



# The Cape Town Proclamation: Parliamentarians' Recommendations Supporting CAADP Goals in Championing Agricultural Successes for Africa's Future

Somerset West, South Africa  
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The conference having noted the following:

## ***Section 1. The Importance of Agricultural Growth***

Sustained agricultural growth is necessary if Africa is to stimulate economic growth and to reduce poverty. Over 70% of Africa's poor work in agriculture; a majority of them are women. Meanwhile, Africa's poor spend over half their income on food staples. Thus, agriculture has the greatest potential to simultaneously increase production and productivity while enhancing incomes of the majority of the continent's poor, and at the same time raising real incomes of the urban poor by reducing the cost of food staples. Members further recognized that agricultural prosperity stimulates demand for many non-farm goods and services, generating large spillover growth in other sectors of the economy and driving large GDP growth multipliers. Further, agricultural growth improves national food security and drives rural prosperity and wealth creation which, in turn, help in stemming rural-to-urban migration.

## ***Section 2. Prospects for Success***

The conference recognized that African farmers and agricultural policy makers have achieved a series of substantial successes in agricultural development, although these have proven inadequate in number and scale to counter Africa's rapid demographic growth. Many of these successes have endured for decades, without being scaled up. The development of Tropical Manioc Selection (TMS) varieties of cassava has launched two decades of breeding breakthroughs in most regions of Africa. The development and diffusion of modern, high-yielding varieties of maize, from the 1960's onwards, have transformed this imported cereal from a minor crop into the continent's major source of calories today. By crossing African and Asian varieties of rice, African rice breeders have developed a hardy, high-yielding upland "NERICA"

variety of rice which is spreading rapidly in West and Central Africa. Further, members noted that in recent decades African farmers have successfully contested highly competitive export markets for high-value agricultural products -- including cotton, coffee, livestock and horticultural products -- for Europe, the Middle and Far East.

Reviews of past successes suggest a regular confluence of three key ingredients. First, is new more productive technology that lowers costs and makes farming more competitive and profitable. Second, is a focus on growing markets. Third is high-level political commitment to agriculture. It was evident that clear vision and high-level political commitment have consistently proven essential for creating favorable policy environments and ensuring adequate budget allocations to agricultural support institutions and related infrastructure.

Looking forward, medium-term projections suggest that the largest immediate opportunity for agricultural growth will lie in the anticipated explosive growth in Africa's internal and sub-regional markets for food staples. Flexible responsiveness to high-value and niche export markets can supplement this with opportunities for external growth. Both domestic and export markets open opportunities for value addition up- and downstream input supply and processing industries. Africa's abundant resource base can underwrite these gains, provided African governments can maintain sustained policy follow-ups to maintain favorable policy environments and provide necessary public goods -- such as roads, power, legal institutions and research -- that the private sector will not supply.

### ***Section 3. The Role of Public Policies and Investments***

The conference further recognized that a modern African agriculture must view farmers as entrepreneurs seeking profit through access to credit and productivity-enhancing technologies in order to compete in growing domestic and export markets. Indeed, Africa's farmers have proven inventive and resourceful as well as highly responsive to new opportunities. Input suppliers, together with agribusiness processing and distribution networks form vital links between farmer and final output markets.

Public policy must provide a favorable environment for sustained agricultural production and agribusiness. Access to land and security of tenure, a solid legal framework, stable macro-economic policy and well-functioning support institutions provide a necessary foundation for agricultural prosperity. However, members expressed concern about the scourge of HIV/AIDS and other debilitating diseases. Harmonized access to continental, regional and sub-regional markets enhances prospects for sustained agricultural growth, particularly in rapidly growing markets for food staples. Fair trade conditions and prices are a necessary part of this favorable incentive system.

