

REMARKS DELIVERED BY THE DIRECTOR AU-IBAR AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE  
CONTINENTAL CONFERENCE “TOWARDS A MORE RESILIENT VETERINARY WORKFORCE FOR  
AFRICA 2024” 26-29 NOVEMBER 2024 NAIROBI, KENYA

**Greetings and good morning to all of you, and allow me to recognize the presence of:**

Cabinet Secretary for Agriculture and Livestock Development, Kenya, **H.E Andrew Karanja**

Principal Secretary for Gender and Affirmative Action, Ministry of Gender, Culture, Arts and  
Heritage, Kenya **H.E Anne Wang’ombe**

Deputy Director General of the World Organisation for Animal Health **Dr. Francois Kaya**

President of the WOAHA Regional Commission for Africa **Dr. Honoré N’Lemba**

Regional Representative of the WOAHA Regional Representation for Africa (RR/AF) **Dr. Karim  
Toukara**

Chief Executive Officer of the Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicines (GALVmed)

Dr. **Carolyn Schumacher**

Deans/Principals of Veterinary Education Establishments;

Representatives of Veterinary Statutory Bodies;

Representatives of the Private Sector

Distinguished participants;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

**All protocols observed**

On behalf of the Commissioner of Agriculture, Rural Development, Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy , Her Excellency Ambassador Josefa Sacko and on behalf of the African Union-Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), I extend our deepest gratitude to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) for convening this pivotal conference and for its unwavering commitment to strengthening veterinary systems globally and in particular in Africa, and we thank the Government of Kenya for hosting this conference in this great City of Nairobi.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**, the theme of this conference could not be more timely or critical. A resilient veterinary workforce is not just a backbone for safeguarding animal health; it is also essential for ensuring food and nutrition security, public health, and sustainable development.

In Africa, where the livelihoods of 470 millions and more are intricately tied to animal resources, the role of veterinary professionals cannot be overstated. Yet, our veterinary workforce faces challenges that require collective effort—ranging from capacity deficits to systematic vulnerabilities exacerbated by climate change, emerging diseases, and economic pressures.

**Distinguished participants,**

In light of AU-IBAR mandate, it has instituted policies and strategies on Principle veterinary sector frameworks namely the Animal Health Strategy for Africa (AHSA) and the Animal Welfare Strategy for Africa (AWSA). The two strategies promote the implementation of WOAHS Standards and are aligned to the Livestock development strategy for Africa (LiDeSA- 2015–2035), CAADP-Malabo and the African Union Agenda 2063. The AHSA strategic objectives include; strengthening animal health policy and institutional frameworks; improving capacities, access to inputs, markets and trade in animal resources; Strengthening science, innovation, research and knowledge management; as well as enhancing partnerships, investment and resourcing of the animal health sector amongst others. Indeed, to ensure **effective, efficient and sustainable animal health delivery systems**, a diversity of interventions and actors are required.

The Veterinary Education Establishments (VEEs) and Veterinary Statutory Bodies in Africa are operating in a rapidly changing environment with increasing demand for animal and animal products; rapid evolution of technologies and innovations; globalization; emerging and re-emerging health threats; underfunding and climate change.

The veterinary workforce in Africa faces unique challenges, including:

- a shortage of professionals, specifically in rural and marginalized areas, there are only 5 to 10 veterinarians per million livestock units in Africa, compared to over 100 veterinarians per million livestock units in developed countries;
- The Private and Public Sectors divide in service provision, with insufficient coordination.
- Capacity-Building Challenges characterized with insufficient training facilities, lack of specialized curricula, and limited practical experience hinder the development of a highly qualified workforce.
- Limited continuing education and skill upgrading opportunities are limited, affecting the ability of professionals to adapt to evolving challenges such as emerging diseases and climate-related stressors. A recent CPD survey undertaken by AU-IBAR indicated that out of 54 Member States, only five countries have developed and active Veterinary CPD programmes.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen;**

With all these challenges we in Africa have still opportunities for improving the Veterinary Work force through different interventions.

AU-IBAR has responded to AU Member request and needs, and coordinated the establishment of the **Africa Association of veterinary Education Establishments (2A2E-V)**, that was launched on the 26th July 2018 in Cairo, Egypt, thereafter endorsed by the AU STC on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment (ARDWE) in 2020. The association aims to **enhance collaboration among** all African Veterinary Education Establishments; to **harmonize veterinary curricula, research and community service**.

Mentioning some of the commendable achievements that have been made; is the **Publication of the Guidelines on 'Re-Profiling of Veterinary Profession: Day 1 Competencies for Veterinarian in Africa'**. Aiming to **improve and strengthen the quality and the performance**

**of the Veterinary Services** in Africa based on the WOAH recommendations; inform **harmonization of the Veterinary Curriculum** in the continent; Promoting professional development.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

To encourage collaboration between public and private sectors, and to ensure sustainable models to expand access to animal health services; AU-IBAR in partnership with WOAH will jointly establish and operationalize the **Africa Forum for Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in the veterinary domain (A3PF)**. The forum will serve as an integrated coordination and advocacy mechanism to support Public and Private partnerships in Member States to deliver on continental mandates, and it will be officially launched this Thursday and I kindly call upon all delegates to join us to celebrate this unifying occasion.

**Your Excellency,**

As I conclude, I would like to highlight the newly signed multi-partner agreement for the **“EU support to the Eradication of PPR (Peste des petits ruminants) from Africa”**. It`s a three years project to establish and strengthen the capacities and coordination of stakeholders for PPR eradication, as we have successfully done with Rinderpest.

Finally, I reiterate the commitment of AU-IBAR to serve the continent with stakeholders and partners, and we look forward to fruitful discussions and meaningful outcomes that will guide our collective journey towards a stronger, more resilient veterinary workforce in Africa.

**Dr. Huyam Salih, Director of AU-IBAR**