

Closing Remarks : H.E. Mokhele R. Likate, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Lesotho and Chairman of the 2008 Africa Day Symposium Organising Committee

It is a great honour and privilege for me to stand here in front of all the Distinguished Guests and participants to formally acknowledge that we have come to the end of these, seemingly, brief, but, otherwise, very important deliberations on a subject of such cardinal importance to the people of Africa. Food production is a very fundamental human need. Without adequate food, there can be no life worth living. There can be no development. There can really be no possibility of advancement of human existence. Before we can begin to tackle the many other challenges of life that we face; the challenges of making progress; of moving from one stage of development to the next, we must be assured where our next meal will come from. Food shortages and their rising costs are calamities that we have to overcome in order that we may have time to ponder the questions of our development.

This Symposium has given very important opportunity for the experts gathered here today to not only detail the nature of the problems Africa faces in food production but, perhaps, more importantly, has gone beyond to say there are opportunities to tap. There is light at the end of a tunnel. That Africa, with effort, can conquer the challenge and produce enough food for its people. It is a seminar that, in a round-about way, has struck a positive note. It is not, therefore, a note of despair but one of hope. We applaud the very encouraging issues that have arisen. But we also appreciate the frank exchange over areas where we fall short of rising to the challenge. To this we promise to respond definitively so that we may not always be at the mercy of the elements of nature. This is not time for complacency. Only work, more work is necessary.

Our profound thanks to the UNU and in particular, the Rector, for facilitating this Symposium.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you for honouring this event with your presence. I hope it has been a worthwhile time for all of us. With these words, allow me to declare this 2008 Africa Day Symposium officially closed.