

**SPEECH BY MR ERIC VAN DER LINDEN HEAD OF DELEGATION
OF THE EC IN KENYA ON THE OFFICIAL, HANDING OVER
CEREMONY OF THE PACE ASSET TO THE AFRICAN UNION
NAIROBI, KENYA 6TH SEPTEMBER 2007.**

**Your Excellency Director of IBAR/African Union, Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am pleased to be here at this ceremony of handing over equipment and assets bought for the Pan African Programme for the Control of Epizootics (PACE). As you are all aware the European Commission has been associated with this important programme covering 32 countries in West, Central and East Africa since the start in 1999 until the end in February 2007. The EC has been the main development partners together with some of the MS such as Italy, France and UK. In this context I also wish to acknowledge the contribution from the NGO's and the scientific organisations such as OIE, Pirbright, CIRAD-EMVT, ILRI, CDC, FAO KARI-Muguga and others. Altogether the Commission has contributed 77 Mill Euro as a grant during the implementation of PACE

Prior to the PACE programme the Commission also contributed to the Pan African Programme for Eradication of Rinderpest (PARC), which was the foundation for the PACE programme.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we have heard from the Director of IBAR one of the most important outcomes of the PACE programme is the introduction and establishment of an *epidemiological surveillance network* in each of the national countries. I am sure that we can all agree that the most significant achievement of PACE has been the effective eradication of Rinderpest from West, Central and most of East Africa. However, we still need to verify whether the virus is active in the Somali Ecosystem or not and for that reason the Commission has agreed to allocate 4 million Euro for a two year extension of the SERECU project (Somali Ecosystem Rinderpest Eradication Coordination Unit), to be implemented by IBAR. We hope to be able to sign the Financing Agreement in the very near future so that the SERECU project can proceed towards the final eradication of rinderpest from Africa and thus from the entire globe.

Your Excellency, Director of IBAR

With reference to the audits I can inform you that the Delegation is in the process of launching the final audits for the regional component namely PCU and SERECU as well as the national component for Kenya, which will enable us to finalise closure of the remaining commitments under the direct responsibility of the Kenya operation.

I would like to mention that when the Commission asked the Delegation to provide them with some success stories of EC corporation in Kenya I was pleased to be able to forward a copy of the success stories of PACE prepared by the PACE Coordination unit.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Among the major items, we are handing over today, is the Local Area Network, which I understand will be serving AU, AU-IBAR, Regional Coordination offices and Regional Animal health centres in West/Central and Eastern Africa, that are hosting FAO, OIE and AU-IBAR.

I trust that the vehicles, computers, and the Local Area Network facility, will assist in facilitating the animal resource information sharing, as well as in enhancing the sustainability and smooth running of the recent EU funded projects, such as: SPINAP, SERECU etc

Finally I wish to thank all the organisations and development partners: USAID, DFID, French Cooperation, Italian Cooperation, FAO, GTZ, IAEA as well as the individuals who have been instrumental in the implementation of the PACE programme. Many of the professionals have now left the programme to take up new challenges elsewhere, while others are still here. In particular, *I wish to acknowledge the contribution of Dr Traora, when entering the PACE programme as the new Director of IBAR at a very crucial time. Moreover I wish to thank Dr Rene Bessin, the PACE Coordinator who has been a cornerstone of the programme and who has kept PACE on course during sometimes very difficult times.*

I would like you to know that my office shall be looking forward to future collaboration with AU/IBAR in the field of livestock and livestock disease control programmes.

Thank you.