

## **Statement by Mr Macharia Kamau World Food Day 2016**

A very good morning to you all.

First of all I begin by bringing you all greetings. I begin by recognizing Her Royal Highness, Princess Lalla Hasnaa of Morocco. It is my pleasure to be here. I would like to recognize of course The Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization and my colleagues from the United Nations that are here today. I bring you greetings from the Secretary General of the United Nations and his best wishes for this day, the World Food Day.

I just heard the Prime Minister of Italy speak, and I must confess that I found his statement moving, passionate and incredibly insightful. I am almost tempted to deviate from what I was going to read and speak about what he said today. Because what it has reminded all of us, I believe, are that this country Italy and this city of Rome, and I recognize the Mayor who is here with us today, is indeed the standard bearer of the values of global solidarity on issues of food and agriculture in the world. This is no small matter, it is indeed the key message that the Secretary General wanted me to bring to you here today.

You see, last year we picked up on the 2030 Agenda. It is an amazing Agenda, it is a wonderful blueprint for which we are hoping to protect our planet, to ensure the survival of our species, and to build prosperity and peace in a way in which we can all live together in solidarity. Precisely the very values that the Italian Prime Minister was talking about. But we also recognize that the threat of climate and climate change has become the existential challenge that we are all facing. There is no question in our mind that unless we undertake the necessary responses to be able to respond to the challenges that we are facing with climate and climate change, that everything that we value in the context of our reality here on earth, is indeed threatened. We have of course, and if you look at the 2030 Agenda, focused on the first key issues, which are poverty and hunger. The message that I want to leave with you today is that the 2030 Agenda at its core is an Agenda about fighting poverty and ensuring that we have no hunger and that food is available to all, and as we see it, nothing threatens that more than climate change. As we go to Morocco in December the challenge we will be looking to respond to is how we can take this incredible agreement that we agreed to in Paris and take it forward in a way in which we can truly defend this planet, in a way in which we can truly safeguard our species as we know it, our culture, our civilization, our livelihoods. That is what we are trying to push for, and it is only right that Morocco should be leading this process, and once again I recognize the presence of the Princess here in that regard.

We also recognize that while we are looking to undertake that particular challenge we are also faced with what we should do now, because as we sit here there are people who are facing hunger and there are people who are facing huge disruptions in their lives and livelihoods because of the climatic conditions that are unfolding. Whether it is in Haiti, whether it is in the Continent of Africa and southern parts of Africa, the Horn of Africa, whether it is in the Pacific in the small islands where I recently visited. In all these places the reality today is one of adaptation and the message that I bring to you on the issue of adaptation is that we must find a way to ensure that we are able to respond with speed and effectiveness, to build a resilience that allows communities and societies to be able to survive the challenges that they are facing today, the challenges that they are living within the context of the moment in which we are living in. This is one of the key messages that I wanted to bring to you today and that I have been asked to deliver. I and my colleague, Mary Robertson, who is also a special envoy of the Secretary General, have put together a blueprint, a blueprint that tries to focus on those very issues. How we can build stronger solidarity between Nations, how we can ensure that we invest in early action so that we are responsive and effective. How we can ensure that we build better partnerships and better innovation, including insurance schemes that protect communities and families, and how we can take the entire risk, if we can, out of the humanitarian response that we all try to implement in the context of our work. This blueprint is a blueprint based on the idea and concept of solidarity, the very idea that the Prime Minister was speaking about a few minutes ago. So for us it is to plead that this day, the World Food Day, becomes a day where we step up our responses. We recognize that the forefront of the 2030 Agenda is this very issue of food, this very issue of the challenge that we face in the world of hunger, and that we put together our efforts, we put together our organizations, we recognize the leadership that is provided by the very organizations that are based here in Rome that deal with this very issue and see that they lead us to help us to be able to respond and respond effectively and in a manner in which we can save lives.

The final message, built on all of that, is one of urgency. Because in the context of all of this, as I said earlier, we are seeing what's happening right now in Haiti, we are seeing what's happening and unfolding in parts of Africa and in parts of South Africa, in particular. And recognize that the urgency of response has to be the primary action that we must engage in. That we must implore ourselves, drive our institutions, drive our responses, drive our investments, in ways in which we respond now, to protect those who are most vulnerable to this challenge that we face. This is the message that I would like to deliver today, and it gives me great pride to be able to be here with you to celebrate the World Food Day, recognizing that this has to be the one use that we have to safeguard, we have to invest in and we have to promote as we move into the future of the 2030 Agenda.

I thank you very much