

OFFICIAL REMARKS

H.E. Dr WORKNEH GEBEYEHU, IGAD EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
Delivered on Behalf by Mr Awira Anthony, the Director of Planning,
Coordination, Partnership Division, IGAD

- **Your Excellency Dr. Fikru Regassa**, the State Minister of Agriculture of the **Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia**
- **Your Excellency, Dr. Fatima Rahma**, **Director General, International Relations Directorate; Ministry of Agriculture and Forests; The Republic of Sudan**
- **Your Excellency Hon. Mohamed Adam Mo'alim Ali**, Minister of Livestock, Forestry and Range; **Federal Republic of Somalia**
- **Your Excellency Hon. Abdul Bahari Jilo**, Chief Administrative Secretary (CAS); **representing** Prof. Margaret Kobia, PhD, EGH; Minister (Cabinet Secretary); of Public Service, Gender, Senior Citizens Affairs and Special Programmes, **the Republic of Kenya**
- **Your Excellency, Mr Joseph Africano Bartel**, Under Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Forestry; **representing** H.E Ms Josephine Napwon Cosmos; Minister of Environment and Forestry; **the Republic of South Sudan**
- **Mr Tabarek Mohamed**, Technical Advisor to the Minister, **representing;** H.E Ibrahim Elmi Mohamed; Minister of Agriculture, Water, Fishery and Livestock, in charge of marine resources; **the Republic of Djibouti**
- **Ms Pamela Komujuni**, Senior Disaster Management Officer, Office of the Prime Minister, **representing;** Hon. Esther Anyakun; State Minister for Disaster preparedness, refugees and Management; **the Republic of Uganda**

Distinguished delegates of Member States,
Distinguished delegates of Development Partners
Ladies and Gentlemen!!

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to the 8th IDDRSI Platform General Assembly and your second home, Addis Ababa, the capital of Africa.

Your Excellencies!

Our gathering today is taking place at a unique time in history when our region was unfortunately hit by the worst food insecurity that affected about 50 million people. The current drought has severely affected three IGAD Member States, even though other countries were also affected to varying degrees. The most affected countries are; Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, accounting for 8.1 million, 4.1 million and 7.1 million food insecurity populations, respectively. Malnutrition among children, the elderly and women account for more than 19 million people and is feared to increase unless immediate and bold measures are taken.

The prolonged drought has also resulted in an economic loss of the pastoral communities because of the death of 7 million heads of animals, which takes many years to recover, even under stern measures.

The IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI) that we established 11 years ago was a step in the right direction and consistent with the aspirations of our forefathers, who established IGAD in 1986 as the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), which aimed at mitigating the effects of recurring severe droughts and other natural disasters.

At this juncture, I would like to commend the Member States for their vision and commitments demonstrated in building the resilience of our region in

the face of increasing hazards on top of drought, such as flood, Desert Locust, conflicts of various scales, COVID 19, and recently the Ukraine Crisis that has implication to the three “Fs” - fuel, food and fertiliser gaps.

Similarly, I would also like to thank our Development Partners, who have demonstrated unwavering support in our journey of enhancing food security in spite of the continued multiple challenges in the region. While owing to dozens of Development Partners in various social, economic and development endeavours of our region, concerning the support to IDDRSI, I would like to recognise the financial organisations, States and Governments, UN Agencies, Technical Agencies and International Agricultural Research Organizations for their support in their respective areas of competences. Hence, I would like to thank the AfDB, the World Bank, KfW, the EU, SIDA/Sweden, USAID, BMZ, Islamic Development Bank, Denmark, Swiss Development Cooperation, UNDP, FAO, ILRI and GIZ.

Your Excellencies!

The 14th IDDRSI Platform Steering Committee that has taken place from 20-21 July 2022, which I chaired, has deliberated seriously on the current drought situations guided by the May 13 Ministerial Meeting on Drought and the meeting of the Heads of States and Governments on 5th of July 2022.

The delegates of the Member States and Development Partner have thoroughly discussed the ongoing drought based on the evidence

generated by the IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre (ICPAC) and in collaboration with the Development Partners. The key issues during the meeting were scaling up the humanitarian interventions to curb the persistent food insecurity and rethinking the investment for resilience for better preparedness for the next drought.

Your Excellencies!

Investment areas that will help us to avoid the return of the catastrophic food insecurity we are dealing with include:

- Water-based developments to minimise our dependency on rainfall.
- building capacities of Member State Institutions, specifically in the area of early warning and anticipatory actions, which are highly desired in our region where 70% of the landmass is under arid and semi-arid lands.
- Peacebuilding at local and national levels.
- Building data and data sharing capacity at the national and the regional levels.

Therefore, I would like to appeal to this august gathering to find ways and means to intensify the humanitarian interventions and rethink the scale of resilience investment in the coming years.

Finally, I thank the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for hosting the 14th IDDRSI Platform Steering Committee meeting and the General Assembly.

I look forward to our fruitful deliberations.

Thank you!!