

**MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE AND PUBLIC AND
PRIVATE SECTOR DIALOGUE ON OCEANIC ECONOMICS
AND CLIMATE CHANGES IN AFRICA**

*Speech by the Secretary-General of the Ministry of
fisheries, his Excellency Ambassador Cipriano Gomes*

Mauritius, 1 to 2 September 2016

Your Excellences heads of State and Government

His Excellency Mr. Secretary General of the United Nations

His Excellency Mr. Representative of the African Union

His Excellency President of the World Bank

Most excellent Representatives of international organizations and members of the diplomatic corps

Distinguished guests,

On behalf of the Ministry of fisheries, the Government of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, I am pleased to participate in this important event, which is the Ministerial Conference and of public and private sector Dialogue on Ocean Economy and Climate Changes in Africa.

This is to assess the problems of our countries and of related sectors, such as agriculture, fisheries, industry, tourism, business creation, introduction of cutting-edge technologies, creation of new employment opportunities and qualitative improvement of the living conditions of our populations, in the face of climate change, population explosion, malnutrition, phenomenal proliferation of diseases and, often, the lack of good governance and ethnic convulsions social and religious extremism.

The situation is serious and urges immediate action to prevent further natural disasters and technological and political instability that characterize the systematic loss of control of the majority of our States on their territories.

We've come a long way for this event, of joined-up thinking, and we hope not to be limited to the adoption of a declaration of principles, which would never have no solution to the problems affecting humanity, particularly those in Africa.

Behold, this forum gives consistency to the Millennium goals and lays the foundations for sustainable and durable development of our countries and of the human person, fundamental rights.

Be allowed to pay homage to the World Bank, the size of the work in Africa and the initiative of its President, in conjunction with the highest authorities of Mauritius, in the Organization of our Conference.

To the numerous delegations expressed my deep respect, do confirm with your presence, that we share the same fate, so that solidarity and cooperation, more than mere political will, should be a world feeling.

President of Mauritius and of the Conference,

The current food security in Guinea-Bissau is alarming, because we produce 169,750 tone's of cereals only, 122,300 of which rice, which is the basis of supply, being clear that we have a shortfall of 80,000 tone's of grain per year.

This growing gap is usually covered by imports and food aid.

However, our country has an area of 1,400,000 hectares of farmland, of which only 400,000 acres are explored.

Nationally, statistics indicate the existence of 1,324,692 head of cattle, 304,104 sheep, goats, pigs and 330,089 646,183 over 1,439,512 birds.

In the area of the forest, the country has considerable resources, with approximately of 2,000,000 hectares of forests and timber reserves estimated at 48.3 square meters, progressively degraded by effect of climatic change and agriculture.

The monoculture of cashews represents the main source of income of the population and also the main national export product, on the order of 100,000 to 130,000 tone's per year.

Therefore, the processing industry organization of cashews will be undoubtedly a real instrument for combating hunger in Guinea-Bissau.

Agriculture, despite being the priority sector of the Government program and is recognized as an engine for sustainable economic growth, even if characterized by a system of subsistence production, traditional, archaic, and, in consequence, destructive to the environment.

The main factors of strangulation in this sector are, in particular:

- Lack of infrastructure of production, processing and marketing;
- Absence of technology production system;
- Degradation of soils and low fertility of the manguesais ecosystems, floodplain and upland crops;

- Lack of agricultural assistance in rice fields of fresh and salt water;
- Lack of research in the field of agriculture.

Although Guinea-Bissau a country of abundant rainfall, 90% of the rainwater flows into the sea, when 99% of the Guinean agriculture depends on rain and precipitation distribution on the area, which is extremely hot.

Despite our socio-economic and structural limitations, Guinea-Bissau has a potential for agriculture to be the driving force of sustainable growth because it contributes 50% of GDP and employs 85% of the working population and 93% of exports.

Recognizing this fact, our Government has decided to introduce adequate reforms in the agricultural sector in General and in food production in particular, in order to ensure food security in quantity and quality, to all Guineans, within the framework of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy.

