

Speech on IGAD General Assembly Meeting
The IDDRSI platform General Assembly of the IGAD Drought Resilience & Sustainability initiative (IDDRSI), 22nd July, 2022, A.A
By H.E. Mr. Oumer Hussein Oba, Minister, Ministry of Agriculture, Ethiopia

- **Dear Mr Awira Anthony, the Director of Planning, Coordination and Partnership Division of IGAD, Representing H.E. Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu the Executive Secretary of IGAD and Chair of the IDDRSI Platform**

- **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 and Invited guests,

All protocol observed

First of all, I feel privileged and honor by this opportunity to represent my Country, Ethiopia at this very important time when our sisterly countries seek

mutual cooperation to overcome the insurmountable problem of climate change and related risks.

Evidently, the climate change based incidences like the drought, invasion of desert locust, flood including other hazards have severely affected the people of Ethiopia most notably living in the dry land areas of the country. The Government of Ethiopia, however, through its relentless efforts and implementation of the resilience building initiatives, we have achieved promising results in improving the livelihoods of the pastoral and agro-pastoral communities living in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) and I do hope that other IGAD member states have also attained similar encouraging results too in ending drought emergencies. In this regard our joint effort in resilience building initiatives is quite critically important.

The Ethiopian government recognizes that drought prone communities in our region share the same ecosystem, are interconnected through shared natural resources, socio-cultural values through interactions and socioeconomic transactions of the cross border trade and trans-boundary human and animal movements. It was learnt that such practices along the cross-border areas of the IGAD member states have demanded a strong coordination, harmonization and integrated development efforts in dealing with drought, and other natural hazards and their resultant effects in the Horn of Africa.

In particular, efforts made on the water development, natural resource management with due emphasis of rangeland rehabilitation, forage development, establishment of livestock market and health facilities, diversified livelihood interventions, peace building and conflict management practices are some of the important socio-economic development thematic areas demanded by the community to be dealt with by designing a more comprehensive and long term development resilience programs to be implemented in a better coordinated and harmonized manner.

This Drought Resilience Platform General Assembly to discuss on IGAD Drought Resilience & Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI) aims to strengthen further the ties among the neighboring countries and to launch the 2nd phase of the **Drought**

Resilience Initiative Program for Building Resilience, Food and Nutrition Security (BRFONS) and the **De-risking, Inclusion and value Enhancement of pastoral Economies (DRIVE)** of IDDRSI along with the 2nd CPP and RPP with a transformational agenda for the upcoming five years, which I greatly believe my country will benefit from.

Distinguished delegates and invited guests,

As you all remember, the 2011 Nairobi Summit was dedicated to the objective of ending drought emergencies through building sustainable livelihoods in the IGAD region. The summit called for the revision of strategies, policies and programs that involve increased investments aimed at building resilience within the member states and in the region as well.

In respect to this, the IGAD Member States have made a commitment to end drought emergencies in a coordinated and harmonized manner. In 2010 the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) developed a revised Disaster Risk Management (DRM) policy, which is already in practice and whose overall objective is to reduce the risks and impacts of disasters through the establishment of a comprehensive and integrated disaster risk management system within the context of sustainable development and it is linked to IGAD's Regional DRM policy.

Evidently, since the last decade Ethiopia has developed and implemented the Climate-Resilient Green Economy Strategy (CRGES) outlining a green economic growth path that fosters development and sustainability. And beyond, as the effect of climate change become more severe and regular more recently, Ethiopia has made great strides to contribute towards tackling climate change through the green legacy initiative under which the country has managed to plant more than 20billion seedlings of trees of different purpose. Ethiopia has also shared the plant seedlings to some of the neighbouring countries to enhance the climate adaptation and environmental protection measures across the region.

Recognizing that peace and stability is critical to ensure sustainable development, Ethiopia has prepared a Conflict Resolution and Peace Building Strategy (CRPBS) with the objective of preventing the occurrence of violent conflicts through the collection of conflict early warning information system and initiating early and

timely responses to tackle the root causes of conflicts by aligning the interventions phase by-phase with the long-term development plans.

