** Women constitute 70-90 percent (70-90%) of the agriculture labour force in Africa. Eighty percent (80%) of the agricultural production comes from small farmers, who are mostly rural women and, as a group, women comprise the the largest private investors in African agriculture. We recognized the importance of improving women farmers' connection to markets and building capacity to enable improved yields, incomes and food security. We recognise that due attention must be paid to the issue to nutrition and healthy diets.
- **Institutional Alignment:** Noting that there are now numerous pan-African frameworks and initiatives aiming to improve African food security and agriculture, the Council recognized the importance of alignment among these initiatives to enhance their impact and avoid duplication.

The Council will reconvene in 2017 to assess progress on these issues and further advancement toward the commitments made through the New Alliance and Grow Africa.