Likewise, significant public investment will be required in rural roads, electricity, and other infrastructure as well as in agricultural research and extension of new, more productive technologies. Returns to public investment in agricultural research and development prove consistently high, both in Africa and elsewhere. Yet Africa, on average, has continued to underinvest in its key productive sector. While Green Revolution Asian countries invested 15% of their budgets in agriculture, on average, African governments today allocate only 6%.

Similarly, the conference acknowledged that public investments necessary to sustain rapid agricultural growth will require a significant boost in African government budgetary allocations for agriculture. Recognizing this imperative, African Heads of State and Government agreed, at the African Union Summit in July 2003, to make agriculture a top priority and to raise budget

allocations for agriculture to a minimum of 10% of their individual countries' total public spending, by 2008.

#### ***Section 4. What is required to achieve the CAADP goals?***

The conference recommends that achievement of the CAADP (Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Programme) goals will require concerted action at multiple levels:

##### *A. AU/NEPAD level*

- Communicate the Maputo Declaration to all stakeholders, including governments, relevant ministries, parliaments, civil society and private sector.
- The NEPAD Secretariat and AU Commission should enhance the monitoring of these agreements, including the Maputo Declaration for all member states.
- Provide a website with real-time information on spending targets and achievement.
- Harmonize definitions of agriculture and total spending. Support the NEPAD initiative on agricultural expenditure tracking within government institutions and the necessary budget translations.
- Host regular, sub-regional seminars, to include government, parliament as well as representatives from the farmer organizations.

##### *B. National level.*

- Immediately internalize, formalize and institutionalize the Maputo Declaration (MD) in national budgeting process. Prepare Cabinet memos, provide high-level briefings within government, legislative branches as well as stakeholder groups. Integrate the MD into national medium-term planning and budgeting systems.
- Improve the quality of agricultural investment allocations.
- Enhance internal capacities to utilize budget allocation effectively and efficiently.
- Develop transparent and efficient accounting systems that will accurately track actual expenditures on a timely basis.
- Initiate national peer review mechanisms whereby government, legislature and civil society can monitor progress towards this goal.
- Engage and enhance the capacity of farmer organizations, civil society and other beneficiary groups on follow up and expenditure monitoring.
- Document and showcase past agricultural successes.
- Make agricultural education and image attractive.

##### *C. Parliamentarians.*

- Designate the agriculture and associated committees of parliament to monitor progress towards the CAADP goals.
- Annually verify the implementation of the CAADP programme, including progress towards the Maputo Declaration by reviewing annual budget allocations and actual expenditure.
- Engage in sub-regional dialogues.
- Alert constituencies, including the youth, men, women and political parties, to the importance of agriculture and increased investment in agriculture.
- Require briefing by the executive to parliament on all initiatives related to agriculture.
- Monitor government progress in achieving the Maputo Declaration.
- Introduce private member resolutions advocating achievement of the MD.
- Parliamentarians should take a leading role in fighting HIV/AIDS.
- Encourage exchanges of experience and mutual learning with other parliamentarians and technical experts.

*D. Development partners:*

- Encourage development partners to prioritize agriculture again and provide matching grants to support African governments that display commitment to CAADP.
- Support capacity building efforts among African governments, parliaments and parliamentary groups.
- Support regional and sub-regional parliamentary fora on agriculture.
- Provide technical backstopping on technical issues affecting agricultural technology, development and trade.
- Provide links to industrialized country parliaments and policy makers so African parliamentarians can communicate the interdependence of African and developed country farm policies.

We believe that with renewed commitment by African governments, significant gains are achievable in African agriculture and that this enhanced agricultural performance will significantly improve prospects for economic growth and poverty reduction in the decades ahead. We call upon the organizers of this conference and all participants to play their rightful role to ensure the realization of these recommendations.

*Participants of the Parliamentarians' Conference on  
Championing Agricultural Successes for Africa's Future  
in Support of CAADP<sup>1</sup>*

*May 18, 2006  
Somerset West, South Africa*

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<sup>1</sup> Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme