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粮食及
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Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Organisation des Nations
Unies pour l'alimentation
et l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الغذية والزراعة
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CONFERENCE CONFÉRENCE CONFERENCIA

Forty-second Session - Quarante et deuxième session - 42.º período de sesiones

**Virtual Meeting, 14-18 June 2021
VERBATIM RECORDS OF PLENARY MEETINGS
OF THE CONFERENCE**

**Réunion Virtuelle, 14-18 juin 2021
PROCÈS-VERBAUX DES SÉANCES PLÉNIÈRES
DE LA CONFÉRENCE**

**Reunión Virtual, 14-18 de junio de 2021
ACTAS TAQUIGRÁFICAS DE LAS SESIONES PLENARIAS
DE LA CONFERENCIA**

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CONFERENCE CONFERENCE CONFERENCIA

<p>Forty-second Session Quarante et deuxième session 42.º período de sesiones</p>
<p>Virtual Meeting, 14-18 June 2021 Réunion Virtuelle, 14-18 juin 2021 Reunión Virtual, 14-18 de junio de 2021</p>
<p>FIRST PLENARY MEETING PREMIÈRE SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE PRIMERA SESIÓN PLENARIA</p>
<p>14 June 2021</p>

The First Meeting was opened at 09:41 hours
Mr Michal Kurtyka,
Chairperson of the Conference, presiding

La première séance est ouverte à 09 h 41
sous la présidence de M. Michal Kurtyka,
Président de la Conférence

Se abre la primera reunión a las 09.41
bajo la presidencia de la Sr. Michal Kurtyka,
Presidente de la Conferencia

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Item 1. Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons**Point 1. Élection du président et des vice-présidents****Tema 1. Elección del Presidente y los vicepresidentes****SECRETARY-GENERAL**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the 42nd session of the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization, FAO. My name is Rakesh Muthoo, I am the Secretary-General of the Conference and I hereby call the Conference to order. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I now give you the Director-General of the FAO, His Excellency, Dr Qu Dongyu. Director-General, the floor is yours.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Thank you Secretary-General, Mr Rakesh Muthoo.

Good morning from Rome. Good afternoon, good evening depending on where you are now.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have the honour to declare open the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference, and to welcome you to the first ever digital Conference of FAO.

We start with Item 1. The first Item on the Agenda is the *Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons*.

At its last Session, the FAO Council proposed that His Excellency Michal Kurtyka, Minister for Climate and Environment of Poland, preside over this Session of Conference.

May I take it that the Conference agrees with this proposal and can confirm this by acclamation?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Thank you. I now invite His Excellency Michal Kurtyka to take the Chair of this Session of the Conference.

CHAIRPERSON

Your Excellencies, Director-General, Distinguished Delegates, ladies and gentlemen, first of all, I will check whether we can hear. There is a communication? Yes, everything is running properly. So, I am very glad to start.

At the beginning I would like to sincerely thank you for the trust you have placed in me by choosing me to preside over the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference.

First of all, I would like to congratulate FAO on its 75th anniversary which we celebrated last year. We all know how important for the world is this specialized United Nations Organization, fighting against poverty and hunger. It is an honour for me to be able to preside over this Conference.

We start today the gathering of this digital FAO, the highest level of global agriculture and food governance. It is our responsibility to convey a strong message to the global community on the urgency for decisive action in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 and SDG 1.

We all know that the right to food is a human right that should be guaranteed in the legal systems of all Member States, ensuring food and nutrition security remains one of the most important global challenges of the 21st century.

We have to remember that despite the significant growth in food production, that current food systems have not eradicated the problem of malnutrition. At present a few hundred million people around the globe suffer from hunger. Even though the current global food production is sufficient to ensure enough calories for every person on our planet, unequal location of food production, improper food distribution and often very bad political and institutional solutions lies behind this problem.

Distinguished colleagues, needless to say, and especially during such a digital Conference that we held, that the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly worsened the whole situation. A decrease in people's income threatens the economic accessibility of food in many countries. This is particularly alarming for people living in extreme poverty, who spend roughly 70 percent of their income on food. COVID-19 has made the fulfilment of SDG 2, Zero Hunger, even more challenging.

In view of the threats posed by the global COVID-19 pandemic, there is a need to strengthen international cooperation. Elimination of hunger and malnutrition is our universal responsibility.

Coordinated international actions would be a significant step towards creating a mechanism to properly address it. There is, clearly, a role for international organizations.

FAO is here to help us to come out of the pandemic into a better world, a healthier and greener world, where we can learn to make better use of the resources available. A world that offers new opportunities to improve our wellbeing and reduce inequalities. A world with such a quality education that it allows creation of the technologies necessary to fight hunger, poverty, environmental degradation and climate change.

There is an urgent need for strengthening economies, health and food systems.

The UN Food Systems Summit 2021 will be a good opportunity to deepen cooperation in this area. We all know that the food we choose and the way we consume it affects our health and our planet. It also has an impact on the way food systems work.

However, when we think about it, we must remember that there is always somebody behind our food, who produced, planted, harvested, fished or transported it. All these people must be not only part of it but, above all, the heart of the change.

In our 42nd Session of the FAO Conference, let us reflect on all the challenges we face. We need to bear in mind that we have only nine years to fulfil the commitments agreed in Agenda 2030. In order to ensure a sustainable future for all, in line with Agenda 2030 and SDGs, we need to put back our economies on the growth path, a path that is built around principles such as just transition, low emission, resilient and responsible development.

From my perspective, climate action can be a catalyst for growth and job creation. This kind of catalyst is needed in every sector.

Distinguished colleagues, this online Session of the FAO Conference must be an example of how, with the right amount of political will and determination from us all, we can move things forward.

I wish for all of us a fruitful discussion and to reach an agreement on matters important for us. Thank you very much.

Now, let me turn to Item 1. In accordance with Rule VIII of the General Rules of the Organization, the Conference, after having considered the recommendation of the FAO Council, shall elect the three Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference.

The 166th Session of the FAO Council held in April this year proposed three candidates for the three positions of Vice-Chairpersons of this Session of the Conference, and consequently the following nominees are now presented to the Conference for approval: Mr Gabriel Mbairrobe of Cameroon, Ms Yael Rubinstein of Israel, Mr Edward Centeno of Nicaragua.

So, can I take that the Conference approves these nominations?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

I congratulate the Vice-Chairpersons and look forward to working with them over the following days.

Distinguished delegates, we are privileged to have the opportunity this morning to hear a statement by His Excellency, Sergio Mattarella, President of the Republic of Italy. We will now hear the video statement by His Excellency, Sergio Mattarella, to the 42nd session of the Conference.

His Excellency Sergio MATTARELLA (President of the Republic of Italy)

Director-General Qu Dongyu, Authorities, Distinguished Representatives, I am eager to greet all of you gathered here for the opening of the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference.

This appointment of ours marks the significant impact of the pandemic on food systems and human health. The virus has impacted the production of foodstuffs, has kept farmworkers away from the fields, curtailed food processing, transportation, the international circulation of goods, has negatively impacted processes to sustain proper agriculture and food systems, which continue to be a priority around the globe.

Facing these challenges, the international community, the UN agencies working in the field on food, must be up to the task of providing a proper response.

This very specifically ties into the Sustainable Development Goals, which must be tackled with renewed determination, concretely. Their implications in maintaining food systems and combating hunger are increasingly stark. While food insecurity affected 820 million people before the pandemic, today, according to the 2020/2021 Global Report on Food Crises, now an additional 155 million people are facing want in 55 countries. This is a full-fledged attack on one of the most elemental human rights, the right to food.

This is a worrying and dangerous turnaround in trend and we must be able to counter it. As we face challenges of global proportions, our response can be none other than global, aiming at shared, long-term multilateral strategies.

Italy is working in this direction together with other G20 partners on the Food Coalition Initiative in order to respond to the effects of the pandemic and world agri-food systems and to attain more sustainable food growth.

Only attentive adequate prevention of crises such as climate change, the loss of biodiversity, diversification, natural disasters and also conflicts will allow us to attain the essential conditions we are proposing for peace and development of cohesive societies.

The FAO 2021 Conference opens with an intense work and projects that Italy will be greatly involved in with the current G20 Presidency underway. The pre-Food Systems Summit convened by the UN and the Italian Government with the co-chairpersonship of the 26th Session of the UN Climate Conference (COP 26) in the United Kingdom, we need to take a common path and move towards sustainable development inspired by the principle of Zero Hunger.

Good work to you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, His Excellency Sergio Mattarella.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am now pleased to announce that we have with us His Excellency Monsignor Fernando Chica Arellano, the Holy See Permanent Observer at FAO, who will deliver the message of His Holiness Pope Francis to the 42nd Session of the Conference.

Monseñor Fernando Chica ARELLANO (Santa Sede) (Observador)

A Su Excelencia, Señor Michal Kurtyka, Ministro del Clima y del Ambiente de la República de Polonia, Presidente de la 42da Conferencia de la FAO.

Señor Presidente, el momento actual todavía marcado por la crisis sanitaria, económica y social provocada por el COVID-19, pone en evidencia que la labor que realiza la FAO en la búsqueda de respuestas adecuadas al problema de la inseguridad alimentaria y la desnutrición, que siguen siendo grandes desafíos de nuestro tiempo, adquiera un relieve particular. A pesar de los logros obtenidos en

las décadas anteriores, muchos de nuestros hermanos y hermanas aún no tienen acceso a la alimentación necesaria, ni en cantidad ni en calidad.

