

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



THE PRIME MINISTER

Keynote address by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister

Dr. Ngirente Edouard

At the African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) launch ceremony

Park Inn Hotel, November 26th, 2019

- **Excellency Hailemariam Desalegn, Former Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia, Chair of the AGRA Board and AGRF Partners Group, and Madam,**
- **Honourable Ministers,**
- **Dr. Agnes Kalibata, President of AGRA and AGRF Secretariat,**
- **Heads of Diplomatic Corps,**
- **Representatives of International Organisations,**
- **Development partners,**
- **Distinguished guests and participants,**

Good morning,

1. Thank you all for joining us today, at this important ceremony of launching the African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF). Rwanda is honoured to be selected as the host of AGRF 2020 and serve as the long-term home country of the Forum going forward.
2. Rwanda bid to host the AGRF because we recognize how essential agricultural sector is, to wider continental development. Therefore, we wanted to be a key part of this movement and become one of the key players in advancing Africa agricultural sector agenda. We thank you for choosing Rwanda and partnering with us in this process.
3. The Government of Rwanda is fully committed to driving a comprehensive agricultural transformation at the heart of our economic transformation. This is emphasized in our Strategic Plan for Agriculture Transformation (PSTA4) which was launched last year.

As Africans, we should keep trying to align the agricultural transformation with the continental development agenda, especially the African Continental Free Trade Area, and other wider commitments.

4. In Rwanda, agriculture continues to be a key foundation of our economic growth. In the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Review carried out recently by the African Union Commission, we were pleased to be ranked first in the 2018 report.

Distinguished guests,

5. AGRF allows us to draw, not only on the strength of our own countries, but also to learn from others working across the continent and continuously pull in new partners; therefore, we welcome any opportunity to share our experiences.
6. Working with the AGRF Partners Group, Rwanda is ready to support this African Agricultural continental agenda with other leaders and stakeholders around the globe.

Distinguished guests,

7. Allow me to highlight some key points we should focus on when it comes to the development of the agriculture sector:

Our African countries need to keep putting emphasis on extension services. This should be done using appropriate approaches such as deployment of skilled extension personnel in farming areas to work with farmers, using farmer to farmer extension services, youth service providers, and private driven extension services.

This linkage between research, extension and farmers will speed up agricultural transformation on our continent.

8. The agriculture sector in Africa, is mostly dominated by an aging population. This is aggravated by the fact that for the youth, agriculture sector is not seen as an attractive business.

To attract them into agriculture, there is need to de-risk this sector so as to attract investments and continue empowering youth and other farmers to use technologies that make agriculture a competitive and profitable business. Furthermore, African Governments have to ensure farmers timely access to agriculture inputs, especially improved seeds and fertilizers.

9. I want to conclude by thanking once again, the AGRF Partners Group for choosing Rwanda as the long-term home of AGRF, and committing to partner together on the Forum's strategic vision.
10. I would like also to invite and welcome all of you, as well as the wider agricultural community, to join the Government of Rwanda and AGRF Partners in Kigali for the AGRF 2020 Summit.
11. On this note, I hereby declare that the home of African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) in Rwanda is officially launched.

I thank you for your kind attention.