

## REMARKS

### LAUNCH OF THE IGAD REGIONAL FOCUS OF THE GLOBAL REPORT ON FOOD CRISES 2022

22 July 2022

**Honourable Ministers, distinguished participants, ladies, and gentlemen,**

The IGAD Regional Focus of the Global Report on Food Crises 2022 brings to our attention the alarmingly high levels of acute food insecurity and malnutrition in our region.

Before we proceed to further business of this august gathering, I wish to recognize with gratitude the role played by the Food Security Information Network and the Global network against food Crises and by all their members, in which IGAD is a member. This report in fact is a coproduction with these two very important global efforts.

Likewise, I would like to thank the agencies and staff of the international humanitarian and development communities as well as the technical officers of our Members States for their dedication to share data and analyse.

In particular, IGAD would like to thank FAO and WFP for their financial contribution along the entire process, for today's event and for the report publication.

In 2021, nearly 42 million of our brothers and sisters were estimated to be highly food insecure and in need of urgent assistance, surpassing all previous records. **This year, they will be over 50 million.**

Our region accounted for nearly 22 percent of the global number of food insecure people in 2021, despite the fact that less than 0.04 percent of the global population is living in the IGAD region.

In addition, **over 10 million of our children suffered acute malnutrition, in 2021, across six of the IGAD countries.**

As you are aware, since late 2020, four consecutive rainfall seasons have failed, causing widespread and persistent drought in parts of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia.

Progress to regional peace and security has also seen some setbacks – contributing enormously to food insecurity and malnutrition – and it remains a concern not only for IGAD, but for the whole international community.

Last year, when we launched this report, the COVID-19 pandemic had exposed the unparalleled complexity of food crises in our region – having national, regional, and global causes and consequences.

A year later, the conflict in Ukraine is worsening the already high levels of food insecurity across the region, once again exposing the fragility of our food systems.

**These phenomena present a reality that can no longer be considered as abnormal but rather a new normal that we must factor in our programmes, strategies, and policies.**

**Honourable Ministers, distinguished participants, ladies, and gentlemen,**

About five years ago, we made a commitment to end hunger and achieve food security and improved nutrition by 2030 through Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2).

However, we remain far away from achieving this goal.

**This must be our wake-up call!**

1. We need to scale up and mainstream anticipatory action. We know it is working and still, it is not implemented at large scale. This should not be the case going forward.
2. We also need to take bolder action to build resilience so that we can safeguard the development gains we have made so far and reduce the vulnerability of our people to future shocks and stresses.
3. We require to improve the region's food and nutrition analysis capacity so that we will be able to acknowledge the state of our food systems and act timely, accordingly.
4. Lastly, given the global climate crisis, we need to shift towards climate smart approaches that increase agricultural production, build resilience, and foster climate adaptation and mitigation.

Let me remind you that our region is endowed with a wide range of natural resources, presenting a variety of opportunities and possibilities for wealth creation and development.

**Honourable Ministers, distinguished participants, ladies, and gentlemen,**

This report presents an opportunity for us to better understand the food crisis landscape in our region and tackle the problem at its roots.

By working together, I am confident that we cannot only improve the food security and nutrition situation in our region but create new opportunities for the IGAD people. **As Kofi Annan, the former UN Secretary-General, once said: “It is partnerships which hold out the greatest hope of finding solutions to the challenges we face”.**

As I conclude, let me take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of our member states and partners who shared their data, analyses, expertise, and other resources to make this report possible.

**Thank you!**