

**Message from H.E. Mr. Yashar Aliyev, Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations
on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States
on the Observance of World Food Day**

We welcome the Observance of the World Food Day focusing in this year on the theme “Biodiversity for Food Security.”

Our countries are rich in biological diversity and committed to its conservation. We are confident that biodiversity, *inter alia*, is crucial for sustainable agriculture and rural development and represents a sustainable food source. Its damage or loss is a serious challenge to national food security.

In this context, we particularly value the contribution of the FAO and *UN Convention on Biodiversity* (CBD) in addressing the issues related to food insecurity, especially in regions with a dire need. Greater coherence and coordination among all the relevant multilateral agencies with the leading role of FAO are crucial and will strengthen the capacity of countries to ensure access to high quality food while achieving sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity.

We highlight the importance of further technological support and increased investments in biodiversity related activities including through partnerships with finance and business sectors and consider them as an important contribution to hunger and poverty eradication efforts.

We believe that the UN in collaboration with all major stakeholders will ensure concerted efforts to protect the environment and promote *sui generis* system of biodiversity.