Honorable Ministers/ Permanent Secretaries

Distinguished Delegates and Participants,

Ladies and Gretel Men

Unfortunately in previous periods, the pastoralists and agro-pastoralists have been the disadvantaged and marginalized people in the country, with a very limited basic social services and development interventions. Thus, at present ensuring their livelihoods and responding to their needs is of paramount importance to the Government of Ethiopia. It is therefore, striving for a more and concerted effort on IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiatives (IDDRSI) in collaboration with IGAD is the priority to achieve the objective of Ending Drought Emergencies (EDE) in the country. To achieve this goal the GoE and its development partners have focused on the following three areas of interventions:

- Institutional and policy reform, where the GoE has undertaken recently
- Acceleration and expansion of investment efforts in the pastoral/agro-pastoral areas and
- Managing disaster risks through dynamic and innovative approaches.

Following the Nairobi Summit in September 2011 and subsequent meetings, the Ethiopian Government and development partners have committed themselves “to make new and significant investments in the dry-lands of the country to improve the livelihoods of vulnerable communities. The increased investment in these areas is aimed at opening up the dry lands and the pastoral and agro-pastoral areas for economic development, market linkages, creation of employment opportunities, quick delivery of services and emergency supplies both at national and sub national levels.

Obviously, building resilience and reducing the vulnerability of the livelihoods of the pastoral community is only possible through long-term development interventions and investments. To this end, the GoE has mainstreamed the Priority

Intervention Areas (PIAs) of the Country Programming Paper (CPP) along with the 10 years of the National Development plans in different sectoral institutions by setting key performance indicators to monitor and evaluate the achievements of the resilience initiatives.

At present, the GoE is implementing various resilience building projects in the dry land areas of the country, but not limited to

- Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Project,
- Drought Resilience and Sustainable Livelihood Program
- Strengthening Drought Resilience/SDR,
- Regional Fund for Strengthen Drought Resilience RF/SDR/KFW
- Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP),
- Lowland Livelihood Resilience Project and,
- Sustainable Land Management

Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Though the implementation of drought resilience initiatives has shown very encouraging results, nonetheless, there are still challenges and gaps that need the attention of the government, development partners and IGAD to deal with in the future and I do hope that some of them might be a discussion point of this IDDRSI PSC meeting and general assembly.

In this regard, I am so confident that the Government of Ethiopia has committed to achieve the Nairobi summit declaration including the recent summit recommendations of Heads of States along the drought emergency response and

we will continue with the same spirit and commitment to sustain momentum of the on-going efforts in building resilience.

Undoubtedly, the implementation of the ongoing and upcoming resilience initiatives will be achieving through an integrated intervention of different actors that can collectively impact in building resilience of vulnerable communities in the areas of arid and semi-arid lowlands of the country. It is our living memory that, in this year, my country experienced a life-threatening drought, which some call it 'the difficult situation the country faced in 40 years' time," which is still continuing in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALS) of pastoral and agro pastoral communities.

The role of our development partners in the process of implementing regional and national resilience building initiatives, is therefore, will be of paramount importance. Cognizant of this fact, I call upon all development partners who have been engaged in poverty reduction and resilience building activities and who are ready to support our future struggle against poverty and drought to be part of the implementation program. Thus, I would like to bring to your attention the need for leveraging your supportive engagement in our future development endeavours, following the same path you paved before.

Once again, on the behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, I would like to convey my acknowledgement and gratitude to all development partners and IGAD secretariat who have been with us along the way in tackling various challenges by the implementation of drought disaster resilience initiatives in the agro-pastoral and pastoral areas

In conclusion, I wish a fruitful IGAD platform on Drought Resilience and Sustainability Initiative General Assembly and Ministerial meeting for the successful completion and deliberation of the path to the resilience and sustainability agenda to end drought.

I thank you!