

**7th meeting of the Multi-Stakeholder Partnership (MSP)
Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock”,
Addis Ababa, 08-12 May, 2017**

**OPENING REMARK
BY H.E. Prof. Fekadu Beyene, Minister,
Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia**

Fritz Schneider, Chair of Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock

Dr. Jimmy Smith, Director General of International Livestock Research Institute

Dr. Rein Wang, Assistant Director General of FAO

Excellences’,

All protocol observed

Distinguished Participants and,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is indeed a great pleasure and honour for me to give an opening remark on this important international conference aimed at achieving multiple benefits through livestock based solutions.

On behalf of the government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and that of my own please allow me to welcome you all to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the Land of Origin.

Ethiopia is happy in hosting the 7th Multi-stakeholder Partnership meeting of the Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock, as this would enable us to share the multiple benefits we are deriving from sustainable livestock initiatives, recently

supported by the Ethiopia Livestock Master Plan (2015) and Growth & Transformation Plan two (GTP 2), developed with a multi-stakeholder approach.

The Climate-Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) initiative, commissioned by the Ethiopian Government, in view of protecting the country from the adverse effects of climate change will benefit the Livestock sector as this sector is the first victim of such negative impacts of climate change.

Excellences and distinguished Participants,

With the global population expected to continue to rise until about 2050 and then stabilize at around 9 or 10 billion, it is estimated that food production will need to increase by as much as 70%. The challenge of feeding a growing population remains formidable but attainable with implementation of climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE).

The Ethiopian Government has laid the institutional and analytical basis for the sector with the creation of the new Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries (MoLF) in October 2015, and the Livestock Master Plan (LMP) based on a rigorous Livestock Sector Analysis. This is a major milestone for the livestock and fisheries sector as it signals the Government of Ethiopia's commitment to the modernization and transformation of the sector.

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for over 85% of the rural community of Ethiopia. The government of Ethiopia has given major emphasis to increase agricultural production and productivity. We are also determined to remove constraints that impede sustainable agriculture and rural development. Some of the measures initiated to support agricultural production include the provision of

quality farm inputs at affordable prices, small scale irrigation schemes, minimized post-harvest losses and control and eradication of major livestock and human diseases. Breed improvement, production of adequate livestock feed and provision of health services are among the major key factors to promote livestock development in the country, and were given prior attention.

Excellences and distinguished Participants,

My Government has taken important and ambitious steps to efficiently utilize its vast wealth of livestock resource and make this sector one of the drivers of the transformation of agricultural based economy, through improved productivity, boosting export oriented business and generating foreign currency. This is mainly backed by the second Growth and Transformation Plan of the country, which envisages rapidity, continuity, and equitability of economic growth.

Poverty reduction and food security improvement are the main challenges in Ethiopia, the continent of Africa and other parts of the developing world. Livestock production, has a significant direct – and considerable indirect – impact on the fight against hunger and poverty. Livestock is increasingly recognized to have a significant potential to contribute to overall economic growth, poverty reduction, and food and nutritional security. Livestock plays multiple roles in the livelihoods of the people, impacting in many ways on food and nutrition security, economic well-being, social status, environmental sustainability and people's health.

Livestock plays an important role in my country, not only because we are the major livestock country in Africa both in terms of numbers and diversity of

livestock resources, but our agriculture depends on livestock, and climate change reduces the availability and productivity of useful resources used to improve livestock production and productivity. That is why such a multi-stakeholder partnership forum is not only essential but timely.

Excellences and distinguished Participants,

My country, with approximately 83% of its total population of above 98 million dwelling in rural areas, is profoundly an agrarian nation. Agriculture accounts for 46% of the national GDP, 90% of foreign exchange earnings, and 85% of employment. This livestock sector has been contributing considerable portion to the economy of the country, and still promising to rally round the economic development of the country. Livestock generates 42% of the agricultural GDP and 16-20% of the national GDP.

Last year, my country has faced an unprecedented level of drought in the Eastern and Southern part of the pastoral areas, which is the worst of its kind in fifty years. However, the impact of drought was averted without causing serious damage against the public mainly due to the prompt and concerted action of the Government and development partners.

Drought resilience initiatives have been instrumental with especial emphasis on water resources development for human and livestock use. Irrigated pasture, fodder bank and horticultural crops, along with improved livestock husbandry and market access would contribute to the CRGE agenda.

In the high lands and mid altitudes areas establishment of Integrated Agro-industrial Parks, with the aim of market creation and value addition to agricultural

and livestock products, is envisaged to catalyse sustainable development and socio-economic transformation.

In 2015 the African Union launched *The Livestock Development Strategy for Africa (2015 – 2035)* to guide livestock development into the future.

Capacity development and gender mainstreaming are important components in the development agenda, particularly in job creation for key actors in the current and future livestock agriculture, particularly women and the youth. The livestock sector is particularly relevant in this context, given that traditionally women play significant roles in raising animals as well as processing and selling livestock commodities. For the youth, the transformation of livestock commodity value chains offers new opportunities.

The mission of The Global Agenda is to enhance livestock stakeholders' commitment and investments in support of the UN Agenda 2030 by facilitating dialogue, generating evidence and supporting the adoption of good practices and policies. The Global Agenda functions in an open and consensual way as a multi-stakeholder partnership that actively engages all actors in the livestock sector worldwide (governments, civil society, private sector, donors, academia, non-governmental organizations and multi-lateral organizations) to foster the sustainable development of the rapidly changing livestock sector.

Excellences and distinguished Participants,

At the same time Ethiopia is keen to learn from others' knowledge and experiences and hopes this meeting will enhance our capacity to practice sustainable livestock to reduce poverty and increase food security

With this brief remark, I thank once again the organizers for organizing this international convention and all the participants who have come here today to participate and contribute to the meeting objectives.

Wishing you a fruitful deliberation, I announce the 7th Multi-Stakeholder Partnership conference of the Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock officially open.

I Thank You,