

Joint Statement of the African Union Commission and the World Economic Forum, Co-Conveners of the Leadership Council

June 5, 2015

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 3 June 2015 in Cape Town, South Africa.

The Leadership Council serves as an informal platform for multi-stakeholder coordination to align and advance the work of the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition and Grow Africa partnership in support of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). Meeting participants included African regional institutions and governments, G7 governments, international organisations, African and global private-sector companies, farmers' associations, and civil society. The meeting served as an informal dialogue to assess progress and advance action on key priorities to enable responsible, sustainable and inclusive investment in African agriculture.

The Leadership Council reaffirmed its full support for the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, adopted by African Union Heads of State and Government in July 2014, including the goal to achieve zero hunger by 2025. We call for commitment from all stakeholders to achieve the goals of Malabo, and note the continued importance of increasing public-sector investment in agriculture per the goals set forth in the Maputo Agreement.

We applaud the preliminary findings on the progress of investments committed through the New Alliance and Grow Africa. Over 200 African and global companies have made investment commitments totaling over USD 10 billion into 12 African countries. Of this total over USD 1.8 billion has been implemented to date, reaching over 8.6 million smallholder farmers and creating 58,000 jobs. A full progress report will be released in October 2015, following country-level and multi-stakeholder consultations.

We recognize the need to continue and accelerate progress, including through addressing key issues:

- **The Business Case for African Agriculture:** The Council noted issues in the enabling environment which constrain progress in implementing investments, particularly impacting smallholder farmers and SMEs. Closer cooperation is needed between governments, banks and financial institutions to expand access to finance, improve infrastructure, and ensure a consistent and effective policy environment. We encourage further progress by governments to implement policy commitments, and by the private sector to adopt inclusive business strategies which deliver increased income and skills to smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs.
- **Land-Based Investment:** At its last meeting, the Council agreed to develop operational guidelines for companies and project partners involved in land-based agricultural investments. CAADP Development Partners and the FAO developed an Analytical Framework for Investors as a tool for implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Responsible Governance of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT), in alignment with the African Union's Framework and Guidelines, and the FAO Technical Guide for Investors. The Framework was developed through consultation with a broad array of stakeholders. The Council welcomed and recognized the Analytical Framework as a tool for investors, and agreed to assess experience with the framework in one year.
- **Women's Economic Empowerment:** The Council reaffirmed its commitment to increasing women's economic empowerment through agriculture investments, including through establishment of a Working Group and best-practice knowledge exchange among stakeholders in the New Alliance.

We reaffirmed the importance of engaging all relevant stakeholders in constructive collaboration and dialogue to further advance the African agricultural agenda through CAADP, supported by the New Alliance and Grow Africa. The African Union, as Permanent Co-Convener of the Council, will work with the CAADP Non-State Actors Group to expand dialogue and engagement with Civil Society on the Council and in these activities. We welcomed the recommendation to include a survey of farmers' perspectives in the annual joint progress report of the New Alliance and Grow Africa, in future years.

The Council will reconvene in one year on the margins of the 2016 World Economic Forum on Africa and the Grow Africa Investment Forum.