El año pasado, el número de personas que estaban expuestas al riesgo de inseguridad alimentaria aguda, y que tenían necesidad de apoyo inmediato para subsistir, alcanzó la cifra más alta del último quinquenio. Esta situación podría agravarse en el futuro. Los conflictos, los fenómenos meteorológicos extremos, las crisis económicas, junto con la crisis sanitaria actual, constituyen una fuente de carestía y hambruna para millones de personas. Por eso, para afrontar esas crecientes vulnerabilidades es fundamental la adopción de políticas capaces de abordar las causas estructurales que las provocan.

Para ofrecer una solución a estas necesidades es importante, sobre todo, garantizar que los sistemas alimentarios sean resilientes, inclusivos, sostenibles y capaces de proporcionar dietas saludables y asequibles a todos. En esta perspectiva, es beneficioso el desarrollo de una economía circular, que garantice recursos para todos, también para las generaciones venideras, y que promueva el uso de energías renovables. El factor fundamental para recuperarse de la crisis que nos fustiga es una economía a medida del hombre, no sujeta solamente a las ganancias, sino anclada en el bien común, amiga de la ética y respetuosa del medio ambiente.

La reconstrucción de las economías pos pandémicas nos ofrece la oportunidad de revertir el rumbo seguido hasta ahora e invertir en un sistema alimentario global capaz de resistir a las crisis futuras. De esto hace parte la promoción de una agricultura sostenible y diversificada, que tenga presente el valioso papel de la agricultura familiar y el de las comunidades rurales. De hecho, es paradójico comprobar que la falta o escasez de alimentos la padecen precisamente quienes los producen. Tres cuartas partes de los pobres del mundo viven en las zonas rurales y para ganarse la vida dependen principalmente de la agricultura. Sin embargo, debido a la falta de acceso a los mercados, a la posesión de la tierra, a los recursos financieros, a las infraestructuras y a las tecnologías, estos hermanos y hermanas son los más expuestos a sufrir la inseguridad alimentaria. Aprecio y aliento, dice el Santo Padre, los esfuerzos de la comunidad internacional encaminados a que cada país pueda implementar los mecanismos necesarios para conseguir su autonomía alimentaria, sea a través de nuevos modelos de desarrollo y consumo, como de formas de organización comunitaria que preserven los ecosistemas locales y la biodiversidad. De gran provecho podría ser recurrir al potencial de la innovación para apoyar a los pequeños productores y ayudarlos a mejorar sus capacidades y su resiliencia. En este sentido, el trabajo que ustedes realizan, dice el Papa, tiene particular importancia en la actual época de crisis.

En la presente coyuntura, para poder lanzar el reinicio, el paso fundamental es la promoción de una cultura del cuidado, dispuesta a afrontar la tendencia individualista y agresiva del descarte, muy presente en nuestras sociedades. Mientras unos pocos siembran tensiones, enfrentamientos y falsedades, nosotros, en cambio, estamos invitados a construir con paciencia y decisión una cultura de la paz, que se encamine hacia iniciativas que abracen todos los aspectos de la vida humana y nos ayuden a rechazar el virus de la indiferencia.

Queridos amigos, el simple trazado de programas no basta para impulsar la acción de la comunidad internacional; se necesitan sobre todo gestos tangibles que tengan como punto de referencia la común pertenencia a la familia humana y el fomento de la fraternidad. Gestos que faciliten la creación de una sociedad promotora de educación, diálogo y equidad.

La responsabilidad individual suscita la responsabilidad colectiva, que aliente a la familia de las naciones a asumir compromisos concretos y efectivos. Es pertinente que «no solo pensemos en nuestros intereses, en intereses particulares. Aprovechemos esta prueba como una oportunidad para preparar el mañana de todos, de todos sin descartar a ninguno. Porque sin una visión de conjunto nadie tendrá futuro».

Con un cordial saludo tanto para Usted, señor Presidente de la Conferencia, como para el Señor Director General de la FAO, a para los Representantes de las distintas Naciones y Organizaciones Internacionales, y también para todos los participantes en esta Conferencia, deseo expresarles, dice el Papa, mi gratitud por sus esfuerzos. La Santa Sede y la Iglesia Católica, con sus estructuras e

instituciones, apoyan los trabajos de esta Conferencia y los acompañan a ustedes en su dedicación en favor de un mundo más justo, al servicio de nuestros hermanos y hermanas indefensos y necesitados.

Fraternalmente, Fraternalmente, Francisco Papa, Vaticano 14 de junio de 2021.

Item 2. Appointment of the General Committee and Credentials Committee

Point 2. Constitution du Bureau et de la Commission de vérification des pouvoirs

Tema 2. Nombramiento del Comité General y del Comité de Credenciales

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much for this address, thank you Monsignor Arellano.

We now proceed to Item 2 of the Provisional Agenda, *Appointment of the General Committee and the Credentials Committee*. I will now read the nominations for the seven Member Nations proposed for election to the General Committee as submitted by the 166th Session of the FAO Council held in April this year.

The nominations are as follows:

- Australia
- China
- Guatemala
- Islamic Republic of Iran
- San Marino
- South Africa
- United States of America

Are there any objections?

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

I will now read the nine nominations for the Credentials Committee proposed by the 166th Session of the FAO Council held in April this year:

- Bangladesh
- Canada
- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Kuwait
- Malaysia
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- San Marino
- Venezuela

Does the Conference wish to endorse these nominations?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Chairperson, forgive me, there is a request for the floor from the United States of America.

CHAIRPERSON

Of course, thank you very much, I did not see it. United States, you have the floor, please.

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

I requested the floor because the United States would like to register our objection to the participation in this Committee by Venezuela. I request that our objection be noted in the Report.

The Venezuela delegation participating in this Conference represents the illegitimate Maduro regime. It is not speaking on behalf of the Venezuelan people.

The United States continues to recognize the legal authority of the democratically elected 2015 National Assembly and the person chosen by this Assembly to be its President as the constitutional Interim President of Venezuela, Juan Guaidó.

Maduro is a dictator and his regime of oppression, corruption and mismanagement have left 7 million people in Venezuela in need of humanitarian aid and created one of the world's worst economic, humanitarian and migration crises outside of a war in modern history.

We and others around the world share a moral obligation to support the Venezuelan people. We look forward to collaborating in the future with a delegation that represents the legitimately elected Government of Venezuela.

Ms Alexandra BUGAILISKIS (Canada)

I would like to add our voice along with the United States to say that we do not recognize the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela or its representative as speaking on behalf of the Venezuelan people. We recognize Interim President Juan Guaidó as the legitimate President of Venezuela in accordance with the Venezuelan Constitution.

Mr Victor VASILIEV (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

Distinguished colleagues, the Russian delegation has noted the statement of the respected delegates of the United States of America and Canada and in turn we would like to ask the delegations not to politicize the work of the FAO Conference.

The Government of Venezuela was chosen on the legal basis by the people of Venezuela. We think it is not justified for any government to impose on another government regarding what government should be in place in any given country.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Russian Federation, for your important remarks. Now let me turn to Lebanon. Lebanon, you have the floor.

Son Excellence Abbas MORTADA (Liban) (Langue originale arabe)

Le Liban, en tant que participant à la Conférence, s'oppose à la nomination du vice-président de la Conférence qui vient d'Israël.

CHAIRPERSON

If I understand correctly, you referred to a point which was already in the previous Item and you finished your intervention.

I can go to Venezuela.

Sr. Porfirio PESTANA DE BARROS (Venezuela, República Bolivariana de)

Deseamos manifestar en primer lugar, nuestro agradecimiento al delegado, el excelentísimo embajador de Rusia por sus palabras. Efectivamente no debemos politizar esto y estamos de acuerdo en que solicitamos, en ese sentido, que no quede por escrito las solicitudes de Estados Unidos y de Canadá, en ese sentido. Somos un gobierno legítimamente electo y en ese sentido queremos que sea reconocido.

CHAIRPERSON

I understand that these points were noted and we can move forward with our Conference.

Let me close on Item 2. Regarding the endorsement of nine nominations, it is so decided and the comments are recorded by all parties who requested the floor.

Now, let me move to the statement of the Director-General. I am very honoured to invite Dr Qu Dongyu, Director-General of FAO, to deliver his statement to the 42nd session of the Conference of FAO.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

His Excellency Sergio Mattarella, President of the Republic of Italy, Honourable Chair of the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference, Distinguished Independent Chair of the Council, Mr Khalid Mehboob, Honourable Ministers and Heads of Delegations, Ladies and Gentlemen, I welcome you to the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference.

I highly appreciate all the support and solidarity from the Holy Pope Francis during the past 2 years.

This first virtual Session of the Conference in history starts with a record-breaking 1332 participants from around world. The Conference is honoured by the presence of 119 Ministers and Vice Ministers.

Honourable Guests,

We are at a critical moment in time. We see a convergence of factors that if ignored, threaten to prevent us from ending global hunger and malnutrition in all its forms. The number of hungry people in the world increased by 10 million in 2019. The pandemic continues to deliver a severe blow with another 132 million of chronically hungry people in the world by the end of 2020. The map shows the significant impact in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

In addition, 155 million people in 55 countries manifested crisis-level acute food insecurity. This map displays the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) and Cadre Harmonisé (CH) Acute Food Insecurity classifications across the world. Countries in IPC 3 or above, labelled in orange, are in crises that could end in IPC 4 or above if actions are not taken immediately. This is the case for countries in conflict, or those that suffered substantial climate shocks.

When looking into other forms of malnutrition, child stunting remains unacceptably high. Overweight and obesity continue to increase in rich and poor countries alike. The number of people living with obesity exceeded that of people in hunger in 2012 and more than 3 billion people in the world cannot afford even the cheapest healthy diets.

Understanding our present allows us to determine the future we want to reach.

