

WELCOMING REMARKS

Prof. Esther M. Kahangi

Chairperson, 6th GCHERA Conference Organising Committee

Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Conference Organising Committee, I am pleased to welcome you to the Sixth Conference of the Global Consortium of Higher Education and Research for Agriculture (GCHERA), a gathering that brings together agricultural research scientists to share ideas on the role of agricultural universities worldwide in drawing solutions to such critical problems as food insecurity which are threatening the survival of humanity.

It is encouraging that the forum will also seek to address another major worldwide concern, the low enrolment in agriculture and related courses in institutions of higher learning.

I wish to take this opportunity to recognise with utmost appreciation the various sponsors of this conference, key among them being the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa, DAAD, Kenya Institute of Management and Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. Equally important are paper presenters in the various sub-thematic areas and exhibitors who are set to enlighten the congregation and indeed the larger society on burning agricultural and environmental matters of the day. I also thank the organisers of the conference for their tireless efforts that have culminated in the staging of today's ceremony.

Your Excellency, this conference – whose theme is “Food, Health and Energy: Challenges for Sustainable Agriculture” – will see, in the next four days, presentations touching on Agriculture and Food Security; Health and Agriculture; Renewable Energy for Agricultural Production; Training of Manpower and Motivation, and Climate Change. We have gone great lengths to invite acclaimed scholars globally renowned for their contribution in agricultural higher education and research. At the end of the conference, we are looking forward to drawing resolutions expected to directly address the many problems currently being witnessed in the areas I have highlighted. The conference will also propose viable strategies to institutions all over the world offering courses in agriculture, veterinary medicine and natural resources management, including the biological, physical and social sciences dimensions of these fields. We also intend to parade exhibitions highlighting innovations resulting from agricultural research.

Your Excellency Sir, agricultural universities and research institutions all over the world continue to play a crucial role in economic development and assurance of comfortable living for all. To this end, we are calling upon researchers to increase efforts in their various disciplines with a view to solving the ever rising challenges in the agricultural sector. Without doubt, research and development is the only way forward, especially for the developing world.

Finally, I wish all participants and guests a fruitful and educative experience during the conference. Welcome once again and thank you all.