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**STATEMENT BY MR ASMEROM KIDANE TECLEGHIORGHIS, ALTERNATE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ERITREA TO ROME BASED UN AGENCIES
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 40TH SESSION OF FAO CONFERENCE
05 JULY 2017**

Mr. Chairperson,

Excellencies

Ladies and gentlemen

First I would like to express my profound gratitude to the FAO, for inviting my Minister of Agriculture, H.E. Arefaine Berhe, who could not come due to other urgent official tasks, and on behalf of whom I am honored to participate in this timely and important conference and deliver this statement.

Mr. Chairperson, the Global Food Crises that we are still experiencing today started long time ago, which was followed by high-profile summits organized by FAO and other countries with inputs from the United Nations. However, in spite of all the good will and pledges to run things around, little has improved since that time. Therefore a lot of work is remaining before us to enhance agricultural system, particularly in the developing countries, and eradicate hunger and sustain food security and nutrition.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished participants, the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goal, built on our ongoing effort to translate into action the vision of a food secure and sustainable world. Hence the Sustainable Development Goal has been streamed into FAO's strategic documents to the achievement of 40 targets, 17 goals and 53 indicators. The achievement of this targets I believe, first and foremost, is the responsibility of every country and not only the task of FAO.

To that extent Eritrea has been giving to Climate change, Agriculture and Food and Nutrition security the highest priority and earmark proportional resources to increase production and productivity. Climate centered programs and irrigation are not just obligations and responsibilities for Eritrea to meet the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but on the contrary they are increasingly becoming part and parcel of Eritrean culture and everyday life, which goes in action with today's Theme "Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security". Accordingly, environmental protection and forestation plans come in to play, Green clubs, terracing programs, in all mountains of the country were under taken through summer programs that involve youngsters, in planting trees on the way carrying out their civic duties contributed to the environmental protection strengthened by enacted laws and regulations.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished participant Eritrea is situated in Sahelian part of Africa, where the rains are usually insufficient and erratic. Eritrea with the cooperation of UN organizations and through its self reliance policy has initiated a lot of work in soil and water conservation, forestation and sustainable system of irrigation in all agro-ecological zones. Soil and water conservation in general, and water harvesting in particular has direct bearing on the productivity of both crops and livestock and the final target of food and nutrition security. Our strategy is to practice intensive and integrated agriculture, so that we can dedicate most of the land, especially the sloppy and drier areas to tree planting and closure establishment in order to enhance our natural resources base.

However, to progress and step forward the support of FAO, UN Organizations and Global Trust fund is very important and crucial. Strengthening rural community awareness in rural societies is generally recognized as a prerequisite for agricultural productivity, reducing poverty and hunger, and promoting economic growth. We, therefore, appreciate you very much for your future support.

I thank you.