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African Union Commission Chair calls for the escalation of science, technology innovation in agriculture to stimulate an ‘African renaissance’

14th July, 2017
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



His Excellency, Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission during a meeting with the RUFORUM delegation in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

A delegation from the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) met with His Excellency Moussa Faki Mahamat, the Chairperson of African Union Commission (AUC) on Friday 14 July, 2017 in Addis Ababa. The meeting discussed implementation strategies for the AU Agenda 2063, which recognises the need for the integration of science, technology and innovation for development. The meeting also noted the need for a focused continent wide program to strengthen higher agricultural education and knowledge generation for agricultural transformation in Africa.

“Research is fundamental for Africa’s growth. Unfortunately, mobility and south-south research cooperation in African remains difficult, due to border constraints. This needs to be redressed -” His Excellency Moussa Faki Mahamat.

His Excellency Moussa Faki Mahamat was accompanied by two Commissioners from the Departments of Rural Economy and Agriculture and Human Resources, Science and Technology Commissioners Sacko Josefa Leonel Correa and Paul De Martial Ikounga, respectively.

RUFORUM signed an MoU with the AUC in 2014 to support the implementation of Priority One on “Eradicating Hunger and Achieving Food and Nutrition Security”. The AUC Chair observed that the continent is richly endowed with natural resources and a young population yet many regions continue

to suffer from famine and hunger. He called on the academia to work more closely with the private sector and other key players to respond to key challenges such as youth unemployment.

He commended RUFORUM for its efforts in strengthening postgraduate training in Africa, for facilitating academic mobility and relevance of university training. He also noted the new focus on enhancing university linkages with TVET institutions.

“We need to provide solutions for today’s problems in Africa through research” he remarked. “Africa is no longer satisfied with statements, Africa wants results. We have given great hope to our people and we must be accountable” said His Excellency Moussa Faki Mahamat.

His Excellency Moussa Faki Mahamat accepted RUFORUM’s invitation to the 6th Biennial Conference to be held in Nairobi, Kenya. This conference will be held from 22 -26 October, 2018.

Notes to Editors:

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a network of 66 African Universities with mission to ‘strengthen the capacities of Universities to foster innovations responsive to demands of small-holder farmers through the training of high quality researchers, the output of impact oriented research and the maintenance of collaborative working relations among researchers, farmers, national agricultural research institutions’. RUFORUM was established in 2004, with Secretariat hosted by Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. RUFORUM signed MoU with the African Union and has mandate to support capacity building for science, research and technology development in Africa. RUFORUM has supported the training of over 1500 postgraduate students, the generation of over 300 agricultural technologies and mobilized over US\$70 million for strengthening postgraduate education in Africa. Please visit www.ruforum.org for more information.

The Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy (STISA) 2024: STISA was approved by African Heads of States in 2014 and aims to strengthen the role of science, technology and innovation as a means to ensure economic development in Africa. RUFORUM has developed a strategic framework for the implementation of Priority Area One of STISA (Eradication of Hunger and Achieving Food Security). This is part of its commitment under the MoU between RUFORUM and Africa Union Commission (AUC) signed in Mozambique during the RUFORUM Biennial Conference in July 2014. RUFORUM is also keen to ensure university contribution through postgraduate research that impacts directly on the society and across all the six STISA Priority areas. STISA 2024 provides an important mechanism for RUFORUM and African universities to contribute towards the Agenda 2063 “The Africa We Want”.

The Delegation: The RUFORUM delegation consisted of Prof. J.H. Pen-Mogi Nyeko (Vice Chancellor, Gulu University, Uganda); Prof. Address Mauakowa Malata (Vice Chancellor, Malawi University of Science and Technology, Malawi); Prof. John Akec Apuruot (Vice Chancellor, University of Juba, South Sudan); Prof. Robert Ridley (Vice Chancellor, Mzuzu University, Malawi); Dr. Mary Shawa (Member of RUFORUM Finance & Administration Committee and Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Public Works, Malawi); Dr. Jemal Yousuf (Deputy Vice Chancellor – Haramaya University, Ethiopia); Prof. Diegane Diouf (Deputy Vice Rector, University Sine Saloum El hadjIbrahima NIASS, Senegal); Prof. Adipala Ekwamu (Executive Secretary, RUFORUM); Dr. Moses Osiru (Deputy Executive Secretary, RUFORUM); Dr. Solange Uwituze (Manager for Partnerships and Business Management, RUFORUM); and Ms. Joan Apio (Communication Officer, RUFORUM).

For additional information, photos and interviews with key delegates, contact Miss. Joan Apio, below.

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