The Government is also engaged in promoting the development of the private sector and increasing the profitability of investments required, mainly in the sectors of fishing, farming, forestry and tourism.

Guinea-Bissau nature gives us everything and still we are rich in human resources, fishery and mineral. As regards fisheries, the country has more than 200 species of fish, crustaceans and cephalopods, in its generality, with high commercial value.

We are the only country of the African Atlantic coast with a Mainland and other islands, the latter consisting of more than 90 Islands, all of them with excellent conditions for the development of a hotel

industry of international reference, crystalline sands and exceptional conditions of marina, heliport, airports, scuba diving in to see the bottom of the ocean blue, fantastic flora and fauna , conducive to hunting, including thick.

We are a land of peace, because what unites the Guineans is greater than what divides us.

Our strength lies in the multi-ethnic, social and cultural mosaic, to which Guinea-Bissau is a strong State with strong institutions, able to overcome underdevelopment and eradicate the evils affecting our society.

The broad policy orientations adopted to achieve these objectives consist of respecting the priority given to agriculture and improving the conditions of national production.

Other basics are the responsibility of the peasants for their better organization and respect for the institutions of the Republic, with a view to the preservation of natural resources and the reduction of environmental hazards.

Mr President,

We are convinced that the objectives to improve food production in our country will not be achieved without the active participation of women in the Organization and in the development of the productive sectors, through training, access to micro-credit and the introduction of new technologies.

This is explained by the fact that women represent more than 52% of our population and, therefore, be decisive in the process of

production, processing and marketing of food, as well as in the fight against poverty.

The strategy to improve food security passes through the following actions:

- Improve access to production areas and rural markets, and rehabilitation of sea transport;
- Introduction of a system of long-term financing for production, processing and marketing of agricultural products;

- Promotion of local production chains to the national, sub-regional and regional markets.

Excellences

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and gentlemen,

Climate change has been a long time, subject of numerous international discussions, but, in several regions of the world, especially in Africa, the mutations climatic conditions continue and the consequences are almost inevitable, and, according to experts of the African Development Bank, causing economic losses of about 5 to 20% of the World gross domestic product.

It is estimated that in the next decades, the African continent will lose between 1 to 2% of GDP, with the propenes of some areas to face bigger challenges. Certain Africans countries may suffer progressive reductions of their agricultural production, up to 50% in the dry and desertification.

Indeed, Africa is particularly vulnerable, according to numerous experts, based on studies of the impact of the current climatic

variation and extreme weather conditions such as flooding, droughts and storms, whose reaction are serious for the economic performance, the means of subsistence and the main recipes, including natural resources, infrastructure and transport of the brain.

Mr President,

The mitigation of greenhouse gases emissions is essential to control the climatic conditions changes in the short, medium and long terms. But, the adaptation to these changes seems to be the only option to manage its impact and, thereby, allow the development to produce better results for humanity.

Adaptation to climatic conditions changes is the guidance of the strategy adopted by our Continental Organization. In Guinea Bissau, is a priority for our development, because it is characterized, in the energy sector, by the duo convivency, vis-a-vis:

-derived energy sources of imported oil mainly to supply the sectors of industry, transport and torches publishes;

-Wood, for the needs of kitchen and other rural areas, linked to trade and crafts.

In summary, the analysis of the current situation in Guinea-Bissau indicates that the environment suffers multiple type and, of course, the degradation process can be fast or slow, depending on certain area ecological.

**Mr President,
Excellences, distinguished heads of Delegations,
Dear Guests,**

On behalf of the Government of Guinea-Bissau and our Ministry, declare our full and unconditional support for the prior of this Conference, in view of the efforts of everyone in this Conference on the economics of the ocean and the changes climatic conditions and the Elimination of hunger pertinence till 2025 on the planet and to ensure the availability of sufficient food safe and nutritious, the growing world population

A thank you from Guinea-Bissau, everyone.