**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**



**MINISTRY OF HEALTH, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, GENDER, ELDERLY AND CHILDREN**

**OPENING REMARKS MADE BY HON. DR. FAUSTINE NDUNGULILE (MP), DEPUTY MINISTER**

**AT THE REGIONAL TRAINING ON LABORATORY ANALYSIS OF RESIDUES OF PHARMACOLOGICALLY ACTIVE VETERINARY SUBSTANCES IN ANIMAL OFFAL**

**TFDA HQ OFFICES, MABIBO EXTERNAL, DAR ES SALAAM**

**3rd - 7th December 2018**

* TFDA Acting-Director General,
* TFDA Directors,
* Dear Participants,
* Media Representatives,

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I feel incredibly honoured to be availed this opportunity to officiate this important regional training programme that has been agreed to be held right here in Tanzania at this premises.

On behalf of the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, I would like to welcome you to Tanzania and I utterly believe for some of you this is the first time you are visiting this part of Africa. We **say karibuni sana** in our local language (meaning you are warmly welcome).

Let me also use the occasion to thank all those who took part in the build-up to this scheduled training. I know it is hectic, time-consuming and daunting experience to organize such international or rather regional trainings particularly from the perspective of ensuring that participants from all parts of the world arrive safely and assemble for the intended purpose. You are indeed acknowledged and appreciated for your efforts and well planned coordination.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

You will all agree with me that drug residues of any kind in the food chain are hazardous to human health. Governments all over Africa even around the globe strives to put measures that will protect public and animal health by all means.

The Tanzanian government had established the Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority (TFDA) to regulate the quality, safety and efficacy of food, medicines, cosmetics, medical devices and diagnostics. The TFDA has been working hard to set-up systems for regulation of such products and I truly commend them for what they are doing.

Through TFDA, we can now conduct laboratory investigations to ascertain the quality of food products, medicines, cosmetics, medical devices as well as diagnostics that are intended to be imported or those that are circulating in our market. The TFDA laboratory is currently accredited to ISO/IEC 17025 standard and also WHO prequalified. Results from this laboratory are now recognized by many both within and outside the country.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

Despite the tremendous achievement registered by TFDA in setting-up the laboratory for testing regulated products, there are still notable gaps that need to be strengthened to ensure that the public is protected from consuming contaminated or adulterated food products that may pose health risks.

The first challenge is ensuring that our farmers practice *Good Animal Husbandry* - failure of which has resulted into increased levels of veterinary drug residues in animal offal.

The other challenge is capacity to test veterinary drug residues in our laboratories - which is the center of this training you have just gathered here for, in the week ahead.

I ostensibly believe what will be covered by facilitators will bring changes on the way we analyze food products and that our people will be safeguarded from consuming products with high and sometimes undetected levels of drug residues that might affect their well-being.

I urge you to set-up robust systems including laboratories in your home countries that will be able to detect veterinary drug residues after this training so that we can both fight the existence of such poor quality and unsafe products in our food chain.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

Let me finally reiterate on the significance of forging partnerships, collaborations and cooperation amongst different institutions including regulators. I have noted that there are 28 participants from 22 African countries who have attended this training workshop.

This is really critical and we should maintain the stride even after this gathering. The national and international partnerships is pivotal in fostering co-operations, results sharing and taking speedy regulatory actions. Should one product cross the borders of another country, we should communicate and notify our authorities for action to be taken immediately before detrimental harm could be caused to consumers. It is my plea that we truly maintain this in the long run.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

Before concluding my remarks and on an exceptional tone, let me sincerely thank the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the support that it had accorded to us over the past years.

* The IAEA has supported our Cancer Institute (i.e. Ocean Road Hospital) through a series of trainings and procurement of equipment including radiotherapy unit for treatment of cancer patients.
* The phase II project on "*Establishing Food Safety Network through Application of Nuclear and Related Technology"* which is currently ongoing has been supported by IAEA.
* The IAEA has supported TFDA on training of laboratory analysts, procurement of laboratory equipment, supplies and consumables which have allowed for effective analysis of samples containing mycotoxins and heavy metals in food products - more than 5,000 samples have been analyzed as of today.

Special gratitude is sincerely owed to this Agency for their contribution in protecting and promoting public health in our country including supporting this training programme. We thank you so very much.

Let me also, on behalf of the Ministry, pledge our commitment towards implementation of the *African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training on Nuclear Related Sciences and Technologies (The AFRA Project)* which you are also supporting.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

With these few remarks, I wish you fruitful and constructive deliberations in the coming days and I now have the honour to declare that this *Regional Training on Residues of Pharmacologically Active Veterinary Substances in Animal Offal* has been officially opened.

**Thank you for your attention**

**END**