



**AFRICAN UNION EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT ON THE  
COMPREHENSIVE AFRICA AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAMME (CAADP) STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2026 – 2035**

**THEME:**

**“SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS FOR A  
HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS AFRICA”**

**11TH JANUARY, 2025**

**SPEKE RESORT, MUNYONYO KAMPALA,  
UGANDA**

Your Excellencies,

Heads of States and Governments,

AU Chairperson,

Development Partners,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

May I extend warm greetings and best wishes from His Majesty King Mswati III and the people of the Kingdom of Eswatini. It is my great honour to congregate with African Heads of States on this occasion to reflect and chart a way forward for the continent's agricultural industry development and food security.

Since the 2003 Maputo Declaration, African agriculture has been placed high on the development agenda. For this, I commend the continent's leadership for their vision towards attaining food sovereignty and prosperity at both national and continental levels. The 2014 Malabo Declaration reaffirmed the goals of the Maputo Declaration and has seen vigorous implementation and reporting by all countries, confirming the significance of the agriculture and food industry in ending hunger and achieving inclusive and sustainable growth for the continent.

While challenges persist, including climate change, less than expected productivity of food value chains, constraints on access and affordability of inputs, limited value addition, and high food prices, it is imperative for our governments and the African Union to stay the course on efforts geared at changing the situation. According to the State of Food Security and Nutrition Report of 2024, the globe has lost 15 years of progress due to recent economic disruptions including COVID-19 and the Russia-Ukraine War. As of 2023, around one in five people in Africa faced hunger. Additionally, 21.5% of the population in 59 countries/territories experienced high levels of acute food insecurity, requiring urgent food and livelihood assistance. In the Kingdom of Eswatini, our most recent vulnerability assessment identifies about 28% of the population as vulnerable and needing food assistance.

These figures highlight the critical need for effective agricultural policies and interventions to address food insecurity on the continent.

By speeding up the implementation of CAADP, as African nations we can reduce these alarming statistics and attain food security and sustainable agricultural growth for our populations going forward.

I am pleased to share that the Kingdom of Eswatini, under the leadership of His Majesty King Mswati III, has prioritised the implementation of the CAADP Agenda through several flagship programmes aimed at increasing productivity, building resilience to climate change, enhancing smallholder producer linkages to markets, increasing investment in agriculture, and strengthening institutional arrangements for the systematic transformation of the country's food systems to be more inclusive, sustainable, and competitive. This trajectory was pronounced in September 2024 during the "Eswatini Agriculture Business and Investment Indaba," where the Government launched the 2nd Generation Instrument-Based National Agriculture Investment Plan (2023- 2028). I would like to appreciate the participation of the AU Commission, AUDA-NEPAD, SADC, CCARDESA and all our development partners and urge all of you to continue supporting Eswatini to aggressively implement the CAADP Agenda as captured in the Eswatini National Agricultural Investment Plan (ENAIP).

It is pleasing to see that the systematic drivers of the 2nd Generation ENAIP align with the new Kampala CAADP Declaration. These include the remodeling of public financing for agriculture through the new Eswatini Agriculture Development Fund. This fund aims at leveraging private sector investment and reducing the cost of finance in the sector; improving horizontal and vertical coordination through the establishment of inclusive

Agriculture Industry Associations; development of specific commodity Sector Development Plan Agreements to be used as investment master plans for both Government and Agriculture Industry Association players; the establishment of the Integrated Agriculture Information System aimed at digitalising agriculture and traceability for improved trade; and a number of policy instruments to promote self-sustenance of our food value chains and youth opportunities in agribusiness.

Your Excellencies, the Government of Eswatini welcomes the new Kampala CAADP Declaration. We believe that if fully supported and implemented, the six objectives of the Declaration will transform the agriculture and food industry landscape on the continent. This will unlock overall economic growth and prosperity for our people, thus ending hunger and poverty, which incidentally, is His Majesty's commission to the current Government.

In this regard, we implore the AU to support member states in implementing this declaration and integrating it into their national investment plans. It would also be appreciated if the AU, at the continental level, could support robust resource mobilization to assist countries in funding their plans in line with the declaration. Lessons from the Biennial Review Reports indicate that countries need support to strengthen their information systems to improve evidence-based planning and reporting; and we believe on this basis more vigorous and targeted interventions can be rolled out to timely achieve the desired targets and ensure prosperity for our nations and the continent at large.

We believe that the impact of Climate Change is real and significant. Therefore, as African states, we need robust and effective adaptation and resilience programmes for our Agrifood systems to thrive. Improving the total

area under irrigation as well as improving irrigation technologies is a case in point.

Contract farming and backward integration that guarantees a market and fair prices to all farmers will promote agriculture as a commercial undertaking rather than a subsistence activity. We are not going to get far with the hoe alone, we need to bring some commercialisation into our food production initiatives. Protection of the genetic makeup and production of seed material is key. This includes safety of our food and avoidance of weaponisation of this against Africa and our people.

Practical projects and programmes need to be implemented to turn around the plight of Africa, this beautiful continent. Much has been deliberated about the potential of this our motherland, it is time the potential is turned to reality so that we achieve productivity, food sovereignty and meaningful economic growth. The future of the next generation is in our hands, let us move with speed towards securing it, *sitsi nkwe*.

I thank you.