We know where we need to be by 2030: Undernourishment has to be reduced everywhere to a maximum of 5 percent; healthy diets have to be affordable for all! Overweight has to be reduced everywhere to levels of 15 percent, similar to what it was in the 1980s. Obesity needs to be reduced to no more than 5 percent in any country. Children Stunting needs to decrease significantly. Inequalities need to be reduced substantially for a sustainable reduction of rural poverty.

We need to achieve land degradation neutrality, increase the efficiency of water use in agriculture, and reach the Paris Agreement targets.

Distinguished Participants,

The agri-food system covers the journey of food from farm to table. This includes growing, harvesting and processing it, distributing, trading and consuming it. It also encompasses non-food products. These also constitute livelihoods and all of the people as well as the activities, investments and choices that play a part in getting us these foods and agricultural products.

To get to where we need to be by 2030, we must perceive the challenges facing us through an agri-food systems lens and act holistically.

Our agri-food systems are not delivering the food security and nutrition outcomes we want to achieve; poverty and inequality are endemic in them. They are the largest economic system, measured in terms of employment, livelihoods and planetary impact.

Worldwide 1 billion people are employed in the agri-food system. Another 3.5 billion people earn their livelihoods from the extended systems.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The global food security is facing multiple challenges.

The number of hungry people has been rising since 2014 and the pandemic is aggravating this situation. Conflict, climate extremes; economic downturns; all these undermine efforts to end hunger, food insecurity and inequalities.

The growing world population increases the pressure on our natural resources and we need to ensure access by all people not only to basic food, but to nutritious foods.

All of the above has to be faced under immense challenges: more than 30 percent of total global land is degraded, more than 20 percent of the world's aquifers are overexploited, and our agrobiodiversity is under threat.

There are circular, interconnected impacts across agri-food systems and other systems, including environmental and health systems. This includes more virulent outbreaks of plant and animals' pests and diseases. COVID-19 and other diseases are rooted in environmental change.

Our agri-food systems are not only victims in this interconnected loop, but they are closely involved in the degradation of natural resources and health, including pandemics and other diseases.

FAO's comprehensive assessment of the world's forests last year shows that forests cover an area of just over 4 billion hectares or around 31 percent of the total global land area.

It also tells us that the proportion of land covered by forests – one of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators – is decreasing. In the last 30 years, the world had a net loss of 178 million hectares of forest.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

More than a year into the pandemic, we are witnessing the scale of its long-term effects on the agri-food systems, and how it has worsened the food security and nutrition situation around the world and specially in food crises countries.

The pandemic and related containment measures have: intensified pre-existing drivers of fragility as shown in the slide for food crises countries; widened inequalities; exposed structural vulnerabilities of local and global agri-food systems; hit the most vulnerable groups particularly hard.

Hunger has increased in rural areas and in cities - not only in the poorest nations but also in upper middle-income countries, and even in developed nations. Across all developing regions, incomes of rural households have been negatively affected, due to reductions in farm and off-farm sources of income.

Despite all this, global food production held up well throughout the pandemic. At the aggregate level, food production continues to rise in line with past trends.

For 2021, aggregate food production is even expected to rise above former rates.

The slide shows how resilient the agri-food systems are, despite the pandemic and its containment measures affecting agricultural trade worldwide. Trade, specifically imports, in food and agricultural products have held up remarkably well so far. Measured in 2015 US Dollars, agricultural trade continued to expand at a pace slightly above the longer-term trend. The faster expansion of values vs quantities implies rising prices for traded food products.

This is captured by the next slide, depicting the FAO food price index.

For many developing countries, this resulted in record levels of food import bills. Despite the resilience of the agri-food systems, the FAO Food Price Index averaged 127.1 points in May 2021. That is 40 percent higher than at the same period last year.

Rising for 12 months in a row, the Index is now only 7.8 percent below its peak value of 137.6 points registered in February 2011. The surge of last month reflected the recovery from the pandemic.

This brought an increase in demand for oils, sugar and cereals along with firmer prices of meat and dairy products.

In very general terms, over the past year tighter supplies amidst strong international demand pushed up prices of most food commodities.

At the same time, this reflects some vulnerabilities: any climate shock that reduces global production and any increase in demand by big importing countries would put pressure on prices. Trade restrictions could also impact prices. Shrinking global reserves reduce the buffering capacity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

From day one as your Director-General, I worked entirely to forge world-class internal governance and organizational culture. Indeed, in the past 22 months, FAO underwent the deepest transformative action since its creation.

We established a modular and flexible structure that allows for optimal cross-sectoral collaboration. This answers our Members' priorities and responds best to emerging needs. Our Offices now play a vital cross-cutting function and our Divisions house FAO's expertise and provide support.

The aim is a stronger and coordinated focus of FAO on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The new Office for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Land-Locked Developing Countries (LLDCs) ensures that the special needs of these vulnerable populations and countries are met.

The Office of Sustainable Development Goals coordinates the corporate engagement in the 2030 Agenda follow-up and review.

The Office of Emergencies and Resilience (OER) provides support for threats, emergencies and resilience aspect.

The Office of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment (OCB) supports Members response to the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation.

I established the first ever post of Chief Economist at FAO, pushing among other priorities Big Data, Geospatial analysis and digital innovation.

FAO's first-ever Chief Scientist is ensuring the robustness, breadth and independence of scientific approaches in our work.

The new Office for Innovation consolidates and strengthens FAO's innovative spirit.

We strengthened existing offices and teams. Combining Partnerships and UN collaboration into one Division, establishing new Divisions for Project Support, for Logistics Services, and for Food Systems and Food Safety.

We created new posts, like the stand-alone Ethics Officer and the Ombudsman.

We put special focus on our Centres and their strong collaborative function: we strengthened the FAO Investment Centre, the Joint FAO/WHO Centre. We strengthened our cooperation with the IAEA and established Joint FAO/IAEA Centre.

Our reform went even further, by modernizing our methods of work and improving transparency. Like revamping our web presence, where all my meetings, interactions and speeches are publicly available.

I established the Core Leadership Team, comprised of the three Deputy Directors-General, Chief Scientist, Chief Economist, and the Director of Cabinet.

This dynamic team supports me in all areas of the Organization's mandate and exemplifies the new collaborative approach of FAO.

No more small kingdoms – we broke down the silos!

We empowered the various levels of management.

Another innovative first, the dual reporting system, ensures transparency and teamwork! There is a primary role (“A”) and a secondary role (“B”) within the reporting line, with the “B” role playing a complementary function and with mutual regular support and update.

We focused on creating a healthy and productive work environment.

Another first in FAO’s history was establishing the Women and Youth Committees. They drive career enrichment and engagement within FAO and are a platform for Members’ engagement. They also played a very positive role in creating a sense of togetherness and belonging in the past year. Especially during the pandemic and difficult times.

We built a big family here. This is the new FAO that is welcoming you today!

An Organization setting three dimension-transparency and teamwork! A new FAO with a flat, accountable and cohesive structure that becomes more efficient and effective by reducing exchange costs and minimizing bureaucracy. An agile, inclusive and innovative Organization that is focused on better serving its Members. An FAO that expands its collaboration with partners across the world.

With globally recognized knowledge and expertise, and by being at the forefront of providing support and making a difference. This is the new FAO – strongly rooted in 75 years of history, guided by the Basic Texts and focused on its original mandate.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Analysing the changes and developments around us begs the question: How can FAO become even more ‘Fit for Purpose’? I believe that has to be a dynamic Organization, which supports its Members in the transformational changes needed to achieve the SDGs.

An FAO that opens the door to the fascinating world of digital food and agriculture. Because, the future of agriculture needs to be built on science, innovations and digital applications. Innovations in technologies, policies, business models and mind-sets will be by people and for people.

Digital applications can produce significant gains in terms of increased efficiency, facilitate the good functioning of supply chains and enhance sustainability.

FAO needs to lead global efforts to make this future of agri-food systems a reality. In the last 22 months we have established a digital FAO that connects all employees and overcomes distances and time zones.

The Organization has shown an extraordinary capacity to move to the new working modalities during difficult times.

The new web presence reflects the central role of our mandate and accessibility of platform to Members, farmers, consumers and partners.

We are continuing to spearhead the holistic concept of a digital organization within the UN family, being well ahead of the curve.

FAO needs to get our Members on board with our flagship Hand-in-Hand Initiative that is evidence-based and country-owned. The Initiative is gaining strength as a mechanism for bringing diverse actors together to help the least advantaged countries and people to: eradicate poverty, end hunger and malnutrition, and to reduce inequalities within and among nations.

In the 39 Members that have joined the Initiative so far, key support is provided to identify and channel funding to the areas where the biggest economic opportunities can be unlocked.

The Initiative’s Geospatial Platform with Big Data analysis and advanced geo-spatial modelling has over 38 000 users from nearly all FAO Members.

We launched the 1000 Digital Villages programme. The Programme focuses on digital technologies to improve production and agri-business management, and related market-oriented and social services of agricultural processes.

With “e-Agriculture”, to improve productivity using information and communication technologies (ICT) and relevant digital solutions.

With “Digital Farmer Services” to enhance farmers’ accessibility to social and economic services.

Digital Services for “Rural transformation” to enhance the delivery of public services in health, education, jobs, welfare, eco-tourism and agri-tourism.

This holistic approach brings all the digital elements needed to support agri-food systems transformation and the rural development needed to achieve the SDGs.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To respond to the global challenges and opportunities, and to continue building an Organization that is fit for purpose, we are proudly proposing: the Strategic Framework 2022-31, the Medium-Term Plan 2022-25, and the Programme of Work and Budget 2022-23.

An unprecedented and impressive process has taken place to develop the Strategic Framework.

