The Lilongwe Call for Action on Forest Landscape Restoration in Africa

We, Ministers of African countries and representatives gathered in Lilongwe on July 12th and 13th, 2017 for the SADC+ Ministerial Bonn Challenge Summit, hosted by the Government of Malawi issue this ‘Call for Action for Forest Landscape Restoration in Africa’.

RECOGNISING AND VALUING THE AFRICAN RESTORATION INITIATIVE - AFR100 AS THE CONTINENTAL PLATFORM TO CONTRIBUTE TO AND IMPLEMENT THE BONN CHALLENGE, the global mechanism for the restoration of degraded land that aim to harness political, technical and financial backing for national restoration targets.

ENDORsing THE KIGALI DECLARATION ON THE PROMOTION OF FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION IN AFRICA and the need for its effective implementation;

HIGHLIGHTING THAT THE ECONOMIC COST OF LAND DEGRADATION REGULARLY EXCEEDS 5% OF GDP within the region, making forest landscape restoration a national development priority;

EMPHASIZING THAT THE COSTS OF INACTION ON LAND DEGRADATION EXCEED THE COSTS OF ACTION by an estimated factor of four to one;

CONFIRMING THAT FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION IS A BROAD APPROACH that integrates restoration across different land types and uses, including forests, drylands, woodlands, wetlands and farmlands;

ALSO CONFIRMING THAT THESE EFFORTS ARE IN DIRECT SUPPORT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY as reflected in SDG target 15.3, Agenda 2063 Aspiration 7.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE REGIONAL SPECIFIC FOCUS IN THE SADC REGION, as defined through the existing SADC Protocol on Environment (2014) and supporting programmes and plans such as the SADC Biodiversity Action Plan (2013), SADC Sub-Regional Action Plan to Combat Desertification (2015), SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (2015) and SADC Regional Green Economy Strategy and Action Plan (2015);

HIGHLIGHTING THE RECENT DECISION BY THE UNCCD REGIONAL FORUM, held in South Africa in April 2017, which encouraged Member States to participate in the Bonn Challenge through AFR100 as a contribution to Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN);

WE:

1. REAFFIRM OUR EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO THE BONN CHALLENGE to restore 150 million hectares of deforested and degraded lands by 2020 and 350 million hectares by 2030;

2. ENCOURAGE OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES MAKE AMBITIOUS COMMITMENTS to the Bonn Challenge as a global initiative, the AFR100regional platform, as well as other sister initiatives such as the Great Green Wall, Land Degradation Neutrality and the Sustainable Development Goals.
3. **ENCOURAGE FURTHER SIGNATURES TO THE KIGALI DECLARATION** by those countries that have not already signed and promoting its up take at the national level;

4. **REQUEST RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE EMERGING LINKS BETWEEN DEGRADATION, POVERTY, MIGRATION AND CONFLICT**;

5. **ENCOURAGE GOVERNMENTS TO MAINSTREAM RESTORATION INTO THEIR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND LAWS** including developing and implementing national forest landscape strategies with an emphasis on the need to ensure coherence and consistency between land-use, fiscal and other relevant policies;

6. **PROMOTE THE INCORPORATION OF NATURAL CAPITAL VALUATION WITHIN LAND-USE POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES**, with a view to strengthening national accountability over their implementation and how these measures enhance or diminish the sustainable management of land, soil and natural resources;

7. **COMMIT TO THE INCLUSION OF YOUTH AND WOMEN IN FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION ACTION**, specifically encouraging the Bonn Challenge and AFR100 to make this a central theme of the next regional FLR meeting;

8. **UNDERTAKE TO EXPLORE INCREASES IN DOMESTIC INVESTMENT OF RESOURCES TOWARDS ACTION ON THE GROUND** including the alignment of domestic investment policies, social safety net developing incentives for farmers and their communities, including revolving funds, tree fertilizer subsidies and similar approaches;

9. **CALL ON DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS, INTERNATIONAL FINANCE INSTITUTIONS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO SUPPORT DOMESTIC INVESTMENT AND FACILITATE ACCESS TO EXTERNAL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION MECHANISMS**, including among others international funds such as the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environment Facility;

10. **PROMOTE INCREASED COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION ON FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION** within the SADC region and with other African regional economic communities with a view to promote cross-learning and effective approaches of land restoration at scale;

11. **PROMOTE CROSS-LEARNING AND EFFECTIVE APPROACHES OF LAND RESTORATION AT SCALE** through south-south collaboration, within Africa and across continents;

12. **PROMOTE ‘BUSINESS UNUSUAL’ APPROACHES INCLUDING REGENERATIVE DEVELOPMENT TO REVERSE CLIMATE CHANGE** and promote interlinkages of different networks such as trans frontier conservation areas, the Miombo network and others

13. **DEVELOP A CULTURE OF RESTORATION AND STRENGTHEN CONTINENTAL CAPACITY TO ACHIEVE THIS** by developing technical expertise, mainstream restoration in education curriculums and developing environmental and social standards for the implementation of Forest Landscape Restoration to help tackle climate change effects, improve human well-being, ecosystem health and biodiversity conservation across Africa;
14. PROMOTE COST EFFECTIVE APPROACHES THAT INCREASE TREE SURVIVAL, INCLUDING FARMER-MANAGED NATURAL REGENERATION FOR RESTORATION.

15. UNDERTAKE TO EXPLORE OPTIONS FOR FLR MONITORING AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES, including enabling framework for policy and financial resources.

16. ENCOURAGE PROMOTION OF EFFICIENT FUEL ENERGY ALTERNATIVES TO REDUCE DEFORESTATION

17. DEVELOP STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANS TO REVERSE DEGRADATION on coastal zone as a result of sea level rise and effects of climate change; including degradation of soil in agricultural lands, salt intrusion.

Done in Lilongwe, July 13th 2017

Annex:

1. List of delegates