

Name: H.E. Róbert Zsigó, Secretary of State

Country/Organization/Constituency: Hungary

Statement:

**Mr. Chairperson,**

**Director-General,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of the Hungarian Government, I would like to express my appreciation for the opportunity to address the 46<sup>th</sup> Session of the CFS, in alignment with the statement of the EU and its 28 Members States.

As we could hear from the presentation of the Report of the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World, over 820 million people are going hungry. In addition, 2 billion people in the world suffer from various forms of malnutrition and its consequences, obesity and overweight.

In this respect, I consider it indispensable to address the root causes of hunger: poverty and inequalities. In this regard, decent work has eminent role. We share the wise words of Pope Francis: "A society that fails to value work and does not care about those who work is doomed to atrophy and to the multiplication of inequalities". The above clearly indicates that the main global challenges are universal and the SDGs to address them are inseparable.

Another aspect is the need to meet the increasing demand for food globally, for the growing population. In this regard, increasing production is NOT the only appropriate answer. Priority should be also given to decrease drastically the food losses and food waste. The post-harvest food losses can be reduced through development of rural infrastructure. This would have positive impacts on rural communities, to their improved livelihood, and could contribute to sustainably manage the natural resources. For similar reasons, developed countries should take severe measures to reduce food waste.

In addition, the agricultural sector needs to overcome several other challenges: adaptation to climate change impacts and reduction of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Efficient climate actions are required to ensure food security in the world and to achieve SDGs. European agricultural ministers have showed strong commitment to increase soil carbon sequestration on agricultural land. With suitable cultivation methods, land use and forestations, lands could absorb more carbon, while also increasing the quality of soils, and thus contributing to higher productivity.

Please, allow me to mention some current Hungarian initiatives:

In 2018, Hungary allocated over 12 million dollars to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals via the implementation of 40 development cooperation projects.

Hungary launched its largest-to-date international development cooperation programme in the Republic of Uganda this year with a budget of nearly 16 million euros. Thus, Hungary will contribute to the food security in Uganda.

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As for the topic of food systems and nutrition, we wish to express our pleasure to have hosted the Regional Consultation in Budapest. We hope that the findings of the regional consultation contribute to the finalisation of the Voluntary Guidelines. These Guidelines are expected to assist decision-makers to ensure enabling policy environment and appropriate legislative framework to provide food security.

We are aware that most of the hungry and extremely poor are living in rural areas and their livelihood is based on agriculture. Therefore, it is essential to follow the approach of relying on the needs and capacities of local communities. Preserving the existing jobs, creating employment opportunities, establishing schools and services would contribute to making rural life more attractive, in particular for the youth. Hungary enables the local small producers - through its legislation - to deliver their products directly to local schools or kindergartens, consequently providing diverse and healthy diet in public catering for children.

Research and innovation play an important role by improving the quality of life in rural areas. New technologies provide opportunity to involve the younger generation in the agricultural sector. We wish to emphasize that new technologies should fully comply with the requirements of sustainability. We do believe that the genetically modified organisms do not meet these criteria and - as it is included in our Constitution - Hungary wishes to keep its GMO-free status.

Let me say, in conclusion, that for us this year World Food Day is a special occasion. All of you know that we celebrate World Food Day on 16<sup>th</sup> October, the FAO's birthday. But probably only some of you know that it was a Hungarian proposal. It was the Hungarian minister of agriculture 40 years ago, during the FAO Conference in 1979, to suggest establishing a day dedicated to food and to those who produce it, the farmers. Thus, this year World Food Day has a special meaning for us.

We do hope that our joint strong commitment to ensure food security will accelerate the achievement of our common goals.

Thank you for your attention!