For nearly 18 months, we held extensive, inclusive and transparent consultations with Members, and other key partners, both formal and informal, we backed this with an intensive internal process drawing on the breadth and depth of FAO’s knowledge and expertise.

We launched a foresight exercise to delve further into the global challenges and opportunities.

A top-down and bottom-up approach ensured that the needs coming from Members and FAO's global mandates and normative strengths were well embedded to allow FAO to provide maximum support in transforming agri-food systems at country level.

All three documents build on and complement the organizational structure and management changes already put in place to make FAO a more modular, flexible and agile organization.

We have presented a concise and clear strategic narrative: Supporting the 2030 Agenda through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agri-food systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life (four betters), leaving no one behind.

All aspects of FAO’s focus for the next period that I have been talking about since my manifesto are contained in this narrative: the SDGs, efficiency, inclusiveness, resilience, sustainability; the overarching importance of agri-food systems, the four betters, and of course, the focus on leaving no one behind.

The three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental, are reflected in the four betters and in the agri-food systems approach.

Four cross-cutting “accelerators” of progress will be applied in all our programmatic interventions to maximize efforts and facilitate the management of trade-offs, according to national priorities. These accelerators are technology, innovation, data and complements (governance, human capital, and institutions).

The 20 Programme Priority Areas identified are inter-disciplinary, issue-based technical themes and represent FAO’s strategic contribution to specific SDG targets. They are framed around the four betters and embed themes where FAO has a comparative advantage, track record and ability to act in our major initiatives.

The Programme of Work and Budget 2022-23 translates the strategic narrative into the biennial programme of work.

It has been developed around three core principles: maintaining a flat nominal budget (namely USD 1 005.6 million); covering all increased costs without negatively impacting the technical work; and keeping the organizational structure currently in place.

Within the flat nominal budget, resources are reallocated to high priority areas including the new Programme Priority Areas, the Office of the Inspector-General, and multilingualism. You can see that for the first time I present the slides in all six FAO official languages.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

When everybody adds firewood, the flames of a bonfire rise high.

No Member or Organization can tackle the global challenges in food and agriculture alone.

The Strategic Framework highlights FAO's role as a facilitator and enabler of change. It encourages us to be more innovative, bold and open.

Our mission is to build transformative partnerships that address systemic change in a sustained manner.

The key is regional integration and multilateral cooperation with FAO Members being the drivers of change.

FAO already plays a major facilitating role, but we aim to do more through our various initiatives and the reinvigorated South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

Multilateralism is the way to address global challenges, including the prevention of future pandemics.

FAO is active in scaling-up joint UN activities on the ground, formulating the collective UN assistance and aligning it with national priorities.

I highly appreciate all host countries of our offices around the world, who have kept our employees safe during the pandemic and here, I especially thank Italy for providing vaccination within its national program to all UN colleagues and their dependents who were interested.

FAO's engagement with the private sector is vital to strengthening and accelerating support to its Members. We have launched the digital FAO CONNECT Portal, a 'one-stop shop' for private sector engagement aimed at agri-food systems transformation.

We are establishing productive and result-oriented partnerships with indigenous peoples, civil society organizations and parliamentarians; producer organizations and cooperatives; and academia and research institutions.

We are energized to scale-up existing cooperation in support of our mission under the new Strategic Framework.

Honourable Ministers, Delegates,

Strengthening the impact of FAO's work at country level has been a focus of mine since day one.

For the first time we started a comprehensive review of the Country Offices' business model. To rethink and change the way we work to achieve greater impact. By introducing digital administrative processes, improved human resources management and strengthened employee engagement, the Country Office Transformation aims to achieve more empowerment and streamlined processes.

Across the globe, we see a democratization of FAO's workspace with greater internal communication, teamwork and participation.

We are fostering collaboration and 'breaking down the silos' between regional, sub-regional and national offices and teams.

We are creating multidisciplinary technical groups to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of technical assistance and coordination with Members.

We strengthened the internal control framework for field activities to the highest standards of accountability and transparency.

We want our Representatives to stand shoulder to shoulder with the farmers and policy makers, to be the trusted partner of national authorities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since March of 2020 the situation has been unlike any other in living memory. The pandemic is a powerful wake-up call on the fragility and short-comings of our agri-food systems. It is also an opportunity to re-evaluate how we address the root causes of poverty, hunger and inequalities.

A chance to build resilience against threats and to start-anew and more importantly, the pandemic reminded us of the fundamental importance of solidarity!

We have seen the value and potential of multilateral cooperation, the courage and resilience of food heroes around the world.

I am proud that FAO was at the forefront of this battle to rise to the biggest challenge of our lives. We reinvented the way we work, communicate and deliver. We adapted our approaches, strengthened our partnerships and sharpened our focus. We put the people and their needs at the centre of our work. We designed and provided game-changing solutions by combination of cutting-edge technology with the expertise and determination of our teams around the world.

All these were done thanks to our loyal employees, my senior teams and your trust with solid supports, and we need your consistent commitment!

Together – and only together, we can turn the tide and achieve a sustainable and equitable future with zero Hunger for all.

In my manifesto, I wrote that we are what we think and that the innovative thinking will lead us to a different journey.

Just over 75 years ago, the thinking of our founding Members started the path to eradicate poverty and nourish the world through the power of food and agriculture.

I cherish this history that teaches us: of the idea that was born at the Allied Food and Agriculture Conference 1943, in Hot Springs, Virginia, USA. Of the Organization that was established in 1945, in Quebec City, Canada by 42 nations. Of FAO finding its first home in Washington, DC, before moving to Rome just 70 years ago. Of all the outstanding pioneer work done by FAO over the last decades.

With both pride and humility, I am carrying forward this noble mission,

We are ready to continue the hard work with you, fully aware that history is made by, recorded by, and evaluated by the people.

I invite you, dear Brothers and Sisters, to walk with us on a path that will lead to a dynamic FAO for a better world - through better production, better nutrition and a better environment, so that all humankind can have a better life.

Thank you!

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Director-General, Dr Qu Dongyu, a pleasure to listen to your statement.

Now, I have the honour to welcome Mr Khalid Mehboob, Independent Chairperson of the Council, and to invite him to address the Conference.

INDEPENDENT CHAIRPERSON OF THE COUNCIL

Good morning, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I should like to begin by offering my congratulations to the Honourable Michal Kurtyka upon his election as Chairperson of the 42nd Session of the Conference. I wish Mr Kurtyka well, as he guides us through this intense week of deliberations.

I wish to acknowledge the statement made by the Director-General, which Members will bear in mind during the deliberations that will take place in the Plenary Sessions and the Commissions. I am sure everyone appreciated the forward looking and constructive approach, which characterizes not only Dr Qu Dongyu's address to the Conference, but also his leadership of the Organization.

Chairperson, it is my honour to make a statement at this historic 42nd Session of the Conference, the first ever digital Conference of FAO.

The virtual mode of this Conference forced upon us due to the COVID-19 pandemic is both a compromise and also an opportunity for innovation and modernisation, which the FAO Director-General and FAO Members have taken on board effectively.

I am pleased in this regard to note that many of the special arrangements for the virtual modality of this Conference have been developed, tried and tested successfully in the three Sessions of the Council which I chaired since last year.

I am confident that, just like the Council, the Conference will benefit from greater participation and inclusivity in this digital version, and address seamlessly the important substantial issues before it, including the Strategic Framework for the Organization for the next ten years concomitant with the UN Agenda 2030, as well as the Programme of Work and Budget for the 2022-23 biennium.

I wish, therefore, all the best to the Members for success in their deliberations this week, as well as to the Director-General in his first Conference since his election at the 2019 Session. He has been very busy since then, introducing milestone reform and modernisation at FAO, and setting out a new strategic vision for the Organization framed around the *four betters* – and all of that, while dealing with the challenges of a global pandemic!

Under his leadership, the Organization is thinking ahead. With its *four betters* and Strategic Framework, it defines and shapes its priorities to produce results that can lead it forward. Those priorities are crucial in defining FAO's areas of work for they enable it to decide where emphasis should be placed and where de-emphasis can be achieved. Its work and the Strategic Framework is already aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. The Organization is primed to provide goods and services to all its Members.

This new era will be shaped according to your vision and that of the Members. Change is a good thing. When one door closes, another one opens, perhaps one that was not seen before.

Revitalization is life itself, and is part and parcel of progress. A constant of that process is to strive to be better, and to do better. This Organization is no exception. In fact, over the years it has undergone significant change and renewal, and I am pleased to see that the Director-General is giving importance to change and renewal so that FAO can continue to find best practices, streamline its procedures and continue strengthening its business processes and internal control systems because they not only impact accountability, oversight and governance, they also ensure value for money in the prioritization of its activities.

This new renaissance of FAO is further driven by the Director-General's vision of the four betters, which frame its strategic direction, and place the transformation of agri-food systems at the centre of the Organization's work. It is promulgated by inventive approaches such as the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and Digital Food and Agriculture, which in turn are galvanized by a relentless drive for innovation and digitalisation.

Chairperson, this week, Members will also elect a new Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) and I wish all the best to each of the three candidates.

As you know, this Session of the Conference marks the end of my term of office as ICC after four years.

For me, this 42nd Session of the Conference also represents, in a way, the culmination of a lifetime at FAO, which I have had the privilege to serve over the past 52 years. In this regard, I should like to share some reflections with you.

Fifty-two years is a lifetime. A lifetime of experience, a lifetime of honour and a lifetime of a privilege, working for this Organization.

I have seen many different situations, met many different people, and as you can imagine, over 52 years, been in many different roles.

