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## **FANRPAN CEO, Dr. Lindiwe Majele Sibanda speaks to the President of the Republic of Malawi, His Excellency Ngwazi, Dr. Bingu wa Mutharika on 5 March 2010**

The Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) CEO, Dr. Lindiwe Majele Sibanda recently had the opportunity to interview the President of Malawi and newly-appointed Chairman of the African Union (AU) and discuss agricultural policies.

President Bingu wa Mutharika's exceptional leadership in the formulation and implementation of sustainable agricultural policies such as the Agricultural Input Subsidy Programme and the Presidential Initiative on Aqua-culture has transformed Malawi into a "food secure" nation and net exporter of maize. President Bingu wa Mutharika has gone on record saying "five years from now, no African child should die of hunger." By taking charge of the critical Ministry of Agriculture and risking international donor support by restoring subsidies to promote productivity, he has set a lasting example for the African Region. Through this determination and diligence in promoting food production in Malawi, His Excellency Ngwazi, Dr. Bingu wa Mutharika was awarded the FANRPAN Food Security Policy Leadership Award.

Dr Lindiwe Majele Sibanda highlighted that it is FANRPAN's intention to profile and showcase to the rest of Africa and the world, the Malawi success story. FANRPAN's vision is to ensure food security in Africa, and would like to scale-up Africa-wide the input subsidy, the programme which has been proven to be successful in Malawi. He commented on the success of the programme, highlighting that farmers are already enjoying greater output. "People who previously could only produce about three or four 50kg bags of maize a year are now able to produce 15, 20 or 25 50kg bags." His wish is to see the programme duplicated in the region.

However, he pointed out that an efficient transport system backed by infrastructure and linkages between countries in the region was pivotal in ensuring a successful scale-up of the programme.

One critical point discussed by the Dr Lindiwe Majele Sibanda and President Bingu wa Mutharika was the need for databases where policies are documented to enable easier tracking and measurement of the region's progress in meeting targets towards ensuring a "food secure" Africa. The president outlined his plan to establish an independent body to support the African Union in its aim to ensure food security.

On climate change, President Bingu wa Mutharika highlighted his plan to scale-up the green belt concept which he is implementing in Malawi. He suggested that FANRPAN set up a consultant framework through which the concept can be implemented in Africa. This tied in closely with FANRPAN's advocacy during the Copenhagen summit where it managed to mobilize, in partnership with others, a position for Africa; "No Agriculture, No Deal."

YouTube links to the interview:

- (1) FANRPAN Endorsement - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jslbn-l-Hag&feature=channel>
- (2) Seed Security - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eS5TjZ05i5Y&feature=channel>
- (3) Evidence Based Policy Research - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9a-XUEY\\_Gq4&feature=channel](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9a-XUEY_Gq4&feature=channel)
- (4) Climate Change - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1ULSdJqxug&feature=channel>