

Closing Remarks

Excellencies Ministers;

Excellencies ambassadors;

Distinguished participants;

Ladies and gentlemen;

On behalf of the Executive Secretary of IGAD, H.E. Engineer Mahboub Maalim who is sending you his warm regards but was also unable to participate in this august meeting, I am really delighted to make these short closing remarks.

Two days have passed and we are now arrived at the end of our conference. These days were not usual business days since we have been working in an intensive program, in a different environment. The draft strategy for employment for peace, stability and development has been presented, thoroughly discussed and validated as a result.

The process of validation has taken us through a number of panels that discussed a series of pertinent thematic issues such as creating opportunities and livelihoods, social protection, empowering communities...etc, our panel work has been followed-by interactive discussions on issues of sustainable development. Modalities for executing our strategy have also been discussed and identifies and the necessary road map put in place.

Excellencies Ministers; and ambassadors;

Distinguished participants;

Our ultimate objective is to reduce the level of poverty as has been spelt out in the MDGs through addressing root causes behind conflict and instability. We believe, such an objective can be attained through carefully implementing the adopted strategy in creating opportunities for employment, protecting the marginalized and empowering our people at the grass-roots level especially women. The strategy implementation should also be accompanied by putting in place a strong monitoring and evaluation system. Along with this, an aggressive resource mobilization effort needs to be pursued.

At our IGAD level, we shall internalize this strategy and process it through our policy organ. In this respect, we advise our Member States to start adopting this strategy through their internal systems. Therefore, we are all in the driving seat and our member states' role is bigger as it will become that of ownership and championship.

Excellencies Ministers;

Distinguished delegates;

Ladies and gentlemen;

Before closing, allow me to thank, very sincerely, their excellencies the Ministers who took time out of their very busy schedule to be with us. I would also thank delegates from Member States, and the distinguished members of the diplomatic corps. Deep appreciation is also due to our partners, ILO, AUC and EU.

For those who traveled to Addis, I wish you all a safe journey back home and to our Ethiopian friends, I wish you all the best and hope we shall meet again.

Thank you!