

[Delivered in Arabic - checked against English interpretation]

**Statement delivered by
His Excellency Ahmed Albakri
Undersecretary of Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of the Sultanate of Oman
on the occasion of the
41st Session of the FAO Conference, Rome, Italy (22-29 June 2019)
25 June 2019**

Thank you and in the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate,
Your Excellency Chairperson of the Conference,
Dr José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of the FAO,
Your Excellencies Ministers and Heads of Delegations,
Excellencies,
Heads of Government Organizations and NGOs,
Donor Funds and Social Society Organization Representatives,
Dear audience, greetings, and the blessings of God be upon you.

At the outset and on behalf of the Delegation of the Sultanate of Oman taking part in the 41st Session of the Conference, we would like to congratulate Dr Qu Dongyu for his election at the helm of the FAO, wishing him all the success in his tasks.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, the fallout of world phenomena on top of which climate change, gas heat emissions, land degradation, drought and desertification are still impacting negatively on the food production system, biodiversity and ecological diversity, especially in developing and the least developed countries. This requires determining responsibilities, assessing and reviewing the plans, which are to be implemented at the Regional Conferences of FAO, and around the world, in order to phase these phenomena, to limit its impact and to gradually address their fallout. This is a human responsibility incumbent on us all without any exception.

The current session focuses on issues relating to migration, agriculture and rural development. The Agenda includes items, some of which were discussed yesterday, and others which will be discussed in order to lead the way, to pave the way, to set up executive plans on the regional level in the fields of the world, food security, its relevant policies, and assessing the progress in this regard in order to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

Fostering nutrition which is connected to consuming more fruits and vegetables and developing family food consumption patterns is important. Therefore the report on the sustainable and systematic user management of fertilizers, also introducing concepts of digital and smart agriculture in applications that can determine the required fertilizer levels to achieve the aspired production levels with the best return is a matter of aspersions that we can all implement easily and with very good results on the ground.

Food production systems in the Sultanate of Oman are going systematically, with God's blessing, in achieving self-sufficiency of all the imports which used to be 41 percent in 2016 and has reached 58 percent in 2018. The volume of production in terms of plants, animals and fish, has risen from 3.2 million tons in 2017 to 3.8 million tons in 2018. This represents a growth rate of 17.2 percent.

The Government is working on the framework of economic diversification in fostering many sectorial projects that are connected to food security and investment in food security by supporting SMEs in all the stages of production, manufacturing and marketing of foods, which create jobs for the Omani youth in different governorates around the Sultanate. According to the Annual Food Security Index in 2019, Oman

ranked third in the Arab world and 29th worldwide out of 113 countries. The Sultanate also ranked first in the Arab world in terms of food availability in 2018.

In concluding, we would like to convey our deepest gratitude and appreciation to Dr José Graziano da Silva for his praiseworthy efforts, for his close follow up, and professional initiatives during his mandate at the helm of FAO, which has contributed towards enriching the progress of this State Organization, wishing him success in his future endeavours. We also would like to thank all the staff at FAO HQ in Rome and its regional office in Cairo and office in Muscat for their ongoing cooperation and appreciated role.

God's peace and blessing be upon you.

Thank you.