Chairperson, I still feel the same honour and privilege that I felt from the very moment I stepped into this building way back in 1969 as a young P1 professional officer. I have spent a lifetime in this Organization, literally. And although I have changed over the years, I can honestly say that my passion for its noble mandate has not. When I joined FAO, it was relatively new, only 25 years old, and only slightly younger than me! So, we have in a sense, grown up together.

Over the past 52 years, I have seen a lot of change at FAO. Quite naturally, a Director-General taking up his functions will seek to remodel FAO through his proposals to the Members. But it is also a fact that proposals for renewal and change can result in controversy and at times acrimonious debate in the Governing Bodies.

In this respect, let me relate to you a high profile and interesting example from FAO's past. A controversy developed in the earlier years of FAO's existence involving many heated debates and suggestions that FAO should restrict itself to performing "Normative Work". In fact, serious dissent developed because of this controversy. As a result, the first Director-General of FAO, Mr John Boyd Orr, seeing that action was being ruled out in favour of confining FAO to advisory functions and documentation, took the decision to resign, expressing his bitterness in a sentence which became famous. He said "The people ask for bread and we give them pamphlets".

Chairperson, this is just an example for information from history. It did not prevent FAO to grow to what it is today.

Whilst it is true, there is so much work to do, and so much more to be done, I would emphasize however, that we have come far from where we were.

FAO has risen to the occasion and continues to rise. I have seen FAO grow and flourish to what it is today, more relevant than ever on the world stage, needed more than ever by those we serve. There are still challenges for FAO to face. I am aware that FAO's efforts to deliver will continue to be impacted by changing conditions around the world, conflict and climate change play no small part in the fight against hunger and malnutrition. The same goes for the challenges of natural disasters, migration, and the spread of cross-boundary diseases.

Nonetheless, FAO stands ready. As food and agriculture take on an increasing important position globally, the world looks to FAO to find the way forward. FAO is unique, with the legitimacy and capacity to provide global public goods, from norms and standards to statistics, and with technical capacity across a broad set of themes relating to agriculture and natural resources.

FAO has been the catalyst of the green revolution, boosting agriculture production, which has transformed food security and nutrition for hundreds of millions worldwide. Thousands of technical cooperation projects have brought critical know-how at country level. Global public goods have been made available by means of data, statistics and the work of the Codex Alimentarius, Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS), International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources just to mention a few. Transboundary diseases have been addressed, and in some cases eradicated, such as River Blindness and Rinderpest.

Above all, FAO is and continues to be the global platform for dialogue and negotiation on all matters relating to food security, agriculture and nutrition.

FAO must continue to be, as it is today, a dynamic and living work in progress, based on fact and experience striving to achieve its most noble mandate.

Renewal has to be a dynamic and living plan, which also evolves on the basis of experience. FAO is needed now more than ever before. It must continue to be a dynamic and living work in progress, based on fact and experience, and strive to achieve its most noble mandate.

Overall, I have no doubt FAO is a better place today than it was 52 years ago. Its workforce is more diverse and inclusive; there is greater openness and transparency. Dialogue and exchange is more candid: among staff, between staff and managers, between the Secretariat and Members, and among Members themselves. Over this period I have worked with four Directors-General and one former Director-General in different ways but always with the same spirit—with loyalty and passion. Loyalty to the Organization and its mandate. Passion for its cause.

You, Director-General are the sixth one and are easily the most dynamic and energetic FAO leader I have witnessed. It goes without saying that your predecessors each had their distinguishing qualities and achievements too.

In the end, it is all about the people. People with passion, people who are dedicated to serving the Organization and people who provide connection between these elements.

To paraphrase the great physicist Sir Isaac Newton, who said that if I have achieved anything over my lifetime, it is because I have done so by standing on the shoulders of giants. In my case, the giants are the people I have had the good fortune to meet and work with through my journey of service at FAO.

These include the Directors-General who have supported me, but also many colleagues at FAO. Fellow managers with whom I worked together. Staff who inspired me with their ability and commitment and colleagues who supported me with dedication.

I have also met and worked alongside with outstanding counterparts in the UN System to address matters in the areas of Human Resources, Finance and Social Services.

Last but not least, Representatives of Members whom I supported as an FAO staff member. Later when I joined them as part of the Governance process. We have always worked together in a respectful spirit of collaboration and courtesy.

When I joined FAO in 1969, it had 116 Members and was mostly a Rome-based Organization. Today it has 194 Members and has a network of 130 decentralized offices across the world, with over 11 000 employees worldwide.

FAO was a very different place in those days. There were no gates or fences around the headquarters buildings, and there was no air-conditioning inside; if the temperature reached 35 degrees at 15:00 hours in the afternoon, staff could go home; you could smoke freely in offices and meeting rooms, and people did.

There were no computers because the rule was if you wanted a computer you had to surrender a secretarial post. Hence, no one wanted a computer. That was the rule put in place and enforced by Ms Beth Crawford's predecessor in the early 70s. I hasten to add, however Mr Chairperson, that Beth had no role in the formulation of that unpopular policy because she was only 8 years old at the time.

As FAO progressed, I progressed. I eventually became Assistant Director-General (ADG) with oversight on a great many functions. This gave me greater perspective, greater insight into the work that FAO does.

Chairperson, it is an emotional moment for me. As I step down from this role, with many a memory and many a thought, I hold my heart and head high, with the knowledge that if I have accomplished anything in these past 52 years, it is thanks to you, to you who represent your countries, to you behind the scenes, to you on the scenes and to you at the forefront of what we all hold most foremost, a world without hunger.

Thank you Chairperson, I wish you all the best in your deliberations.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Mr Khalid Mehboob. Allow me to convey to you our very best wishes for your future endeavours now that your term of office is drawing to a close and you addressed us with such an emotional and right exposé.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the McDougall Lecture to take place under Item 28.1 on our Provisional Agenda shall be held this afternoon at 18:00 hours.

At this 42nd Session of the Conference, the McDougall Memorial Lecture will include a high-level discussion, following the delivery of a keynote statement by Mr Bill Gates, Co-Chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, entitled "Combating climate change and hunger through innovation". The discussion will be moderated by the Chief Economist, Mr Máximo Torero Cullen, with the participation of the Director-General and a number of Ministers and Senior government officials. Further information can be found in the daily Journal of the Conference.

May I remind the seven members of the General Committee elected earlier this morning, and the three Vice-Chairpersons, to join the First Meeting of the General Committee on the dedicated Zoom link, which will be starting in 15 minutes from now.

Further, I wish to remind the nine members of the Credentials Committee to join the meeting via the dedicated link for the meeting, which will take place at 13:30 hours.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, this brings us to the end of our work for this morning.

The Second meeting of the Conference will reconvene at 14:30 hours this afternoon.

With this, I declare our First Plenary Meeting closed and I thank you very much for following it.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Mi estimado Presidente, lo saludo, lo felicito y saludo al señor Director General, pero mi pedido de palabra lo quiero hacer en mi carácter de Presidente del G77+China, para poder saludar a mi querido Presidente, Khalid Mehboob, que tengo el honor de poder decir que soy su amigo, que he aprendido de él desde el primer día, que nos ha dejado un legado moral, político, muy importante y muy alto. Es imposible imaginar el futuro sin tomar en consideración su experiencia, su trabajo, su legado y su generosidad.

Quisiera pedirle al Presidente Mehboob que siempre esté al lado nuestro para guiarnos, para ayudarnos y para apoyarnos en las gestiones y en los desafíos que vamos a tener en el futuro. Gracias, querido Presidente Mehboob. Gracias, querido amigo, es una enorme emoción para mí compartir esta última sesión contigo. Un abrazo enorme, con todo el corazón mío, de mi país y de todo el G77+China.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much for those excellent words and let me right now turn to Mexico.

Mr Miguel Garcia WINDER (Mexico)

Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. Director-General, colleagues and friends.

Continúa en español

Solamente para expresar el agradecimiento y reconocimiento de México al Presidente del Consejo Independiente por su trabajo y reiterar a la Organización y al próximo Presidente, quien resulte electo, nuestro compromiso de trabajar en beneficio de la Organización y de la agricultura.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much for these important statements.

With this, again, if I do not see anybody taking the floor, let me declare our first plenary meeting closed. Thank you very much.

The meeting rose at 11:07 hours

La séance est levée à 11 h 07

Se levanta la sesión a las 11.07

CONFERENCE CONFERENCE CONFERENCIA

<p>Forty-second Session Quarante et deuxième session 42.º período de sesiones</p>
<p>Virtual Meeting, 14-18 June 2021 Réunion Virtuelle, 14-18 juin 2021 Reunión Virtual, 14-18 de junio de 2021</p>
<p>SECOND PLENARY MEETING DEUXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEGUNDA SESIÓN PLENARIA</p>
<p>14 June 2021</p>

The Second Meeting was opened at 17:07 hours
Mr Michal Kurtyka,
Chairperson of the Conference, presiding

La deuxième séance est ouverte à 17 h 07
sous la présidence de M. Mr Michal Kurtyka,
Président de la Conférence

Se abre la segunda reunión a las 17.07
bajo la presidencia de la Sr. Mr Michal Kurtyka,
Presidente de la Conferencia

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las correcciones a: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

First Report of the Credentials Committee
Premier rapport de la Commission de vérification des pouvoirs
Primer informe del Comité de Credenciales

CHAIRPERSON

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I call the second plenary meeting of the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference to order. I shall now give a short statement regarding the participation of the European Union.

The European Union is participating in the meeting in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of Article II of the FAO Constitution. I wish to draw the attention of the meeting to the declaration made by the European Union and its Member States, which is contained in document *C 2021/INF/2*.

