

**“Deepening China-Africa Agricultural Cooperation for the Realization of
Agenda 2063”**

Statement delivered at the China Academy of Agricultural Sciences

By

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Distinguished Professor Felix Dakora, Senior Advisor to the Chinese Government and my mentor

Distinguished Professors and Researchers of CAAS in your respective capacities

Ladies and Gentlemen. Good Morning.

It is a great pleasure to be here today at the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, (CAAS). On behalf of His Excellency, Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, I extend our deep appreciation to the Chinese Government and the leadership of CAAS for your continued friendship and collaboration.

From the outset let me on behalf of the Chairperson of the AU Commission commend H.E. President Xi Jinping for providing strong and clear leadership that continues to deepen China-Africa relations. As we meet here this morning, China under President Xi is not only accelerating its development trajectory, it is providing pivotal leadership that would undoubtedly shape the future of the new global order. We commend President Xi for advancing the Ten Partnership Actions including Accelerating the Modernization of Agriculture in Africa under FOCAC and the zero-tariff policy which came into force on 1 May this year.

I would like to extend our profound appreciation to Prof. Felix Dakora, one of Africa's most renowned and accomplished scientists, for facilitating this meeting at a very short notice. I am pleased to be here for this initial exchange with CAAS and some of China's leading agricultural experts.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Agriculture lies at the heart of Africa's development agenda. As articulated in Agenda 2063, our continent aspires to a prosperous, food-secure, and sustainably developed future. This aspiration is anchored on the visions of a healthy and well-nourished citizens through modern agriculture for increased productivity and production. These aspirations are being implemented through the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the Malabo Declaration, and the national agriculture and food security investment plans of our Member States. With 60 percent of the world's arable land fed by vast rivers and favorable ecological systems, Africa holds the key to global food security.

In the FOCAC Beijing Action Plan (2025-2027), China and Africa clearly identify agricultural modernization as one of the tools that can assist African countries to pursue independent and sustainable development. They therefore agreed to work together to take practical steps to ensure industrialization, agricultural modernization and green development as concrete paths to modernization.

The Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences is specifically mentioned in the Beijing Action Plan and is commended for championing the establishment of the China-Africa Agricultural Science and Innovation Union. CAAS is specially tasked to promote platforms on agricultural technology cooperation with the aim of facilitating coordinated development of agricultural technology and industry in China and Africa.

The 2024 FOCAC summit commended the successful launch of the first set of China-Africa modern agriculture technology demonstration and joint training centers in the Chinese provinces of Hainan, Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Jiangsu. The summit also commended the establishment of a tripartite demonstration center by China, Ethiopia and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), to foster cooperation in agriculture, animal husbandry and green development,

Ladies and Gentlemen

China's extraordinary journey in agricultural transformation from ensuring food security for over a billion people to becoming a global leader in agricultural science, technology, and innovation provides powerful inspiration and practical models for Africa. We are particularly interested in your advancements in hybrid seed development, precision farming, efficient irrigation systems, soil fertility management, mechanization, biotechnology, and climate-smart agricultural practices.

Building on our shared vision, the African Union sees immense potential to deepen mutually beneficial cooperation in the following six integrated priority areas:

Firstly, it is critical to strengthen policy alignment and institutional cooperation and dialogue under the FOCAC agricultural track to ensure full synergy between China's agricultural modernization priorities, Agenda 2063, and the CAADP Strategy and Action Plan (2026-2035) as well as China's recently adopted Fifteenth Five Year Plan. Leveraging joint policy frameworks on modernization of agricultural production systems, local production of fertilizers and the establishment of quality infrastructure would be enhanced through strengthened strategic dialogue.

Secondly, it is critical to scale up technology transfer and joint research with particular emphasis on collaborative development of high-yielding, drought-resistant, and nutrient-efficient crop varieties; integrated pest management; and advanced fertilizer technologies, including locally adapted blended fertilizers, controlled-release products, and organic soil amendments. This also covers post-harvest loss reduction,

appropriate mechanization, and digital precision farming tools tailored to commercial and smallholder contexts.

Thirdly, it is pivotal to ensure increased capacity development and knowledge sharing by expanding training opportunities for African researchers, extension agents, and agro-entrepreneurs with special attention to women and youth on soil fertility mapping, efficient fertilizer application methods, and integrated nutrient management. Strengthening institutional partnerships through joint demonstration centers and Centers of Excellence, including deeper exchanges with CAAS would be crucial to the success of this process.

Fourthly, pursue climate resilient and sustainable agricultural practices. We need to jointly advance climate-smart practices, sustainable land and water management, agroecology, and restoration of degraded soils through balanced fertilization and organic recycling. These efforts directly support the Great Green Wall initiative and Africa's broader environmental commitments under Agenda 2063.

Fifthly, there is an imperative to scale up investment in enhancing value chains and market access. This is pivotal for the realization of the vast opportunities presented by the African Continental Free Trade Area and China's zero-tariff policy. Promoting investments in these areas would boost Africa's capacity to optimize the opportunities presented by the AfCFTA and China's zero-tariff policy.

Finally, it is crucial to promote local production of affordable, quality fertilizers to reduce import dependence. Africa's heavy reliance on the importation of fertilizers continues to hamper its realization of food security and sovereignty sometimes due to external geopolitical dynamics. Consequently, the Sino-African partnership should be leveraged to boost the local production of fertilizers on the continent.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to conclude by reaffirming the AU's commitment to coordinate continent-wide frameworks within Agenda 2063 and FOCAC frameworks as well as China's recently adopted 15th Five Year Plan. It is critical to leverage these frameworks to deliver scalable and sustainable impact. By aligning our efforts, we can accelerate Africa's agricultural transformation while contributing meaningfully to global food security and South-South cooperation.

We look forward to concrete outcomes from today's discussions, including the identification of flagship joint projects for cooperation with clear follow-up mechanisms, timelines and tangible deliverables.

Thank you for your kind attention.