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A PRESS RELEASE

2020 WORLD FOOD SAFETY DAY

FOOD SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

Nigerian workers join the rest of the world to celebrate the 2020 World Food Safety Day (WFSD). This global event, being marked for the second consecutive year, is aimed at raising public awareness on the need to protect our food sources from contamination arising from unsafe production, storage, processing, retailing and consumption processes. Overall, the objective is to promote public health and safety.

The theme of this year's commemoration "Food Safety is Everyone's Business" buttresses the link between food safety and public safety. The suspected origin of the current novel Corona virus disease (Covid-19) from a food wet market in Wuhan China is a very good example of the relationship between food safety and public safety.

As it is popularly said, "we are what we eat". It is therefore important for governments all over the world to learn from the current Covid-19 pandemic and its association with unhealthy food sources. It is noteworthy that the Chinese government is taking this matter very seriously as it has reviewed its laws on food safety and food consumption going as far as removing some food items from the menu.

We expect other countries of the world to emulate this. This requires global synergy as the food market has become one of the major markers of an increasingly globalized world economy. As has been proved from the epidemiology of the Covid-19 pandemic, one unsafe food in any part of the world could be the source of sickness, mass deaths, and massive global socio-economic dislocation and widespread misery.

In the global fight to protect our food sources, it is important for the countries of the world to reach consensus through empirical scientific evidence on a list of harmful agrochemicals and food additives and work concertedly and in synergy to eliminate such toxins from the global food chain. This measure has become crucial given the increasing link between harmful pesticides, herbicides, in-organic fertilizers, and additives with some terminal illnesses in human beings.

It is also important to develop and enforce global standards that will promote food safety from farm to the table. These standards should be structured in a way that promote job addition and income preservation. Perhaps, a good direction to look at might be the promotion of wholesome organic farming and incentivizing the value chain, both knowledge and material, to make organic farming practicable, scalable and profitable.

In line with the commitment of the 2019 Addis Ababa Conference and the Geneva Forum to scale up food safety, we urge international organizations, multilateral institutions, governments all over the world, and public policy drivers to be immersed in actions geared towards regulating, detecting, preventing and managing food borne risks. This will go a long way in promoting global food security, economic prosperity, tourism and sustainable development. The role of increased organizing of agricultural workers and robust cooperation between the social partners in facilitating these goals cannot be over-emphasized because food safety is a shared responsibility between governments, producers, agricultural workers and consumers of agricultural products.



**Comrade Ayuba Wabba, mni
President**