Before moving on the next Item on the Agenda, we need to adopt the First Report of the Credentials Committee. I give the floor to Ambassador Daniela Rotondaro of San Marino, Chairperson of the Credentials Committee, who will present the Report.

Ms Daniela ROTONDARO (Chairperson of the Credentials Committee)

I would like to inform Members that the Credentials Committee held two meetings on 9 and 14 June 2021. The Committee took note of the exceptional circumstances and associated limitations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and recalled the decision adopted by the 166th Session of the Council to hold the Conference in virtual modality. The Report of the Credentials Committee provides general information on the rules and practices of the work of the Committee and on the fact that on this matter FAO follows Rule III of the General Rules of the Organization as well as the practices and criteria as endorsed by the Governing Bodies of FAO.

As of 14 June 2021, 167 Member States and one Member Organization have submitted credentials or information on the composition of their delegations. The Committee recommended to the Conference that the credentials of the delegations, as contained in document *C 2021/LIM/15*, be accepted and recommended that all delegations be authorized to participate in the Session. I would also invite Members to communicate directly to the Secretariat through the protocol unit any additional information on their credentials as well as any correction on the list. Revised report and updated lists will be issued later in the Session.

I also would like to inform the Members that the Committee will hold its third Session on Wednesday 16 June to review the credentials that will be submitted from today to Wednesday. The First Report of the Credentials Committee is available as document *C 2021/LIM/15* and I would invite the Conference to approve my oral report.

CHAIRPERSON

Are there any comments on the Report?

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

With regard to this Report, the United States would like to refer to our statement during Agenda Item 2 of this Conference and disassociate from the adoption of this Committee's Report solely with respect to the acceptance of the credentials submitted by the Maduro regime on behalf of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

CHAIRPERSON

Are there any other comments on the Report? I do not see. So, if there are none, I declare the Report adopted.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

Thank you very much, Ambassador, and my thanks go to the Chairperson and members of the Credentials Committee for the work carried out. We will now turn to the next items.

Sr. Federico Zamora CORDERO (Costa Rica)

Muy brevemente nada más acogiendo el sentir de muchos miembros y siguiendo la histórica praxis que se remonta en mucho tiempo atrás, Costa Rica pide que el mensaje del Papa Francisco a la 42^o Sesión de la Conferencia de la FAO, pase a formar parte de la documentación de la misma, quedando registrado el texto y numerado pertinentemente en las actas de estas Sesiones de Trabajo.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much. We take note and I leave it to the discretion of Secretariat to do it. Thank you very much for this statement and proposition.

Item 3. Adoption of the Agenda and Arrangements for the Session

Point 3. Adoption de l'ordre du jour et organisation de la session

Tema 3. Aprobación del programa y de las disposiciones para el período de sesiones

Item 4. Admission of Observers

Point 4. Admission d'observateurs

Tema 4. Admisión de observadores

First Report of the General Committee

Premier rapport du Bureau

Primer informe del Comité General

CHAIRPERSON

The First Report of the General Committee set out in document *C 2021/LIM/16/for adoption*, which was published on the Conference website a little while ago, as well as being circulated by the Members' Gateway and the Conference mobile application.

I will now proceed to go through the Report section by section and will read the title of the first section.

Section A, Agenda for the Session.

The General Committee examined the proposal by the Republic of Korea to add to the Agenda an item on the preparations for the 15th World Forestry Congress and agree to insert a Sub-Item under Item 11.4, *Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry*.

In addition, no applications for Membership in the Organization had been received. Item 5, *Applications for Membership in the Organization*, is removed from the Agenda. If there are no comments, I declare this section and the Agenda adopted as amended.

We now proceed to the following section, Section B, Special Procedures and Arrangements for the Session. Under Section B the Conference is invited to approve the draft resolution as submitted in the First Report of the General Committee on the Special Arrangements and Voting options for the 42nd Session. If there are no comments, I declare this section and the draft resolution adopted.

Let me now turn to the following section, Section C, Establishment of Commissions and Tentative Timetable of the Session. If there are no comments, I declare this section adopted and so we move on to the next section.

Section D, Appointment of the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Two Commissions. The General Committee recommends that the Conference endorse the nomination of Ms Eudora Hilda Quartey Koranteng of Ghana as Chairperson of Commission I and Mr Benito Santiago Jiménez Sauma of Mexico as Chairperson of Commission II. If there are no comments, I declare this section adopted and so we move on to the next section.

Section E, Appointment of the Independent Chairperson of the Council. If there are no comments, I declare this section adopted and so we move on to the next section.

Section F, Election of Members of the Council. If there are no comments, I declare this section adopted and so we move on to the next section.

Section G, Right to Vote.

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

I will be very brief. I just wanted to repeat a point in plenary that we made in the General Committee, and that is that in principle the United States opposes the granting of voting rights reinstatements to countries in arrears, a position we have maintained across other UN agencies. Membership carries with it obligations and payment is one of those obligations. We, as Members, need consistency in our approach to rules across the UN system and FAO's operations rely on timely payments by Members.

CHAIRPERSON

This point being taken, we can move forward. If there are no comments, I declare Section G adopted and so we move on to the next section.

Section H, Right of Reply. If there are no comments, I declare this section adopted and so we move on to the next section.

Section I, Verbatim Records. If there are no comments, I declare this section adopted and so we move on to the next section.

Section J, Statements by Heads of Delegations. If there are no comments, I declare this section adopted and so we move on to the next section.

Section K, Admission of Observers from Intergovernmental and International Non-Governmental Organizations. If there are no comments, I declare this section adopted and so we move on to the next section.

Section L, Attendance by Palestine. If there are no comments, I declare this section adopted and so we move on to the next section.

Section M, Conclusion. If there are no further comments on the Report, I take it that the Conference approves the Report in its entirety.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

The First Report of the General Committee is now adopted.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

Thank you, Germany, for the visible sign of applauding. And Timor and Somalia and others, thank you very much for this. We have to learn to applaud in the digital format as well, all together.

At this stage I would like, and I am very pleased, to delegate the Chairpersonship to my Vice-Chairperson, Minister Edward Centeno from Nicaragua. Minister Centeno, you have the floor, please.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Chairperson, if I may, Minister Edward Centeno will be available to chair the meeting in eight minutes' time, at 17:30 hours. With your permission, may I suggest the Plenary reconvene at 17:30 hours, when he is ready to take over the chairpersonship from you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Secretary-General. Let us come back to the meeting under the Chairpersonship of Minister Centeno in exactly seven minutes, at 17:30 hours.

Thank you very much and see you.

The meeting was suspended from 17:23 to 17:32 hours

La séance est suspendue de 17 h 23 à 17 h 32

Se suspende la sesión de las 17.23 a las 17.32

Item 9. Review of the State of Food and Agriculture**Point 9. Examen de la situation de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture****Tema 9. Examen del estado de la alimentación y la agricultura****VICEPRESIDENTE**

Vamos a continuar con la plenaria del 42º Período de Sesiones de la FAO y a continuación abordaremos el Tema 9 del programa, *Examen del Estado de la Alimentación y la Agricultura*. Para este tema disponemos de dos documentos de antecedentes, *C 2021/Rev.1*, *C 2021/12*.

En el segundo documento se establece el tema propuesto por el Consejo para el Debate General. A saber, la transformación de los Sistemas Alimentarios Agrícolas de la Estrategia a la Acción. Antes de dar la palabra al Señor Máximo Torero Cullen, quisiera rogar a los oradores que antes de pronunciar su declaración, tengan la amabilidad de enviar su texto al grupo de interpretación mediante la siguiente dirección de correo electrónico en aras de una interpretación correcta de sus declaraciones en los demás idiomas de la reunión.

El correo electrónico es el siguiente: Conference-Statements@fao.org.

Cedo ahora la palabra al Señor Torero Cullen, Economista Jefe de la FAO para presentar el tema.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist of FAO)

Even before COVID-19, 690 million people suffered from hunger, despite progress made in the last 75 years since FAO was created and despite enough amount of food that is produced to feed everyone in the world. Millions more are macronutrient deficient and the number of people who are overweight across all ages, classes and borders are growing at an alarming rate. The pandemic has exacerbated the situation even more.

Suffice it to say, one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century is to meet the world-growing food need while simultaneously reducing the environmental impact of agriculture. The agri-food systems covered a journey of food from the farm to table, including when it is grown, harvested, processed, packaged, transported, distributed, traded through, prepared, eaten and disposed of. It also encompasses non-food products and it also constitutes livelihoods and all of the people as well as their activities, investments and choices that play a part in getting us these food and agricultural products.

In the last ten years the growing frequency and intensity of conflict, climate variability and extremes and economic slowdowns and downturns has increased significantly. The increased occurrences of these major drivers has led to the rise in hunger and has undermined progress, introduced all forms of malnutrition, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. Economic downturns in 2020, including those resulting from COVID-19 containment measures, contributed to one of the largest increases in world hunger and nutrition in decades, affecting almost all low- and middle-income countries. When economic downturns occur along other drivers, particularly climate-related disasters, conflict or a combination of both, the largest increases in this level of undernourishment is in Africa followed by Asia.

Each of these major drivers is unique and while they are external to food systems, they interact to create multiple compounding impacts at many different points within our food systems to the detriment of food security and nutrition.

As mentioned earlier by the Director-General, agri-food systems are the major driver of climate change and the planet's unfolding environmental crises. Agriculture uses about 40 percent of the earth's land and emits the most greenhouse gases than all cars, trucks, trains and aeroplanes combined.

Right now, from fertilizers, polluter gateways and coastal ecosystems, agriculture also consumes 30 percent of the fresh water on earth and it causes approximately 80 percent of forest loss. The coronavirus pandemic is a wake-up call on the current need to transform agri-food systems. This is because COVID-19 and climate change are intermingled. COVID-19 and other diseases are rooted in environmental change. 60 percent of all infectious diseases are zoonotic and 75 percent of all emerging diseases are zoonotic.

