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Chairperson, Excellencies, distinguished country delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

It is a pleasure and an honour to address the 40th Conference.

I congratulate the Conference chairperson upon his appointment. I thank our organization, the FAO, for facilitating the organization of this Conference.

The Seychelles as a SIDS of the Indian Ocean identifies strongly with the debate topic of this session: climate change, agriculture and food security. Growing demands for food translate into higher carbon output. SIDS are net food importers sometimes importing as much as 90% of their food needs. They are distantly placed from the main markets of the world and have many competing ends for scarce natural resources such as water and land which could be dedicated to agriculture, in the face of a growing national demand for food.

Seychelles stands in solidarity with other SIDS of the world and indeed with the other member states of the organization to deplore all actions that might further jeopardize the Paris Agreement.

Seychelles continues to engage actions to implement national policies that will reduce its over dependence on imported fossil fuels hence further reduce its carbon foot print, its contribution to the greenhouse gases, global warming and sea level rise. It has set a goal of achieving 15% of energy needs by 2030 through renewable sources, particularly using the photovoltaic cells. It is committed to its share in minimizing global warming.

Seychelles is already feeling the adverse impacts of climate change. Derailed traditional seasons and the proliferation of invasive species seriously perturb agricultural production. The now regular phenomenon of near 100% coral bleaching threatens artisanal fish stocks which provide 40% of the dietary protein with consequences to national food and nutrition security. However, the Seychelles have recently engaged in successful proliferation of coral. The very finite low lying areas with important socio-economic infrastructure are subjected to the continuous onslaught of tidal surges which translate into economic costs.

Seychelles defined A *National Food and Nutrition Security Policy* up to 2020 with technical assistance of the African Union's NEPAD and the NPCA. The policy document recognizes the

intricacies of national food production, the many dimensions of nutrition as well as the significance of personal lifestyles in an effort to curtail growing malnutrition cases. Overweight and obesity engender a national scourge. The rise in cases of non-communicable diseases, their associated mortality, morbidity, and medical costs which transpire into national economic costs and reduced personal productivity impose a very severe economic burden.

Seychelles has through the African Union-wide CAADP process, promulgated a national agricultural and a fisheries investment plan up to 2020, in part with the technical assistance of the FAO. The investment plan targets five areas of intervention which require immediate resource input.

These areas of intervention coincide with the Regional Programme for Food Security and Nutrition, (PRESAN), an initiative of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and the FAO which should be replicated in other SIDS groups. The PRESAN was adopted by the 31st Council of Ministers of the IOC held in 2016. It was also presented on the sidelines of the 29th FAO Regional Conference for Africa.

The Seychelles' Country Programming Framework or CPF 2014-2017 reinforced the technical collaboration between the Government of Seychelles and the FAO. The upcoming Government will surely consolidate this cooperation.

I would like to convey to you the best wishes of the Government and the people of Seychelles for fruitful deliberations.

Chairperson, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen I thank you for your attention.