

MINISTERIAL COMMUNIQUÉ ON PROMOTING AFRICA WIDE COOPERATION IN HIGHER AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION, 5th DECEMBER 2019, CAPE COAST, GHANA

The Government of Ghana hosted a Ministerial Round Table Meeting during the fifteenth Annual General Meeting of the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM). The meeting was attended by representatives of the Governments of Angola, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Eswatini, Ghana, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, and was preceded by a meeting of technical experts from the respective Governments. Development Partners including African Development Bank, Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, BRIDGIN Foundation, MasterCard Foundation, and OCP Group participated in the meeting.

The objectives of the meeting were to:

1. Deliberate on how Member States can promote Africa wide collaboration in Higher Agricultural Education, Science, Technology and Innovation;
2. Provide a platform for Member States to dialogue on the needed transformation of national and regional Higher Agricultural Education systems in Africa;
3. Deliberate on the RUFORUM member universities' response to the Committee of Ten Heads of State (C10) Lilongwe Declaration and Action Plan;
4. Review the progress made in the implementation of the decisions made by the Ministerial Round Table Meetings on Agricultural Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation held in Cape Town 2016, Lilongwe 2017 and Nairobi 2018; and,
5. Discuss potential continental initiatives for strengthening Agricultural Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation in Africa.

We, the Ministers and Senior Leaders of Agriculture, Higher Education and Training, Science, Technology and Innovations, and Finance assembled at the Ministerial Roundtable meeting on Higher Agricultural Education, Science, Technology and Innovation held at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana on 5th December 2019;

1. **NOTING WITH CONCERN** the underperformance of African countries in capacities to generate knowledge, technologies, and innovations to drive economic development on the continent;
2. **NOTING** the decisions of the **FIRST SUMMIT OF THE COMMITTEE OF TEN HEADS OF STATE** championing Education, Science, Technology and Innovation held in Lilongwe 2018, that identified key actions to be undertaken by Member States and African Universities to address the gaps;
3. **RECALLING** that the Africa's Ministerial meetings held in 2016 in Cape Town, 2017 in Lilongwe, and 2018 in Nairobi called for continental initiatives to Strengthen Higher Agricultural Education in Africa (SHAEA), Build Africa's Science, Technology and Innovation Capacity (BASTIC), Strengthen Africa's Innovation and Entrepreneurship Capacity (SASTIE), Escalate Postgraduate Training in Africa, and increase staffing capacities and the pool of Women Scientists in African Universities (RISSCAW), and Support Human Capital Development, Youth Employability and Entrepreneurship for Agricultural Transformation in Africa (HEEAT);
4. **NOTING THAT** African Union Commission signed an MoU with RUFORUM in 2014 for the implementation of Science, Technology, Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA) 2024 PRIORITY Area 1 on reducing poverty and enhancing food and nutrition security;
5. **NOTING WITH APPRECIATION** the efforts by African Universities to support Africa's development through the Africa's Universities Agenda for Agricultural Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa;
6. **NOTING** the need to strengthen Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) systems and enhance educational value chains in Africa;
7. **NOTING** the disproportionate low female participation in Higher Agricultural Education, Science, Technology and Innovation;
8. **NOTING** the significant expansion within the Higher Education sector and the spiralling intake of undergraduate students without parallel expansion in resources including funding, infrastructure, equipment, and staff at African universities;
9. **FURTHER NOTING THAT** there are several opportunities for strengthening the Higher Education sector in Africa, especially: (i) increased importance of **human capital** as a basis for strong knowledge-based economies; (ii) **Youth**

demographic dividend requires an urgent and sustained intervention from a multiplicity of stakeholders (public, private, community and partners); (iii) **Technical Skills** at various levels will be a key pathway to accelerating innovation and expanding employment opportunities; iv) **Techno-Entrepreneurship** holds the promise for translating the diverse natural resources and tapping into youth potential to develop products that create wealth and meet societal needs; and, v) The **Fourth Industrial Revolution** is shaping advances in artificial intelligence and deployment of digital tools for agricultural transformation;

10. **RECOGNISING** the importance of Higher Education as a key mechanism to ensure the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2063 *'The Africa We Want'*;
11. **RECALLING** that Africa's Ministerial meeting held on 23 October 2018 in Nairobi, Kenya called on Member States to ratify the RUFORUM Charter following each country's specific procedures.

WE HEREBY ENDORSE

The Five Continental Initiatives for strengthening Africa Innovation Capacity, increasing its competitiveness, enhancing youth employability and entrepreneurship;

AND AGREE TO

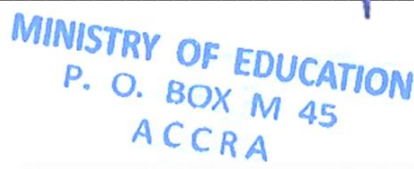
1. **COMMIT** to put in place mechanisms including continental collaborative programmes for strengthening staff capacities and increasing the pool of women scientists in African Universities and other research and development institutions;
2. **UNDERTAKE** strategic interventions to catalyse graduate and postdoctoral training to bolster the capacity of universities to generate the requisite knowledge, skills and innovations;
3. **INVEST** in youth programs that advance requisite technical skills, entrepreneurship and uptake of digital solutions to expand innovation and employability;