By 2030 undernourishment must fall everywhere as much as 5 percent. This is the biggest challenge that we have. Healthy diets must be affordable for all. Overweight has to be cut everywhere to 15 percent or lower, similar to what it was in 1998. In every country obesity is to fall to no more than 5 percent and the stunting among children must be reduced significantly. The lost decade in rural poverty reduction is to be recovered in order to cut rural poverty. Inequalities must be addressed.

Finally, the world must meet the Paris Agreement target of limiting global warming to less than 2 percent. So, we have a huge challenge to cover. FAO has prioritized 20 Programme Priority Areas around the four betters for a new strategic narrative.

Better production means ensuring efficient sustainable consumption of production patterns to sustainable inclusive supply chains to boost food system resilience. Priority areas include to bring innovation, good transformation, one health, small-scale producers, equitable access to resources and digital agriculture.

Better nutrition means ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition priority areas, include healthy diets for all, nutrition for the most vulnerable, safe food for everyone, reduced food loss and waste and transparent markets and trade.

Better environment means protecting, restoring and promoting sustainable use of terrestrial and marine ecosystems, promoting good environments for farming systems and combating climate change through sustainable, inclusive and resilient agri-food systems. Priority areas include climate mitigating and adapting agri-food systems, bio-economies for sustainable food agriculture and biodiversity and ecosystem services for food and agriculture.

All of these contribute to a better life. It means promoting inclusive economic growth by eliminating hunger, improving the lives of vulnerable people and reducing inequalities and improving quality of life in rural and non-rural areas.

Priority areas include gender equality and rural women empowerment, inclusive road transformation, sustainable urban food systems, agriculture and food emergencies and resilient agri-food systems. It is scaling up investments and the Hand-in-Hand initiative, focus on ensuring that collective action towards these achievements can be scaled up to trigger transformational change in agri-food systems.

Crosscutting themes around gender, youth and inclusion will ensure that FAO does not lose sight of the vulnerable and marginalized groups in its work. FAO is deeply committed to leaving no one behind and contributing to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1, 2 and 3.

Finally, as previously mentioned, in order to maximize efforts to meeting the SDGs and accomplishing the organizational aspirations, the four betters, FAO will apply four cross-cutting, cross-sectional accelerators: technology, innovation, data and complements, which include governance, human capital and institutions in all of its programmatic interventions to speed up the progress and minimize trade-offs.

In order to maximize the efforts in meeting the SDGs and accomplish the organizational aspirations, FAO needs to apply these four accelerators because emerging technologies are already changing the food and agricultural sector, helping farmers to take full advantage of new technologies based on solid science.

FAO's special platform and big data lab exemplifies how data and food agricultural, socioeconomic and natural resources can come together to help strengthen evidence-based decision-making in the food and agricultural sector.

As technologies revolutionize, the risk of unequal access and exclusion loom, investments in human capital by building capacities as well as policy and regulations, minimizing such risks are required. It is central that the labour supply reforms respond to the new labour demand that will result from the new technologies and innovation to make the process more inclusive. Technologies have to be affordable in order to ensure that everyone has to access them. Other structural barriers, including lack of education and training, must be identified and addressed.

We have prioritized these 20 Programme Priorities, areas of work that are formed around the four pillars of our new strategic narrative and will progressively be elaborated. Three priority areas, as we mentioned before, will be central to the development. All of these contribute to the agri-food systems transformation that we are hoping to accomplish and, as I mentioned before, we have a significant challenge to be able to comply and that is what we are going to do and that is what we are proposing in this paper for discussion.

VICEPRESIDENTE

Quisiera recordar a los Delegados y Delegadas que la opción de hacer declaraciones digitales, ya sea como una declaración de solo texto o como una declaración en video pre-grabada en relación con el Tema 9, ha sido aprobado por la Conferencia con anterioridad esta mañana a través del Primer Informe del Comité General.

Éstas declaraciones presentadas con antelación, se publican en el sitio web del 42º Segundo Periodo de Sesiones de la Conferencia. Daré ahora la palabra a los Jefes de Delegación que solicitaron hacer uso de ella con antelación. Quisiera también decirles que habida cuenta del número de oradores y del limitado tiempo de que disponemos, quisiera hacer un llamamiento a que respeten por favor el límite de cinco minutos establecido por la Conferencia cuando hizo suyo el Primer Informe del Comité General anteriormente presentado esta mañana.

Recuerden que si se quedan sin tiempo, pueden enviar la versión completa de su intervención a la Secretaría, que la cargará en el sitio web de la Conferencia y la incluirá en el acta literal de este periodo de sesiones. Tengo el honor de invitar como primera oradora a la Excelentísima Señora Carola Schouten, Viceprimer Ministra y Ministra de Agricultura, Naturaleza y Calidad de los Alimentos del Reino de los Países Bajos.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Netherlands)

As flagged to the Secretariat, the Prime Minister was available earlier this afternoon but is not available this afternoon and she would like to make a statement tomorrow morning.

VICEPRESIDENTE

Daremos entonces la palabra a continuación a su Excelencia Tom Vilsack, Secretario de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos de América.

His Excellency Tom VILSACK (United States of America)

Honorable Chair Kurtyka, Director-General Qu, Distinguished Delegates, Excellencies, and Guests, it is an honour to join colleagues from all over the world in this first-ever virtual meeting of the FAO Conference.

These are extraordinary times. As some countries appear to be emerging from the worst of the pandemic with cautious optimism, while others are in the throes of catastrophic circumstances. It's clear that our work to help the world overcome and recover from the grave impact of this pandemic is far from over. We face unprecedented challenges, from extreme weather and climate shifts to ongoing conflicts and rising food insecurity that have only been exacerbated by the fallout from COVID-19. The most obvious and tragic example is the situation in Tigray, where the United States fears famine is already occurring, threatening the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians. That is why on June 8 the United States announced that we are contributing an additional USD 181 million in assistance as we engage with our partners to seek a durable political solution to this crisis. However, many more may be in famine conditions by September. A second failed harvesting season, which will very likely happen, would kill countless people. This avoidable humanitarian nightmare illustrates the need for our redoubled effort.

But with every great challenge comes opportunity. The road to recovery offers us a chance to build forward better, deepening resilience to future shocks and promoting sustainable livelihoods that leave no one behind and that protect our planet. The possibility of making real and lasting change to our agriculture and food systems gives me great hope for the future.

And so, our FAO Conference agenda is both urgent and critical as we map out FAO's next ten-year strategy through the Strategic Framework and the Program of Work and Budget. The work ahead includes: elevating the importance of climate change and how FAO can address it within its mandate; reaffirming FAO's mandate to support international standard setting and safety; strengthening FAO's preparation and response to food and agricultural threats and emergencies; embracing a more agile approach to innovation, through cutting edge technologies, science-based applications for farmers, creative partnerships, and even the organization's business model; building a way forward to improve animal health and prevent zoonotic spillover; and allocating the appropriate resources to achieving our results.

This is a bold agenda that calls for coordinated effort and our collective and renewed commitment to multilateralism, anchored in the core values and principles of the United Nations and international rules-based order.

I urge all of us to ground our work this week in the wider context of our shared goals: ending hunger and improving food security. Just after this Conference, we look forward to the G20 Summit convened by our Italian hosts, as well as the Food Systems Summit and pre-Summit, COP 26, and the Nutrition for Growth Summit. The United States will show leadership at each of these events through concrete commitments in partnership with other stakeholders. We will use our commitments to address the global hunger crisis and advance social, economic, and environmental sustainability throughout the world.

But to make true progress, it is imperative that we use this strategy-building session to reaffirm support for science-based and data-driven decision-making and promoting innovations of every type -- including new scientific methods, cutting-edge technologies, ecological and biosecurity management approaches.

The innovative approaches we champion must be as dynamic as the shifting challenges that our farmers, ranchers, foresters, fishers, and others face. We must optimize farmer-led solutions and be open to the next big idea, as well as continue to invest in the agility and resilience of agriculture, rural communities, and supply chains around the globe. And we must continue to promote markets and trade, as well as the pivotal role FAO plays in setting standards for international trade, food safety, and plant health protection. Because if we don't improve life and economic viability for farmers, the future of food security will only be more unpredictable and more unstable.

We all recognize that global food insecurity was at unacceptable levels even before the COVID-19 pandemic - driven by entrenched conflicts, natural disasters, climate change, and economic shocks. The Biden Administration, alongside many others in the global community, has worked to expand and adapt our food security programs and improve COVID-19 response and recovery efforts to meet the needs of roughly 155 million food insecure people around the world. Concerted efforts to work with both development and humanitarian actors to meet urgent needs while also addressing the underlying drivers that make people vulnerable to food insecurity is paramount. FAO's leadership - both through the upcoming Food Systems Summit and through its leadership in the Global Network Against Food Crises - present critical opportunities to further these goals.

The climate crisis is an urgent threat disrupting the lives of many, but I believe the agriculture sector can -- and it must -- lead on climate action and solutions. In April, President Biden convened a Leaders Summit on Climate to rally the world in tackling the climate crisis. The United States announced a target of 50-52 percent reduction from 2005 levels in economy-wide greenhouse gas pollution by 2030. And we intend to double, by 2024, our annual public climate financing to developing countries as well as to mobilize private capital to follow suit. My Department plans to invest more than USD 1 billion in conservation, science and research, and rural development.

We congratulate FAO for integrating sustainability and climate change into every facet of programming and for committing to revise its climate strategy while staying focused on its core mandate. We look forward to seeing how far we can advance those endeavors in this new Strategic Framework.

