

**REMARKS BY THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE,  
IRRIGATION AND WATER DEVELOPMENT**

**ERICA MAGANGA (MRS.)**

**AT THE**

**INAUGURATION OF THE CONFERENCE ON “UNLEASHING  
AGRICULTURE’S POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVED NUTRITION  
AND HEALTH”**

**HELD AT**

**CROSSROADS CRESTA HOTEL**

**ON**

**26<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2011**

- The Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development; Hon. Prof. Peter Mwanza, M.P.
- The Ambassador for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID),
- The Representative for the Ambassador for the Embassy of Ireland,
- The Representative of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)- Washington DC, Rajul Pandya-Lorch,
- Government Officials herein present,
- Representatives of the development partners herein present,
- Representatives of the Non State Actors herein present,
- The Academia,
- The Media,
- All invited participants, Ladies and Gentlemen.

My humble duty this afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen is to invite the guest of honour to this function; Hon. Prof. Peter Mwanza, MP, the Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development to give us his inaugural speech.

But before I do that, allow me to say a few words.

First and foremost, let me welcome all of you to this function and thank you very much for making it.

More specifically, I would like to thank the Guest of honour, Prof. Peter Mwanza, MP for accepting to come and grace this occasion despite his busy schedules. Hon Minister, thank you for coming and this demonstrates the commitment you have in supporting activities of the whole agricultural sector. We are very happy for your presence and we are proud of you, Sir.

Hon Minister, ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to give a background to this conference.

It was in February, 2011, that the 2020 Vision Initiative of the International Food policy Research Institute (IFPRI) coordinated a global consultation process whose centerpiece was International Conference called Leveraging Agriculture for Improving Nutrition and Health.

The conference was attended by Participants from all the three sectors of agriculture, nutrition and health at which 65 countries participated.

One of the recommendations at the conference was that all countries should host similar event at local level to inspire new thinking and stimulate actions to leverage agriculture to improve nutrition and health.

We are the first country in the world to host such a conference and I would very much like to thank you Hon Minister for the guidance that you have always given to us. We thank you because you allowed us to champion and host this event here in Malawi.

Allow me also to thank my fellow Principal Secretaries; Dr. Mwansambo of Ministry of Health and Dr. Mary Shaba of OPC-HIV and AIDS, in absentia for showing interest to participate in this conference and also for the support they have provided throughout the preparations of this conference. Unfortunately, they

have both not made it to the function as they are attending to other equally important activities. Instead they have sent officials from their respective Ministries to represent them and I want to thank the officials for their participation.

Hon Minister lastly I would like to inform you, Sir that a competent team was put together that has ably organized this conference whose composition include officials from; the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Ministry of Health, Department of Nutrition, USAID and Irish Aid. The team has been meeting since July this year (2011) and I can assure you it was not easy but fortunately they have eventually yielded positive results working together as a team. I

would like to request the whole committee to stand so that you see them. Please, let's clap hands for them.

Finally, I will be failing in my duty if I don't recognize the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Irish Aid for their financial support towards the conference. One can have a strategy but if resources are not there to implement it, it's as good as not having the strategy at all. So I really thank our development partners for their assistance towards the agricultural sector.

As already highlighted by previous speakers, the objective of the conference is to influence policy direction and catalyze action for investments in Agriculture to sustainably prevent and reduce malnutrition and ill health.

With these few remarks Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to humbly invite our Guest of Honour, Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development to address the house.

**THANK YOU!!**