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A joint activity of the African Union Commission, Brazilian Government and UNIDO.

Declaration for the First High-Level Biofuels Seminar in Africa

Sustainable Biofuels Development in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges

30 July – 1 August 2007, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The Addis Ababa Declaration on Sustainable Biofuels Development in Africa

Preamble

Considering the rising and volatile price of oil, ongoing efforts to revitalize the agricultural sector in the face of low commodity prices, agricultural and trade policy reforms, local and global environmental challenges, the need to create new jobs and stimulate rural development, availability of new and more efficient technologies, and increased access to information, biofuels development in Africa has become a high priority.

In order to discuss the potentials and challenges of biofuels, the African Union Commission in co-operation with the Government of Brazil and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) organised the First High-Level Seminar on Biofuels in Africa at the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 30 July to 1 August 2007.

Key stakeholders at the seminar included over 250 high-level representatives of the Africa Union Commission; ministries and departments of energy, agriculture, environment, industry, trade from African Union member countries; Regional Economic Communities; development partners including UN agencies and the African Development Bank; government of Brazil; private sector; NGOs; and biofuels experts.

Ministers of key biofuels related sectors present held a roundtable that was preceded by a series of presentations and discussions on issues raised from various background papers prepared for the seminar. The roundtable took into account the conclusions and recommendations reached by the seminar.

The seminar participants agreed on the following recommendations:

1. Develop enabling policy and regulatory frameworks for biofuels development as a matter of priority, taking into account the following aspects:
 - a. Link to overall sustainable development policies;
 - b. Promote equity, including gender equity;
 - c. Ensure participation of all stakeholders;
 - d. Promote local consumption; and
 - e. Enhance energy security.

2. Commit to include biofuels in the broad energy related frameworks;

3. Take lead on those aspects on biofuels research and development along the biofuels value chain that have significant implications for Africa;
4. Harmonise national biofuels policies, strategies and standards through regional economic communities to ensure economies of scale and access to international markets;
5. Increase the capacity of key players along the biofuels value chain;
6. Participate in the global sustainability discussion and develop immediate guiding principles on biofuels development to enable Africa to compete internationally;
7. Call upon public financing institutions to support biofuels;
8. Call upon development partners to assist countries in keeping abreast with developments in the biofuels sector through North-South and South-South cooperation;
9. Minimize the risks associated with captive markets especially for the small-scale producers;
10. Formalise the organisation of similar high-level seminars at continental and regional levels;
11. Establish a forum to promote access to information and knowledge on biofuels related sector (e.g. best practices in policy development, technology-transfer, investment promotion, trade capacity building etc);
and
12. Commit themselves to implement the attached plan of action and call upon the African Union Commission to present the Addis Ababa declaration to the upcoming ministerial conferences on sectors relevant to biofuels.
13. Welcome the active participation of Brazil and wishes to identify key areas of potential cooperation partnership.
14. Participants thank the AUC, the Government of Brazil and UNIDO for organizing this seminar.

1st August 2007, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.