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Opening Statement

by

**H.E. Amb. Josefa Leonel Correia SACKO
Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue
Economy and Sustainable Environment (ARBE)**

African Union Commission

At the

**6th Session of the African Ministerial Conference on
Meteorology (AMCOMET)**

Ministerial Segment

Virtual

16 May 2024

15:00 – 18:00 EAST AFRICAN TIME (GMT + 3)

Protocol

- **H.E. Jean Ernest Massena NGALLE BIBEHE, Minister of Transport, Republic of Cameroon, also Chairperson of the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET)**
- **Honourable Ministers and Members of the AMCOMET Bureau**
- **Prof. Celeste Saulo, Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization**
- **Representatives of Regional Economic Communities (RECs)**
- **Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen**

H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the AU Commission, sends his warm greetings to you Honourable Ministers and Delegates of the 6th Session of the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET).

The Commission is grateful for your commitment to providing guidance on the contribution of meteorology to the realisation of the pan-African Vision -Agenda 2063, “The Africa We Want”.

Excellences, since the 5th Session of AMCOMET in March 2021, the continent has witnessed daunting meteorological challenges. The globe is witnessing more intense tropical cyclones, floods, drought, El Niño, and many other meteorological events than before. These events are often accompanied by high levels of devastation, including loss of human life, wildlife, and livelihoods; destruction of natural resources, property, and infrastructure; degradation of the environment; and disruption of major economic and social activities. While we currently battle the ills of El Niño, sad memories of Cyclones Idai and Freddy are also still fresh in our minds.

The need for reliable, tailored and timely weather and climate information services is more urgent now if efforts to accelerate or sustain Africa’s socio-economic development are to yield results.

Excellences, Africa should gather positive energy, look inwards, and redouble its efforts to enhance climate change resilience of economies and communities. We must build adaptive capacities and strengthen the entire value chain of weather and climate information services, and Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems. We also need to modernize our hydro-meteorological systems; strengthen meteorological observation networks; enhance meteorological and early warning investments; and make our institutions (both soft and hard) effective.

Your Excellences, conditions appear somewhat favorable for us to achieve this. We have very strong political will and commitments to achieve the foregoing. For example:

- 1) Through ***the African Leaders Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action***, agreed during the inaugural Africa Climate Summit (ACS) in Nairobi, Kenya in September 2023, the African Heads of State and Government, have committed to strengthen early warning systems and climate information services, as well as to take early action to protect lives, livelihoods and assets and inform long-term decision-making related to climate change risks; and
- 2) Additionally, during the 35th Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly which was held at AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in February 2022, the African Heads of State and Government adopted the revised Integrated African Strategy on Meteorology (Weather and Climate Services) and the AU Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan. Among other things, both Strategies provide strategic guidance on enhanced production, delivery and uptake of early warnings and climate information services into decision making and practice.

Such strong political will leaves the ball in the courts of the meteorological and climate sectors to pursue appropriate actions for translating the commitments into the much-needed action.

I am glad to learn that this 6th Session of AMCOMET will be adopting the Implementation and Resource Mobilisation Plans as well as the Monitoring and Reporting Frameworks of the Meteorological Strategy. This is very important, especially as the STC-ARDWE decided that reports on the implementation of the Meteorology Strategy be submitted to it biennially.

Allow me at this time to briefly update you on some of the critical relevant developments that took place since the 5th Session of AMCOMET:

- 1) As requested by the 5th AMCOMET Session, the AU Commission facilitated the submission of the revised Integrated African Strategy on Meteorology to relevant AU Policy Organs. I am pleased to inform you that the Strategy was adopted, including by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in February 2022;
- 2) During the inaugural Africa Climate Summit (ACS), which took place in Nairobi, Kenya in September 2023, the African Heads of State and Government committed to strengthen early warning systems and climate information services, as well as to take early action to protect lives, livelihoods and assets and inform long-term decision-making related to climate change risks. Full details are in the *African Leaders Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action*;
- 3) In line with the Abidjan and Cairo Ministerial Declarations on Meteorology, partner support has been mobilized to ensure Member States' smooth transition from the use of weather and climate data and information from meteosat second generation (MSG), to meteosat third generation (MTG) satellites. The European Union has committed resources to this cause, including the establishment of the African Meteorological Application

Facility (AMSAF). The Programme Document is under preparation with implementation expected to commence in 2025; and

- 4) In collaboration with partners including the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), and others, **the Multi-Hazard Early Warning for All: Africa Action Plan 2023-2027** was developed and later launched on the opening day of the Africa Climate Summit in Nairobi, Kenya on 4 September 2023.

Permit me, at this moment, to express my sincere gratitude to H.E. Jean Ernest Massena NGALLE BIBEHE, Minister of Transport, Republic of Cameroon, also Chairperson of AMCOMET, for his and his Bureau's unwavering support. We achieved all these high-level commitments through his leadership and personal involvement. The AU Commission is grateful, Sir.

I would like to express my own personal support as well as the full commitment and support of the AU Commission to work with the upcoming Bureau to advance the meteorology agenda.

Finally, I would like to express the AU Commission's appreciation to all our partners for the support they render to Africa. Some of these partners include the European Union (EU), the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), the African Development Bank (AfDB), UN Agencies including UNECA, and the European Organization for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT), to mention but a few.

I thank you for your attention and wish you fruitful deliberations.