



**The issue of the persisting drought and famine within the context of agriculture
and agribusiness development in Africa
for sustainable economic growth**

Resolution 145 (2017) adopted by the 40th Conference
(Ouagadougou, 10 november 2017)

The African Parliamentary Union, meeting at its 40th Conference in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on 9 and 10 November 2017,

Recalling, inter alia:

- International agreements emanating from the Conferences of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change - COP21 and COP22,
- The resolution on "Developing agriculture in Africa to address the food crisis and contribute to poverty reduction" adopted by its 31st Conference held in Kampala, Uganda on 30 November 2008,
- The resolution on "Enhancing private investment in the agricultural sector to achieve food security in Africa" adopted by its 36th Conference held in Libreville, Gabon on 8 November 2013,
- The resolution on "Achieving sustainable development in all its dimensions as a major goal for peace, security and social and economic progress in African countries" adopted by its 37th Conference held in Rabat, Morocco on 2 November 2014,
- The resolution on "African countries deal with the adverse effects of climate change: measures to be taken and role of African parliamentarians" adopted by its 38th Conference held in Bissau, on 6 December 2015,
- The resolution on "The role of African Parliaments in the achievement of the sustainable development goals" adopted by its 39th Conference in Rabat, Morocco on 9 November 2016,
- The resolution titled "Urgent international action to save millions of people from famine and drought in parts of Africa and Yemen" adopted by the 136th Assembly of the Inter-parliamentary Union in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 5 April 2017,

Deeply concerned about the severe drought and desertification experienced on the continent in recent years as a result of global warming, which has hit Africa hardest and, combined with economic challenges, has made access to water and food difficult for many African people and caused considerable losses of livestock owing to lack of water and fodder,

Also concerned that after a decade of relative improvement following the food crisis of the mid-2000s, famine has been on the rise in recent years due to drought, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa where, according to the United Nations, over 20 million people need emergency humanitarian assistance, highlighting Africa's vulnerability as regards of food security,

Recognizing that aside from famine, conflict and population and cattle movements, drought also causes humanitarian crises that adversely affect economic growth, social stability, water resources and the ecosystem,

Observing that famine affects countries where the effects of drought are accentuated by lack of or low investment in the agricultural sector, including infrastructure, particularly hydro-agricultural schemes (irrigation canals and drains) et renewable energies, often considered too costly,

Emphasizing the major role that international financial institutions could play in making affordable financing available, to increase agricultural production in African countries,

Regretting that the effects of drought, political instability, civil wars and displacement are compounded by development policies which are generally unsupportive of agribusiness in countries suffering the most from hunger,

Noting that despite its enormous agricultural potential, sub-Saharan Africa is the most food-insecure region in the world, where poverty is particularly alarming,

Reiterating that the continuing high level of food insecurity and import in Africa is unacceptable for a continent with abundant resources which allow for a wide range of diverse agricultural production and can help organise its food security, if exploited in a rational and sustainable manner through appropriate policies,

Stressing the importance of the agricultural sector in African economies and *conscious* that its rapid growth is a prerequisite for the improvement of the food situation in the face of the constantly growing demand resulting from high population growth and rapid urbanization of the continent,

Considering that increased demand for food and changes in consumption patterns arising from population growth and urbanization create opportunities for African staples, particularly processed food,

Considering also that meeting the growing demand for food calls for more productive and sustainable agro-pastoral and fishery strategies, by transforming the agricultural sector,

Observing that in developing countries that have been able to achieve transformation, these transformations were driven by higher agricultural productivity, leading to reallocation of labour and resources used in agriculture to other sectors, higher per capita income, and a substantial decline in hunger and poverty,

Convinced that a dynamic agribusiness sector, coupled with the development of services in rural areas would create jobs, particularly for women and the youth, resulting in improved income and food security,

Recognizing the important role played by the United Nations in conflict and natural disaster management in African countries,

Recalling that by adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, States are committed to eradicating hunger and poverty and achieving other important goals, including making agriculture sustainable, protecting the planet and ensuring peace and prosperity for all, reducing inequalities and combatting injustice and ensuring inclusive growth,

Recalling the African Union's commitment to the core values and principles that define the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), including the pursuit of agriculture-led growth as a key strategy to achieve the food and nutrition security and shared prosperity goals,

1. *Calls upon* African parliaments to encourage their governments to adopt agricultural development policies that systematically incorporate the risk of drought or climate change, so as to enable countries and communities to prepare, adapt and mitigate their effects;
2. *Calls upon* African parliaments to give due consideration in policymaking to:
 - Increased productivity in the agricultural sector
 - Agricultural transformation, ensuring food self-sufficiency and job creation
 - Development of the agro-food industry, even as countries transit from subsistence-based agricultural economy to a true market economy
 - Development of inter-regional and national markets
 - Establishment of strategic reserves, especially of cereals
 - Set up emergency funds for farmers who suffer losses;
3. *Calls upon* African parliaments to request their governments to ensure reduction of the environmental impact of agriculture, improving the nutritional quality of foods, preserving local ecosystems and biodiversity, improving the quality of life of agricultural workers, local employment and density in local economic channels;
4. *Urges* African parliaments to encourage their governments to substantially increase the budget allocated to the agricultural sector;
5. *Encourages* African parliaments to undertake the policy reforms required to create an enabling environment for private sector investment and participation, including through public-private partnerships in the provision of services;
6. *Calls upon* African parliaments to support the mainstreaming of agricultural and agro-industrial strategies into physical planning policies, and boosting investments in irrigation and storage infrastructure, rural roads, railways, renewable energies and information and communication technologies;
7. *Recommends* that African parliaments should support, through appropriate legislative measures, the setting up of funds for private investment in the agricultural sector and the promotion of decentralized financial systems;

8. *Calls upon* African parliaments to ensure that their governments adopt measures designed to assist smallholders, especially women and young people, to secure their access to land so as to develop modern plantations, produce more, and improve their incomes;
9. *Urges* African parliaments to undertake, in conjunction with their governments, consensus-based land reforms through a participatory process, ensuring that land and natural resource rights are respected;
10. *Commits* all African parliaments to transpose international agreements on sustainable development and climate change into national legislation, making adequate budget allocations and providing robust oversight mechanisms for government action in these areas;
11. *Calls upon* African parliaments to enjoin their governments to produce an annual report on measures taken to implement their Sustainable Development Goals commitments;
12. *Invites* the parliaments of industrialized and other polluter countries to step up efforts with their governments to honour their commitments towards funding for adaptation measures, including low-budget agricultural financing and technology transfer to African countries;
13. *Appeals* for increased international solidarity in the event of conflicts or natural disasters in African countries;
14. *Recommends* that an African parliamentary forum for food security, water management, climate and sustainable development should be set up at the African Parliamentary Union.