Opening Remark

Hamid Jemal (PhD), Deputy Director General, Ethiopian Agricultural Authority

- Your Excellency, Dr. Fikru Regassa, State Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture
- Your Excellency, Dr. Boja Endebu, President of the Ethiopian Veterinary Association
- Honorable guest from the Agricultural Standing Committee
- Honorable Representatives from Government and Development Partners,
- Esteemed Members of the Ethiopian Veterinary Association,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure and honor to make an opening remark in today's 38th Ethiopian Veterinary Association annual conference titled "Reinforcing Animal Health and Welfare Regulatory Framework for Resilient Veterinary Systems in Ethiopia.", I wish to thank the Executive board of the Ethiopian Veterinary Association (EVA) for the invitation.

Also, taking this opportunity, on behalf of the Director General of Ethiopian Agricultural Authority, H.E. Ambassador Driba Kuma, and myself, once again, I would like to welcome all esteemed participants and guests to this Conference.

Today, we stand at the threshold of a new era of animal health governance in Ethiopia, marked by the endorsement of the Animal Health and Welfare Proclamation. This proclamation is not merely a legal document; it is a cornerstone for building a robust, modern, and science-based animal health regulatory framework in Ethiopia. It represents a major step forward in aligning our national veterinary system with international standards and best practices.

The significance of this proclamation lies in its comprehensive approach to safeguarding animal health, protecting public health, promoting animal welfare, and enhancing the competitiveness of Ethiopia's livestock and livestock products in regional and global markets. For this proclamation to deliver on its promise, effective implementation mechanisms must be established without delay, and this is where the Ethiopian Agricultural Authority has a leading and strategic role to play.

Besides, EAA with affiliated institutions plays a great role in facilitating the Assessment of Performance of Ethiopian Veterinary Service (PVS) by WOAH, and is proud of the feedback given by the assessors. This tells us that the livestock sector is more competent than ever. I would like to thank our technical teams who have stood and are ready to provide all necessary information, site visit facilitations, and engaged in constructive dialogue with the WOAH assessment team. Also, as part of this achievement, I would like to congratulate all veterinarians for your collective effort.

Dear Excellencies

Dear participants

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The last closed fiscal year 2017 EC was a very successful time for the livestock regulatory sector by achieving the highest live animal export in history in favor of the macro-economic reform, which discourages illegal movement of live animals and animals crossing the Ethiopian border. Besides, as part of digital Ethiopia, almost all regulatory services under EAA are automated, and some mature E-services are now engaged in the Ethiopian modern one-stop shop center, "MESOB". As part of regulatory compliance, the EAA animal product and input quality testing center, 13 test parameters are accredited and increasing regulatory reputability and decision-making at large. These are a few best achievements of EAA that we would like to declare for this conference.

We are working to modernize our animal quarantine infrastructure and improve surveillance and certification systems at border points, ensuring the safe and regulated movement of animals and animal products both within the country and across borders. Quarantine stations must serve not only as checkpoints, but as early warning systems against transboundary diseases.

The quality and safety of animal-origin food products must be guaranteed. The Authority is working to enhance inspection and certification procedures to ensure hygienic standards based on HACCP protocol, traceability, and compliance with both domestic and export market requirements at the level of production firms and export abattoirs.

Ensuring the availability, safety, and efficacy of veterinary drugs is also crucial. Through robust registration, inspection, post-market surveillance, and regulation of distribution channels, to protect animal health and combat the rise of antimicrobial resistance.

Proper animal feed regulation is fundamental to animal health and productivity. The Authority is committed to regulating the production, labeling, distribution, and safety of animal feed through inspection, licensing, and continuous monitoring to prevent contamination, adulteration, and the misuse of feed additives. To this end, our motto is "Robust Regulatory System for Sustainable Development."

Dear Participants

Colleagues and Partners,

Strengthening the regulatory environment is a shared responsibility, involving policymakers, academic and research institutions, private sectors, international partners, and most critically,

professional associations such as the Ethiopian Veterinary Association. Your collective expertise, dedication, and ethical leadership are indispensable to building systems that are resilient, inclusive, and responsive to both current and future challenges. Furthermore, we must create a regulatory culture based not on enforcement alone, but on shared responsibility, transparency, and trust. The Ethiopian Agricultural Authority will continue to work closely with federal government institutions, regional governments, veterinary professionals, academia, development partners, and international organizations to build the necessary human and institutional capacities.

In this regard, we value the vital role of the Ethiopian Veterinary Association in fostering professional excellence, advocating for sound veterinary policies, and promoting ethical standards across the sector. The continued partnership between EVA and the Authority will be indispensable to achieving our common goals.

In conclusion, the endorsement of the Animal Health and Welfare Proclamation provides us with a clear legal foundation. Now, our collective responsibility is to give it life through strategic planning, effective enforcement, capacity development, and strong stakeholder coordination.

I wish to all participants and exhibitors a happy stay and to have a time of successful experience sharing.

I want to reaffirm the Ethiopian Agricultural Authority's commitment to working closely with EVA and all relevant stakeholders in strengthening our regulatory framework and building a veterinary system that meets the highest national and international standards.

And would like to thank EVA for organizing this wonderful platform, and I wish a fruitful time to all of the conference participants.

I would like to thank the organizers of the event, the partners who sponsored the event, the facilitators, and all contributors, including the media crew in realizing this conference.

Finally, I congratulate you all, Vet. Families for reaching the eve of a historic National Inaugural Festivity of the Ethiopian Renaissance Dam with ‘Nigat’ lake, the largest lake in Ethiopia

Thank you!