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STATEMENT BY

**HER EXCELLENCY DR. JOYCE BANDA
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI**

DURING THE 3RD AFRICA-ARAB SUMMIT,

KUWAIT CITY, KUWAIT

19-20 NOVEMBER, 2013

- **Your Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of the State of Kuwait and Chair of the 3rd Africa-Arab Summit**
- **Your Excellency the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Chairperson of the African Union, and Co-chair of the Summit**
- **Your Excellencies the Co-Chairs of the 2nd Africa-Arab Summit (Libya and Gabon)**
- **Your Excellency the Secretary General of the League of Arab States**
- **Your Excellency Chairperson of the African Union Commission**
- **Your Majesties, Highnesses and Excellencies, Heads of State**
- **Ladies and gentlemen**

Let me begin by thanking Your Highness, the Amir for hosting this Summit and for the warm welcome accorded to me and my delegation since our arrival in this beautiful City of Kuwait, in the State of Kuwait. My delegation is optimistic that this Summit will achieve the objectives we set ourselves to accomplish within the two days, on account of the vast experience that Kuwait has in organizing such high profile events.

We welcome the theme of the 3rd Africa-Arab summit: **“Partners in Development and Investment”**. The Afro-Arab partnership consists of natural partners as we have nine of the African member countries belonging to the Arab World.

Indeed, Africa has a lot of untapped economic potential, particularly in areas of trade, agriculture development and food security, which if complemented with the Arab investment, could reap far reaching and profound results impacting on both the African continent, the Arab world and beyond.

I strongly believe that investment in the above areas will create job opportunities for our youth, and empower our women to uplift their living standards. After all, the youth and women form the large percentage of our population. In Malawi, we have untapped natural resources which we have discovered, such as minerals and oil. We are also blessed with

abundant fertile agriculture land. In all these areas, we need investment and support from our partners in the Arab world.

Let me express our thanks to the African Union Commission and the Secretary General of the League of Arab States for the comprehensive joint activity report for October 2010 to October 2013, which has ably highlighted some modest achievements made during the period under review. It has also indicated challenges encountered in implementing the 2011-2016 Joint Action Plan.

Allow me to dwell a little more on the challenges because if we deal with those effectively, I believe we would be going in the right direction.

Firstly, international peace and security is a prerequisite for development. The Activity Report points to the upheavals in a number of countries in the two regions, including the popular uprising that swept through some parts of North Africa and the Middle East whose residual effects are still major challenges to both sides. This situation has significantly diverted the attention of the two coordinating organizations leading to failure to reach our set objectives. To this effect I would like to underline the critical importance of finding lasting peace and stability in our regions for the future success of the Afro- Arab partnership.

Secondly, lack of funding for joint projects has been cited as one of the major challenges in the Afro-Arab partnership. The report highlights that the joint Action Plan was not accompanied by a dedicated financing mechanism. Financing for our priority programmes is an issue that we must deal with decisively, if we are to make any headway in our partnership. My delegation is of the strong view that by the end of this Summit we should line up predictable sources of financing for our Joint Action Plan. In this regard, we would like to express our gratitude to the Amir for the 1 Billion for infrastructure and investment projects.

Your Highness

Your Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

The private sector and civil society have been known to be a good source of financing and expertise in as far as partnerships like ours is concerned. In the case of our partnership the non-involvement of the private sector and civil society was a serious missed opportunity that must be redressed for whatever part is remaining of our Joint Action Plan. The success of the summit will be judged by the decisions we will take to address the challenges identified to facilitate implementation of future action plans.

As Chairperson of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), I am aware that as building blocks of the African economic community, regional economic communities have an important role to play. I would therefore urge our partners in the Arab world to invest in the priority projects that we have identified, to enhance regional integration. The region is one endowed with abundant natural resources. On our part, we have worked tirelessly to create a peaceful environment for investment. Our peace initiatives in the DRC and Madagascar attest to this commitment. We are also monitoring developments on Mozambique, to ensure that peace prevails in our region.

In conclusion, fellow leaders, we should not lose sight of the modest accomplishments outlined in the report, **inter alia**, the cooperation between African and Arab Peace and Security Councils, the establishment of Joint AU-LAS committees of Ambassadors; Economic Cooperation, Africa-Arab Trade Fair as well as Financial Cooperation with BADEA. These are areas that we should build on for the sake of progress.

I thank you for your attention