

Africa to tackle hunger through investments in agriculture

ADDIS ABABA: Africa's leaders unanimously agreed to end hunger and cut poverty in half by 2025 with the signing of the Malabo Declaration at the 23rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union Heads of State and Government last month.



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"Accelerated growth is essential if Africans at all levels are to achieve their aspirations for prosperity," said AU Chairperson Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma. "It is time for heads of state to put agriculture at the top of national development agendas and lead the way on a sure path to development for their people. Prosperity is within reach - it's in our hands."

At the summit, African leaders committed to new priorities, strategies and concrete targets around agriculture-led growth to achieve food and nutrition security for shared prosperity for their people. Building on the positive growth performance of many agricultural sectors in recent years, the new targets will push governments to move faster in creating a policy and infrastructure environment in which agriculture can thrive and generate income opportunities at all levels.

Specifically, they agreed to:

- Recommit to the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) process
- Increase both public and private investment finance in agriculture
- End hunger in Africa by 2025
- Halve poverty by 2025 through inclusive agricultural growth and transformation
- Boost intra-Africa trade in agricultural commodities and services
- Enhance resilience of livelihoods and production systems to climate change variability and other related risks
- Commit to mutual accountability to actions and results

Through CAADP, the African Union will drive and measure progress so that countries, and their leaders, are held accountable for results. The declaration committed African leaders to a systematic regular review process, using the CAADP Results Framework. The leaders further called for an immediate design of a strategy and roadmap for implementation of these comments.

"While their collective pledge is important, it is now time to move beyond words and for Africa's political leadership to act. Africans cannot prosper on just hopeful summit declarations," said Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

Agriculture is Africa's solution to long-term social and economic development issues including food security, youth unemployment, gender inequality and climate change.

"A strong agricultural sector will provide employment and generate economic growth which means jobs and incomes for Africans," said AUC Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, Rhoda Peace Tumusiime. "But public and private sector investment in agriculture is essential."

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