



**OPENING REMARKS BY DR. HUYAM SALIH, DIRECTOR OF AU-IBAR AT THE  
2<sup>ND</sup> SOMALI ONE HEALTH CONFERENCE 2024 MOGADISHU, SOMALIA 3-5  
MARCH 2024**

**Theme: Empowering One Health Workforce to Drive Positive Change for Somalia and  
the World**

- Representatives of the Somalia Federal and State Ministries
- Representatives of Technical and Development Partners
- Members of the National Organizing Committee
- Members of the Scientific Committee
- Members of the Faculty of Abrar University
- Scientists, Researchers,
- Participants
- Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning, Salama alekum,

It is always a pleasure for me to be in your midst and indeed, I feel at home.

On behalf of the Commissioner of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment (ARBE) of the African Union Commission, H.E. Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, I convey her heartfelt greetings and deep gratitude to the Government and People of Somalia for hosting the 2nd Somali One Health Conference.

**Distinguished Guests**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

The increasing human population is putting immense pressure on ecosystem integrity as a result of unsustainable development practices that have adversely affected the previously well established relationships and interactions between, animals, humans, plants and the environment. This state of affairs has increased health risks at the human-animal-plant-environment interface. The health risks are further amplified by globalisation; urbanisation and associated challenges; animal movements for pasture, water or trade; biodiversity loss as a result of ground cover loss and climate change.

The key health risks associated with this unusual relationships and interactions in our continent include emerging and endemic zoonotic diseases, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), foodborne diseases and degraded environmental health.

### **Distinguished Guests Ladies and Gentlemen**

Africa is however not able to adequately address these health risks due to a variety of challenges that include; **inadequate funding of the human and animal health systems hindering early detection and response. This has been exacerbated by weak intersectoral collaboration, weak workforce and infrastructure.** Within the context of inadequate resources and the heavy burden of the aforementioned health risks, there is a need for a paradigm shift on how we address the health risks at the human-animal-plant-environment interface. We need to **adopt a system thinking approach** which is the hallmark of the One Health, with the aim of optimising the health of human, animals, plants and the environment.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

I find the theme of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Somali One Health Conference. **“Empowering One Health Workforce to Drive Positive Change for Somalia and the World”** as most appropriate as it provides participants with an opportunity to enhance their understanding on how to **better**

**identify, design and implement One Health policies and actions** at the human-animal-plant and environment interface. This conference will enhance participants knowledge on One Health issues, innovations and technologies, increase awareness and networking among sectors and as catalyse enhanced collaborations, communication and data sharing among human, animal and environment sectors at all levels in Somali and indeed globally.

### **Distinguished delegates and participants**

Recognising the role of One Health in sustainable animal resources development and indeed the protection of animal, public health and environmental health , the Africa Union Commission Institutions namely AU-IBAR, AU-PANVAC and Africa CDC have in the recent past been working closely with Member States, RECs and development partners to strengthen One Health in the Continent.

The key actions we have undertaken include:

- Supported Somalia to support a situational analysis of AMR-
- Development of the **Animal health Strategy for Africa (AHSA)** and **Africa Union Antibiotic Resistance framework** among others
- A study on the impact of Rabies on animal resources in Africa
- A study on the Veterinary Public Health Function in Africa
- Establishment of the **Africa Union One Health Coordination Group on Zoonotic Diseases**
- The **One Health Strategy for Zoonotic Disease** is under development
- Establishment of **African Association of Veterinary Education Establishment and African Association of Veterinary statutory bodies**
- Supporting the integration and sharing of **OH data** through the Africa Union One Health Data Alliance for Africa (AU-OHDAA)

**In addition, AU-IBAR mandate to build capacities of MS, is evident with the planned training of trainer workshop on AMR stewardship for veterinary medicine drugs regulators, animal health professions and livestock keepers in which Somalia is participating.**

**Dear Participants Ladies and Gentlemen**

I urge AU MSs partners to create an enabling environment and support towards addressing the health risk at human-animal-plant-environment interface through the one health approach to leverage on scarce resources and for cost-effectiveness of the health policies and actions.

Once again, I thank the Government and People of the Federal Republic of Somalia for the hospitality and all the plans that have been made to make this conference possible.

Ladies and Gentlemen as I conclude it is, therefore, my hope that this 2<sup>nd</sup> Somali One Health Conference will deliberate and propose appropriate solutions to better identify, design and implement One Health Policies and actions in Somalia and indeed in the continent.

Thank you for your attention. I wish you successful deliberations