

9TH MEETING OF THE LUSAKA AGREEMENT GOVERNING COUNCIL

KAMPALA, UGANDA 1ST -3RD OCTOBER 2008

CLOSING REMARKS BY HON. EZEKIEL MAIGE (MP), DEPUTY MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND TOURISM OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA AND THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE LUSAKA AGREEMENT GOVERNING COUNCIL AT THE 9TH GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING

**IMPERIAL HOTEL, KAMPALA, UGANDA,
3RD OCTOBER 2008**

Honourable Ministers,

Representative of the Executive Director of UNEP,

Director of the Task Force,

Technical Officers from Party States,

Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honored for having presided over this important meeting of the 9th Governing Council. I wish to appreciate the participation and contributions of my colleagues Ministers who are present with us today. I would like to sincerely thank with appreciation the Government of the Republic of Uganda for hosting this meeting. We have enjoyed the hospitality of the people of Uganda, the Pearl of Africa.

I wish to commend the technical officers and all invited partners for a good work that they have achieved during the past two days and you will agree with me that it resulted into a successful meeting of the Governing Council today.

I would like to commend the Task Force for having been effective in discharging its mandate as per its strategic plan and programme of work that were approved in the last meeting of the Governing Council and the Bureau meetings.

LATF/LAGC.9/3.10

The Task Force also managed to implement some of the decisions of the Governing Council despite limitations in financial resources.

It is evident that the Task Force would do even better if provided with adequate resources. I would like to recommend that the Task Force continue prioritizing its activities and employing prudent management of resources to ensure that it operates within its means.

I wish to further encourage Parties and cooperating partners to rededicate themselves towards implementing the Lusaka Agreement by supporting the Task Force and Parties' initiatives of protecting wildlife resources.

In regard to development of strategic partnerships, I would like to direct the Task Force to continue concluding co-operative agreements with other institutions. Further, on the issue of expanding membership, I wish to reiterate that the Task Force continues pursuing collaboration with Non-Parties with a view of encouraging them to accede to the Agreement. Sharing good results with potential Parties is critical for the purpose. As I mentioned in my acceptance speech, the current Bureau will make use of regional and sub-regional fora to promote the Agreement with the aim of ensuring expansion of its membership.

It is vital that the Task Force facilitates co-operative law enforcement in the region through initiating and participating in cross border meetings and fostering good relationship among the Parties and between Parties and neighboring Non-Parties. I therefore encourage them to continue with such initiative.

The Task Force should also continue promoting inter-agency collaboration among law enforcement officers and developing capacity building programmes in an attempt to improve enforcement techniques in fighting wildlife crime.

The Programme of Work and the Budgets we have approved today are important roadmap for the Task Force but which come with many challenges of their own. It is clear that the main challenge is to secure financial resource for effective implementation of the programmes.

Without adequate funds, the plans will only remain as a wish list. Parties then are expected to strongly play their part by timely meeting their financial obligations as decided and in accordance with our rules.

The Task Force should focus its attention in pursuing the clearing of all contribution arrears by concerned Parties. In this respect, I direct the Task Force to follow up settlement of these arrears with the concerned Party States.

LATF/LAGC.9/3.10

As President of the Governing Council together with my colleagues of the Bureau, we will do our best to urge Parties to meet their current and outstanding financial obligations. I was informed that the Republic of Uganda has started settling its contribution arrears. I wish to personally thank the Government of Uganda for that and encourage them to continue doing so.

I would like to commend all our Parties and the donor community that have been supporting the Task Force to continue with their support to the Agreement and in particular to the Task Force and urge them to continue nurturing the Agreement to greater heights.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Bureau of the 9th Governing Council and on my own behalf to express my sincere thanks to UNEP for their continued advisory, consultative and financial support to the bodies established under the Agreement. Thank you for financing this meeting too.

As an implementing committee, the Bureau will continue guiding the work of the Task Force and ensuring that the decisions made in this council meeting and others are implemented successfully.

The current Bureau will spearhead the effort of promoting the Agreement.

Allow me to reiterate the commitment of Tanzanian Government in supporting the Agreement and the Task Force. What I can assure the Task Force and the other organs of the Agreement for the time being is my full support and willingness to see everything moving forward in achieving our goal.

Last but not least, I thank all participants of this meeting for a job well done and wish you safe journey back home.

With these remarks, I declare this meeting of the 9th Governing Council officially closed.

THANK YOU

ASANTENI SANA

HON. EZEKIEL MAIGE (MP)

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRESIDENT

9TH GOVERNING COUNCIL OF THE PARTIES TO THE LUSAKA AGREEMENT