



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

**OPENING REMARKS BY RT. HON. ROBINAH
NABBANJA, PRIME MINISTER, AT THE OPENING OF
THE SESSION OF MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE
DURING THE AFRICAN UNION EXTRA-ORDINARY
SUMMIT ON THE COMPREHENSIVE AFRICA
AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
(CAADP) STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2026 - 35**

DATE: 9th JANUARY 2025

TIME: 10:00 AM

VENUE: SPEKE RESORT MUNYONYO

- Your Excellency Amb. Josefa Sacko, Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Development at the African Union Commission, and your team,
- Hon. Ministers of Agriculture from the African Union Member States,
- Representatives of the African Union Institutions
- Representatives of Regional Economic Communities
- Development Partners
- Distinguished participants
- Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the people and Government of the Republic of Uganda, allow me to register warm and fraternal greetings to you all, and to say “Welcome to the Pearl of Africa”.

In the same spirit, allow me to extend a warm welcome to all of you to this Ministerial session of the African Union Extraordinary Assembly on the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), during which Member States will consider and adopt the post-Malabo CAADP Agenda, henceforth to be known as the Kampala CAADP Agenda.

I have been briefed that over the past one and a half years, the African Union Commission has led the process of drafting the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme Strategy and Action Plan 2026 – 2036 and Kampala Declaration, and that the process has been widely consultative.

Ladies and Gentlemen, On its part, Uganda as the Chair of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment

(STC-ARDWE), has provided strategic oversight at the political level.

The whole process, which has been under the supervision of you as the Ministers of Agriculture, has now come to an end, with the Specialized Technical Committee set to present the Strategy and Action Plan as well as the draft Declaration to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

I congratulate you upon this milestone.

With the Summit set to consider and adopt the Strategy and Action for the period up to 2035, I wish to remind you that this will be the third in a series of ten-year CAADP Strategies and that the third biennial review of implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme carried out in 2023 noted that, we, as African countries, needed to do better, than we have been doing, in order to achieve the targets that we set for ourselves some twenty years back (that is, in 2003).

Therefore, I want to urge you as sector Ministers across the continent, to guide us on where we need to re-adjust in order for us to meet our own targets.

You will note that CAADP is one of the strategies towards realization of the *Agenda 2063 – The Africa we Want*. Therefore, let us work deliberately to get what we want as a continent.

As the continent’s agricultural sector Ministers, I urge you to deliberately work to reduce Africa’s over-reliance on food imports from outside the continent.

We must position the continent in such a manner that our agricultural sector is resilient to climate change as well as other shocks and is adaptive to advances in technology.

Excellencies ladies and Gentlemen,

The African Development Bank report indicates:

- i. That more than 60% of Africa's working population is engaged in agriculture;
- ii. That the soil across most of the continent is rich and fertile;
- iii. That Africa has 65% of the world's remaining uncultivated arable land;
- iv. That Africa has abundant fresh water, with enough rainfall and a good number of days of sunshine each year yet, in 2021, Africa's food imports were about USD 100 Billion fueled mainly by population growth.

What a shame? that a continent that was gifted by God with such a proportion of the world's arable and fertile land is experiencing such a trend in food imports!

This session of the Summit should come up with concrete proposals on how Africa can come out of such an undesirable situation.

For us to guarantee our future as Africans, **we must feed ourselves.**

The process of drafting and adopting the Strategy and Action Plan is now coming to an end. I urge you to now focus your energies on implementation.

This will be a combined effort, from national to regional and continental levels. Let us work together in a complementary way to deliver the Africa we want.

Let me close my remarks by putting forward my suggestions:

- i. Policy reviews for Food security and nutrition.

- ii. Investing in research for improved seeds and livestock.
- iii. Investment in Irrigation and mechanization is a must to mitigate climate change and enhanced production.
- iv. In order to align the African population, we need to mobilize them for Production, productivity, and profitability.
- v. As Africa we must remain focused to the fact that regional trade has the potential to back regional and national development and that it can lead to greater economic and political cooperation.

Avoid trade barriers, we need each other for development.

- vi. We must take advantage of the African Continental Free Trade Area, which is about 1.5 billion people, COMESA, ECOWAS, the EAC and stop exporting raw materials and add value to our agricultural products such as coffee, cocoa, tea, Milk etc.

Why not export finished and branded products from Africa?

With these remarks, it is now my singular duty and honour to declare this Ministerial Session of the African Union Extra-Ordinary Assembly of Heads of State and Government on the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme officially open.

For God and my Country

Nabbanja Robinah
PRIME MINISTER