

The 2nd General Congress of Aquaculture Network for Africa (ANAF)

15 to 17 January 2024, Naivasha, Kenya

**Opening Statement on behalf of Mr. Ndiaga Gueye, Senior Fisheries and Aquaculture Officer, FAO Regional Office for Africa**

**The Representative of the Republic of Kenya,**

**Director AU-IBAR**

**The Interim Chair of ANAF, Republic of South Africa**

**The CEO of AUDA-NEPAD**

**Representatives of the Host REC the EAC Secretariat,**

**Regional Economic Communities (RECs)**

**Regional Fisheries and Management Bodies**

**AU and FAO Members States**

**AU Centers of Excellence and Specialized Institutions**

**Representatives of the African Continental & sub regional Non-State Actor**

**Platforms,**

**President, AWFISHNET**

**Excellencies,**

**Colleagues,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I bring you Greetings from Accra,

I am **Dismas Mbabazi**, serving as the Fishery and Aquaculture Officer at the FAO Regional Office for Africa. Regrettably, the Senior Fisheries and Aquaculture Officer, who intended to deliver the FAO statement, is currently attending the **COFI, Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management** in Rome and requested me to do this on his behalf.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

It is my honor and pleasure to welcome you to the “**2nd General Assembly of the Aquaculture Network for Africa (ANAF)**” on behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), here in Naivasha, Kenya. I acknowledge the collective efforts that have brought us together to address the critical challenges and opportunities in advancing aquaculture development across the African continent.

Since the 2005 Fish for All Summit, ANAF has grown into a vital force driving sustainable aquaculture development in Africa. The Committee for Inland

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Fisheries and Aquaculture of Africa (CIFAA) recognized the Importance of a regional network in providing essential skills, technology, and information to accelerate aquaculture strategies on the continent. ANAF was thus established, underscoring the commitment that its success should be funded by the Member Countries themselves.

### **Distinguished Participants**

The overarching objectives of ANAF are clear—to maximize the utilization of scarce resources for aquaculture development in Africa, fostering sustainable growth to combat poverty, ensure food security, provide employment, and promote rural development. These objectives align seamlessly with FAO's mission of achieving **MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable agrifood systems for better production, better nutrition, better environment, and better life leaving no one behind.**

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

Building on the success of the virtual 1st General Congress organized by AU-IBAR, the adoption of key instruments such as Plenary Discussions, Rules of Procedure of The General Congress, and Rules of Procedure of The Steering Committee has set the stage for the structured and effective operation of ANAF. I extend our gratitude for your support and collaboration, which have been instrumental in this progress.

As we convene for the 2nd General Assembly, FAO in collaboration with AU-IBAR is committed to formally presenting and updating Directors of Fisheries and key stakeholders on recent developments within ANAF. This includes unveiling new goals and objectives, rules of procedures, governance instruments, and rules guiding the network's future endeavors.

### **Distinguished Participants**

I extend heartfelt appreciation to the Republic of Kenya for hosting the meeting, the AU-IBAR, and all participants for their unwavering support in realizing this meeting and assure of FAO's commitment and technical support.

Over the coming days, I encourage each one of you to actively engage, share your expertise, and experiences to enrich our discussions. Your dedication is crucial in driving the success of ANAF and together, let us work towards the

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shared vision of enhancing aquaculture in Africa for the benefit of our communities and the continent at large.

**Special request:** The FAO, within the context of the **African Network on Fish Technology and Safety (ANFTS)**, is inviting experts and professionals to submit papers on advances in technology, food safety and marketing in fisheries and aquaculture value chains. This call for papers builds on a series of meetings/consultations supported by FAO with the most recent in 2021 (**a virtual event held in Uganda**). I will request Jemima to share a call for distribution to all of you to disseminate to relevant stakeholders in your various locations.

**Asante sana!**