

**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY ADVOCACY LEADER AND FARNPAN CEO,
DR. LINDIWE MAJELE SIBANDA, AT THE LAUNCH OF THE AFRICAN CLIMATE
SOLUTION, POZNAN, POLAND, DECEMBER 10 2008.**

Salutations

On behalf of the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) here today, our partners and investors represented here, I am honoured to welcome guests to this milestone event, the launch of the African Climate Solutions, a bold initiative that calls for bold decisions.

Often portrayed as working against governments in Africa, CSOs are working with governments and they are here today at the invitation of African governments. CSOs believe in the African Climate Solutions as the key vehicle to deliver Africa's development aspirations at a time the continent is challenged by the combination of the financial and food crises which are a wake up call for action and collaboration between the North and South, developed and developing countries.

CSOs are at Poznan today representing, a conglomeration of constituencies: ill resourced farmers, development agencies, governments and government agencies, researchers, the private sector and investors alike.

Africa is at development cross-roads in the wake of inevitable threats posed by climate change on Africa's key sources of livelihood for its people: agriculture and forestry activities. Furthermore, these core sources of our survival in Africa have been sidelined in the current Kyoto Protocol, a development we hold hope will be corrected by the post-2012 regimes. We call on the international community to support our call for inclusion and to endorse our offering – the African Climate Change Solutions – in aiding efforts to adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change.

Working hand in hand with African governments and development partners, CSOs view COP 14 as the ideal platform to set the stage for Africa to joint the party in making a difference in the lives of more than to Over 300 million people in Africa who live in extreme poverty. A majority of people in Africa depend on the consumption and sale of agricultural and other natural products for their livelihood. Their survival is

being threatened by climate change as about two-thirds of the rural poor live in ecologically vulnerable areas.

The African Climate Solution is a two-pronged strategy to promote the **Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD)** as well as agriculture, forestry, and other land use, commonly referred to as AFOLU.) In Sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture, forestry, and other land use (commonly referred to as AFOLU) holds the most promising potential for carbon finance. Presently the carbon market is driven by buyers' preferences and has shown little interest in supporting genuine poverty eradication and sustainable development in Africa's largely agro-based economies.

Our resource-poor farmers should be rewarded and encouraged for their efforts towards adapting and mitigating the effects of climate change, even when they were not doing this consciously. Giving them an incentive for protecting their forests – a key factor in carbon sequestration – and for embarking on conservation agriculture will go a long way in entrenching practises that will save our environment. Today, Africa is speaking with one loud voice urging the international community to join hands with Africa in securing a cleaner and sustainable earth for current and future generations. The time for that action is now.

Africa can use its Bio-Carbon (including trees, soil, and peat) to provide up to 25% of the climate change solution. Bio-Carbon is not coherently part of the international response to climate change. Importantly, reducing the business as usual emissions of Bio-Carbon in developing nations is excluded from the Kyoto Protocol.

Bold leadership alone will not deliver the development that Africa quests, bold decisions as those we urge the international community to make in regards to Africa's position on climate change will.

The world agreed in Montreal in 2005 (and again in Bali in 2007) to explore including the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) in developing nations in the post-2012 international climate framework. We stand here today reminding developed countries that this is a win-win situation because Africa is banking on bold decisions that will eventually include forests and all other Bio-Carbon ahead of Copenhagen in December 2008.

It is now my singular honour to invite the leader of the African delegation to Poznan and the Secretary-General of COMESA, Mr. Sindiso Ngwenya, to make his remarks and launch the African Climate Solutions initiative.

I thank you.