



## **Development Briefing no. 30**

### **Resilient Agriculture in the Face of Crises and Shocks**

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## **SPEECH**

**by Mr Achille Bassilekin, Assistant Secretary General, Secretariat of the ACP Group**

**Honourable Dr Akinwumi Adesina, Minister of Agriculture from Nigeria,**

**Mr Staffan Nilson, President of the European Economic and Social Committee,**

**Mr Michael Hailu, Director of CTA,**

**Mr Rajul Pandya-Lorch, Head of 2020 Initiative at IFPRI,**

**Mr Denis Salord, Head of Unit, European Commission,**

**Excellencies,**

**Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First of all, let me commend CTA for the consistent organisation of the series of Policy Briefings on issues of agriculture and rural development, focusing on ACP countries. Today, we are gathered in the context of the 30<sup>th</sup> edition of these briefings which are now an important element of the Brussels consensus in Agriculture and rural development and I would like to commend the CTA management and its staff for this vibrant initiative.

Allow me to avail myself of this special opportunity to signal that our countries have benefited immensely from past briefings. With their extension to the ACP regions, I believe that the wider coverage and participation will continue to raise awareness on the challenges and opportunities for ACP countries in Agricultural issues.

As you are aware, for a large number of ACP countries, agriculture remains the most important economic sector and the largest single occupation for our citizens beyond the rural environment. In addition, this sector has been regarded by planners and policy makers primarily as the source of essential food production.

Needless to underscore, that Global agriculture is currently facing many challenges which could persist over the coming decades. These include extreme weather events, increasing temperatures, enhance atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide, sea level rise, drought, flood and changing precipitation patters as a result of climate change.

All these challenges coupled with frequent crisis and shocks have significant consequences for agricultural production in ACP countries, as well as increased risk of hunger and food insecurity, thereby threatening the achievements of the MDGs. Preliminary estimates for the period up to 2080 suggest a decline of 15-30 per cent of agricultural productivity in most climate-change-exposed

countries. It is even projected that, total agricultural productivity in ACP countries could decline by up to 50 per cent if the issue of resilience to crisis and shock are not urgently and comprehensively addressed.

In this regard, building resilience in the form of adaptation and other measures is therefore paramount to ACP Member States in order to alleviate the potential impacts of crisis and other forms of shocks, particularly climate change and variability. Adaptation will be needed in the short, medium and long term, to not only address the adverse effects of climate variability and extreme weather events, but also the long term impacts over the coming years.

In the long term, effective policies at national, regional and global levels will be critical for a more resilient world and a better future for farmers in our countries.

We believe that an innovative framework in resilient agricultural growth should help to evolve from crisis response to crisis anticipation and enhanced risk response. A renewed strategy on disaster risk reduction, prevention and capacity building will contribute immensely in addressing the twin challenges of food availability and access to food by taking into account environmental risks and climate change challenges, investment in infrastructure, research, technology transfer, market and safety nets, strategic food reserves and emergency stocks, insurance schemes, storage facilities and financial services to farmers.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Indeed the options available to address the biophysical socio-economic impacts of crisis and shocks on agriculture are many, and today we will hear from a group of Experts who will enlighten us on approaches and instruments for building resilience in agriculture and elaborate on success stories on building resilience in Agriculture.

The expectation is that discussions at today's briefing will contribute by and large to addressing agricultural resilience to crisis and shocks in ACP countries.

I thank you for your kind attention.