ASARECA COUNCIL OF PATRON MINISTERS SUMMIT

Repositioning ASARECA for Accelerated African Agricultural Transformation

May 2\textsuperscript{nd} - 4\textsuperscript{th}, 2019

Speke Resort and Conference Centre, Munyonyo, Kampala, Uganda

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

We, the Ministers responsible for Agricultural Research from the aforementioned countries gathered in Kampala, Uganda, on this 3rd day of May 2019;

Aware
• that in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa, the challenge of feeding a growing population projected to double by 2050 has to be met,

• that despite a degrading resource base coupled with global climatic and economic changes, where smallholder agriculture remains the centerpiece of our countries’ economies,

• that confronting this challenge while protecting the natural resource base involves finding innovative and sustainable ways to produce more food with less resources.

Cognizant of the need to use our land resources in ways that will ensure its health and sustainable access to future generations, Here note that:

• conservation agriculture-based sustainable intensification (CASI) practices, including practicing minimum tillage, maintaining permanent soil cover and mulches and implementation of crop diversification practices (such as cereal legume intercropping and rotations), as tested through the sustainable intensification of maize-legume cropping systems in eastern and southern Africa (SIMLESA) program and similar multidisciplinary research efforts show promise in boosting and stabilizing productivity and safeguarding the resource base in the face of climate change.

• Mainstreaming CASI calls for institutionalization efforts that support scaling and networking, integration into agricultural research and extension systems and fostering value chains development. CASI also benefits from appropriate mechanization
which would reduce drudgery especially for women farmers and laborers; as well as attracting youth talent into agriculture.

Do therefore recommend the following policy actions to our Governments and call for concerted action from a range of multiple stakeholders in Africa including: multi-disciplinary researchers, Think Tanks, extension agencies, National and Regional Parliaments and Local Governments, private businesses, non-governmental organisations, regulatory agencies, farmers and their community organisations, trade organisations and others:

Mainstream and Institutionalize Conservation Agriculture-based Sustainable Intensification (CASI) farming practices through:

Enhanced investments in scaling priority technologies through

- **Advisory and extension institutions.** Ministries of Agriculture should facilitate re-skilling extension personnel in CASI and the operations of farmer innovation platforms and collective institutions

- **Broad-based Farmer Education through CASI demonstration and learning sites.** By mobilising public and private partnerships to fund national networks of long term CASI learning sites.

Regional CASI networks of

- **Ongoing adaptive and multi-disciplinary research, training at multiple levels and knowledge systems.** This should be done in collaboration with other relevant ministries and agencies (such as Education, Science and Technology, Environment and Natural resources) as well as sub-regional research organisations such as ASARECA, CCARDESA and CORAF.

Enable rural market development by:

Encouraging innovations that improve rural value chains and enable adoption of CASI.

- Supporting agribusinesses willing to invest in rural innovation and market development as part of their business model, e.g. through funds that enable such innovators to access start-up capital where needed.

- Promoting collective institutions to enable farmer integration into markets

Support the development of smallholder machinery value chains through:

Collaborative efforts for networks of machinery development, testing and adaptation

- Local-level training for entrepreneurs in decentralized custom hire businesses and service centers

- Support market innovations that enable low-cost farmer learning and experimentation
To conclude, we re-affirm that with multi-sector support, smallholder farmers can trial, select and adopt CASI practices suited to their varying conditions to build resilient farms needed to feed the growing populations in Africa. Using CASI as a framework, it is possible to instigate critical paradigm shifts in smallholder farming systems and underlying agronomy, encourage institutional and market innovations to support farmers adopt CASI.

The potential of CASI to conserve soils, improve yields and have positive environmental impacts can enhance farm resilience to the effects of climate change. Therefore, CASI should be promoted as a regional initiative and as a major contributor to achieving the Malabo Commitment on resilience of farming systems in Africa.

We also affirm that political and material support at both national and regional levels are required to build strong partnerships in regional AR4D flagship programs for scaling of agricultural technologies and innovations. These regional collective actions are critical opportunities to create the free flow of new ideas, research results, technologies and innovations to generate the much needed spillovers across institutions and countries. Such positive spillovers are central to achieving impact of agricultural innovations faster and at national and regional scale.

IN AGREEMENT HEREOF, the undersigned representatives being duly authorized by their respective Governments have signed the present Joint Communique

DONE AT KAMPALA, this ___3rd____ day of ___May___ Year ___2019____

FOR:

THE REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI

____________________________________________________________________________________
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

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MINISTER OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS
THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES

FOR THE AFRICAN UNION

COMMISSIONER, RURAL ECONOMY AND AGRICULTURE, AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

OBSERVER:

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