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**The Honourable Mendsaikhan Zagdjav
The Minister of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry of Mongolia
Ulaanbaatar MONGOLIA****ariunbayar@mofa.gov.mn**

**Subject: Designation of the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP)**

Your Excellency,

The Eastern and Southern African Pastoralist Network (ESAPN) presents its sincere greetings to you. We are glad to learn that the resolution proposal submitted by Government of Mongolia with other supporting countries in support of the designation of the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) is included in the agenda of the 27th session of Committee on Agriculture (COAG) in September-October 2020.

The rangelands of Eastern and Southern Africa host the highest number of livestock that provide almost 90% of employment and form the basis of livelihoods and production for pastoralists. Pastoralism also contributes in a big way to national GDPs while at the same time ensuring the existence of wild fauna and flora that from the foundation of the regions wildlife based tourism. Further, pastoralism provides a cultural identity to the region in addition to ensuring ecological integrity in the rangelands.

As ESAPN our vision is to reach an Eastern and Southern Africa where pastoralists, their livelihoods, communities and cultures are recognized and respected for their contribution to sustainable food systems, natural resource management, and socio-economic development. In order to achieve this vision, we identified our mission as to empower pastoralists in Eastern and Southern Africa to sustainably improve productivity and livelihoods, while making their voices heard through effective communication, advocacy and legitimate demand for services and resources from policy makers.

Accordingly, we believe that the designation of an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists would provide an opportunity to raise the profile and support for rangelands and pastoral issues globally and nationally, improve understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by rangelands and pastoralists, and direct increased attention and resources to them.

Thus with this opportunity we would like express our commitment to continue our work and allocate funds for conserving pastoralism and ecological integrity in the rangelands before and during the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Tiampati

CHAIR