4. ESTABLISH Higher Education Centres of Excellence for Building Africa's Science, Technology and Innovation Capacity

WE FURTHER

1. **URGE** the Member States to endorse the RUFORUM Charter through their respective procedures;
2. **URGE** the Member States that committed to participation in the Strengthening Higher Agricultural Education in Africa (SHAEA) program and the African Union Commission to engage the World Bank to execute the funding arrangements for full implementation of the SHAEA program and the Sub-Regional Agricultural Productivity Programmes;
3. **URGE** the Member States to support the strengthening of TVET systems and educational value chains in Africa;
4. **URGE** the Member States to engage RUFORUM as technical advisory agency in the design and implementation of Higher Agricultural Education, Science, Technology and Innovation Initiatives;
5. **URGE** the African Union Commission to reach out to African Development Bank and other Funding Agencies to finance the Five Continental Initiatives and a Regional Academic Mobility Programme;
6. **URGE** the African Union Commission to request the European Union Commission to include RUFORUM in EU funding support to Africa; and
7. **URGE** the African Governments and the African Union Commission to table the above recommendations through the African Union Commission Specialized Committee on Human Resource and Science and Technology, to the African Heads of State and Government during their AU Heads of State January-February 2020 Summit.

Signed by:

Name	Designation	Country	Signature
Hon. Dr Mathew Opoku Prempeh	Minister	Ministry of Education GHANA	 
H.E Eugénio Adolfo Alves da Silva	State Secretary	Ministry Higher Education ANGOLA	 
Hon. Pr. Eleonore Ladekan Yayi	Minister	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research BENIN	 
Hon. Prof. Gaspard Banyankimbona	Minister	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research BURUNDI	 
Hon. Lady Howard Mabuza	Minister	Ministry of Education and Training ESWATINI	 

Hon. Diholo
Kotiti Lawson

Deputy Minister

Ministry of Education
and Training
LESOTHO

Hon. Prof. Ansu
Dao Sonii, Sr

Minister

Ministry of Education
LIBERIA

Hon. Prof.
Mahamoudou
Famanta

Minister

Ministry of Higher
Education and
Scientific Research
MALI

Hon. Dr William
Susuwele Banda

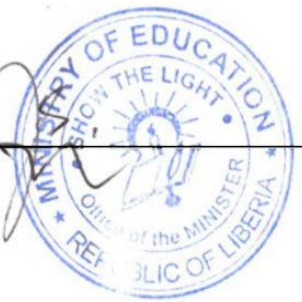
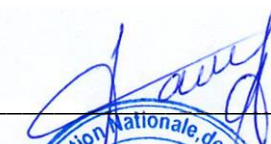
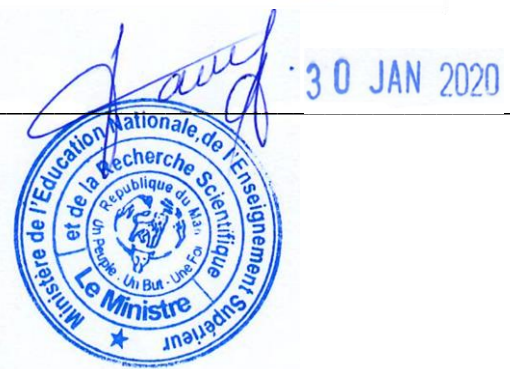
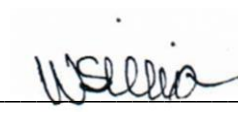
Minister

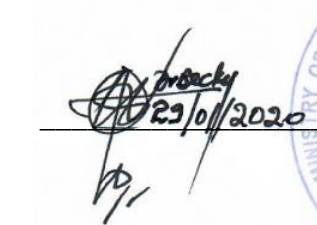
Ministry of Education,
Science and
Technology
MALAWI

Hon. Dr. Becky
Ndjoze-Ojo

Deputy Minister

Ministry of Higher
Education, Training
and Innovation
NAMIBIA




Hon. Prof. Aiah
Gbakima

Minister

Ministry of Technical
and Higher Education
SIERRA LEONE

Aiah A.



H.E Prof. Intisar
Soghayroun
Elzein
Soghayroun

Minister

Ministry of Higher
Education and
Scientific Research
SUDAN

Intisar



Hon. Yien Oral
Lam Tut

Minister

Ministry of Higher
Education, Science and
Technology
SOUTH SUDAN

Yien Oral



Hon. Dr. John
Chrysostom
Muyingo

State Minister

Ministry of Education
and Sports
UGANDA

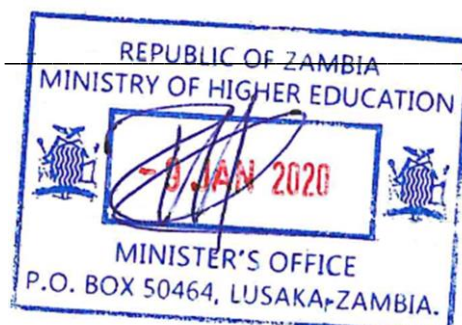
John Chrysostom



Hon. Dr. Brian
Mushimba

Minister

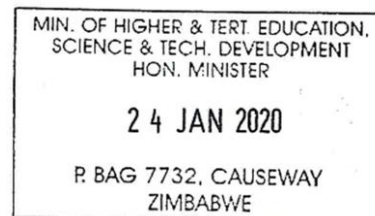
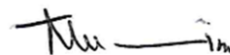
Ministry of Higher
Education
ZAMBIA



Am



Hon. Prof. Amon Minister
Murwira
Ministry of Higher and
Tertiary Education
ZIMBABWE



Hon. Prof. State Minister
Jacques Fame
Ndongo
Ministry of Higher
Education
CAMEROON

Hon. Prof. Minister
Gabriel Ismael
Salimo
Ministry of Science
and Technology,
Higher Education and
Professional
Technician
MOZAMBIQUE

Hon. Prof. Minister
Thomas Luhaka
Losendjola
Ministry of Higher
Education
The Democratic
Republic of Congo