The FAO Strategic Framework is a strong vision for a better world. We appreciate FAO's aim to contribute to the Agenda 2030 and for sharing greater knowledge on challenges, threats, trade-offs, and transformational opportunities.

We welcome FAO Member States' commitment to ensuring this agency joins others in embracing and deepening the implementation of best practices and principles of good governance, including secure elections that ensure the inclusivity and the integrity of the vote, a code of conduct that sets out robust principles for our exercise of the most fundamental of our membership rights, and in accountability, an area in which FAO has made significant recent progress.

FAO was created to solve big, complex problems, where the fates of people around the world are tied together and where no single country alone can address the enormity of global challenges. So, let's remember that as we move forward - we are stronger together, and together we can shape the future of food and agriculture for the better.

VICEPRESIDENTE

Damos la palabra a su Excelencia Víctor Manuel Villalobos Arámbula, Secretario de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos.

Su Excelencia Víctor Manuel VILLALOBOS ARÁMBULA (México)

Muchas gracias Señor Presidente,

Es un honor para mí hablar ante esta Conferencia y tomar parte en el análisis sobre el estado de la alimentación y la agricultura, y los retos de pasar de la estrategia a la acción en la transformación de los Sistemas Alimentarios.

México reconoce la visión y el rumbo planteados en el Marco estratégico de la FAO para el 2022-2031 que será considerado por esta Conferencia. Coincidimos plenamente con el enfoque de sistemas agroalimentarios que proponen, ya que permitirá que los trabajos de la Organización puedan desarrollarse de una manera integral, coherente y equitativa.

Este nuevo Marco estratégico y el Plan de Acción Inmediato abren el camino para que la FAO se mantenga como una Organización de vanguardia orientada al futuro y que responda a las necesidades de sus Países Miembros. Alentamos a la Organización a poner en marcha esta Estrategia para hacer realidad las Cuatro Mejoras que proponen: mejor producción, mejor nutrición, mejor ambiente y mejor vida para todos.

El principal reto que tendrá el Marco estratégico propuesto para traducir todo el conocimiento, los datos y herramientas de la Organización en beneficios concretos para lograr acabar con el hambre y reducir la pobreza y avanzar en el cumplimiento de los Objetivos del Desarrollo Sustentable, es más que evidente.

La pandemia de COVID-19 ha mostrado la fragilidad de los sistemas agroalimentarios. La FAO jugó un papel fundamental para evitar que la crisis sanitaria se convirtiera también en una crisis alimentaria, lo que confirmó su valía y su pertinencia. Sin embargo, ahora la FAO y los Estados Miembros enfrentamos el reto de reorientar el camino de lograr la transformación de los sistemas alimentarios para hacerlos más resilientes, también más productivos y más respetuosos del ambiente.

Esta transformación permitirá hacer frente a los desafíos que se han agravado con la pandemia y contribuir al futuro más cierto frente a las circunstancias similares y ante los retos que encierra el cambio climático y la pérdida de la biodiversidad.

No existen soluciones ni enfoque únicos como lo reconoce el propio Marco Estratégico, por lo que cada Miembro requiere el apoyo y el acompañamiento de la FAO para responder a los retos de sus propias realidades. Hacemos un llamado para que exista la sensibilidad necesaria para reconocer que existen retos y necesidades específicas en todos los países y en todas las regiones. La FAO que México quiere ver es una FAO que responda a las necesidades de todos para que efectivamente no dejemos a nadie atrás y a nadie afuera.

Otro elemento importante que puede contribuir positivamente a la transformación que se plantea, es el comercio internacional. Coincidimos que la importancia de mantener reglas comerciales claras y de evitar medidas injustificadas de restricción al comercio, es esencial. También es momento de prestar mayor atención a los mercados locales, la pandemia ha demostrado que tenemos como tarea pendiente entender mejor las dinámicas de los mercados de las cadenas de suministros locales, especialmente de aquellos mercados que se encuentran en las zonas urbanas y semiurbanas pobres, porque en los mercados locales es donde podemos tener un mayor impacto sobre la seguridad alimentaria de los países.

Los mercados locales ofrecen además la oportunidad de llevar productos frescos y de temporada a los consumidores. Es fundamental que la FAO continúe ayudando a entender cómo funcionan estos mercados para ayudar a proveer alimentos sanos, inocuos y asequibles para los consumidores más pobres así como para sumar en los mercados locales, integrar a los mercados internacionales, ya que la promoción de ambos no es excluyente.

Otro elemento importante es la sostenibilidad, México apoya decididamente los trabajos de la FAO en materia de cambio climático y de biodiversidad o del impacto directo que ambos tienen sobre la alimentación y la agricultura. La protección de los suelos, del agua y de la biodiversidad, y la posibilidad de fortalecer los sistemas de innovación para protegerlos son elementos fundamentales de cualquier transformación.

Estamos convencidos de que las soluciones tecnológicas e innovadoras son la vía para avanzar en la productividad del sector con las que además el mundo podrá mitigar la escasez de agua, la degradación de los suelos, la pérdida de alimentos y el uso excesivo de insumos y la pérdida de la biodiversidad. Coincidimos en que la pesca oceánica y continental y la acuicultura son sectores que ofrecen un enorme potencial para pasar de la estrategia a la acción y también son prioritarios para México.

Reconocemos la importancia que tiene este sector, incluida la pesca artesanal en la seguridad alimentaria, además de ser un pilar fundamental del desarrollo económico y un importante generador de empleos. Cabe mencionar que en noviembre de este año, México hospedará la 17ma Reunión del Subcomité de Acuicultura bajo los auspicios de la FAO. Se trata de un tema relevante para la seguridad alimentaria actual y también del futuro.

México está convencido de que la cooperación internacional, particularmente la Cooperación Triangular y la cooperación Sur-Sur, son estrategias fundamentales, que permitirán generar nuevas sinergias para avanzar en la transformación de los sistemas agroalimentarios. Por ello México continuará potenciando su cooperación agrícola internacional para aprovechar su experiencia y el conocimiento de sus técnicos en favor de la construcción de sistemas alimentarios más sostenibles y de la reducción de las brechas de pobreza y de desigualdad.

En vías de la Pre-Cumbre y de la Cumbre sobre Sistemas Alimentarios, consideramos que la contribución de la FAO será fundamental para lograr sus objetivos.

Finalmente deseo expresar mi esperanza en que los trabajos de esta Conferencia nos brinden debates, resoluciones y aportaciones que orienten y nutran nuestra voluntad y nuestra capacidad en los trabajos de los ministerios a nuestros cargos para bien de la gente y en particular del sector agropecuario y pesquero.

Muchas gracias.

VICEPRESIDENTE

Quiero trasladar la palabra en este momento al Secretario General que tiene información que compartir con nosotros.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I would just like to recall the Timetable for the Conference for the rest of today and for tomorrow.

Today, shortly, the Plenary Session will attend to Item 28.1, *the McDougall Memorial Lecture*, up to 20:00 hours Rome time. There will be no further meetings of the Conference today.

Tomorrow the Plenary Session will resume with Item 9 at 8:30 hours and Commission II will start its business also at 8:30 hours tomorrow.

Commission I will start its work tomorrow afternoon at 13:30 hours.

Item 28. Any Other Matters

Point 28. Questions diverses

Tema 28. Asuntos varios

Item 28.1 McDougall Memorial Lecture

Point 28.1 Conférence McDougall

Tema 28.1 Disertación en memoria de McDougall

VICEPRESIDENTE

Pasaremos inmediatamente al punto 28.1, que es la *Disertación en memoria de McDougall*.

Esta Disertación forma parte de una serie que comenzó en 1959 en conmemoración del difunto Frank McDougall, uno de los padres fundadores de nuestra Organización. La Disertación se pronuncia en cada periodo ordinario de sesiones de la Conferencia.

Como innovación para la 42° periodo de sesiones, la Disertación en memoria de McDougall de este año se llevará a cabo como un evento interactivo, consistirá en una declaración del ponente de la Disertación McDougall seguida de un debate con invitados distinguidos, moderado por el Economista Jefe de la FAO.

Después se dará la palabra a Australia de conformidad con la tradición de la Conferencia. Pero en primer lugar quisiera dar la palabra al Director General para que presente al ponente de la Disertación McDougall de 2021, el Señor Bill Gates, Co-Presidente de la Fundación Bill y Melinda Gates. Señor su Excelencia, Director General Qu Dongyu, tiene usted la palabra.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations is honoured that Mr Bill Gates, prominent philosopher and co-founder of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, accepted the invitation to deliver the 2021 edition of the McDougall Memorial Lecture.

Since 1959, the McDougall Memorial Lecture pays tribute to the Australian economist, Frank McDougall, for his contribution as one of the FAO founding fathers. At each Conference Session we have the privilege of listening to the McDougall Lecture delivered by the prominent luminaries and influential voices in the fight against hunger, who have enlightened and inspired us with their thoughts and vision.

Ladies and gentlemen, every two years the McDougall Memorial Lecture focusses our attention on the key issues that will be at the base of discussion over the course of the Conference.

Today, Bill Gates' lecture will focus our collective commitment to ending hunger and climate change. Reaching that goal is now in peril as the world faces both the COVID-19 pandemic, the largest global public health and development crisis in a century, and the price of the climate change which already threatens farmers and livelihood of global food security.

Never has it been more timely to reflect on the vision and the determination and the cooperative spirit that the founding fathers, including Frank McDougall, brought to the task of establishing FAO as an international forum to address global food agricultural challenges. The scope of this challenge requires global innovative solutions, international alliance and partnership.

Together we can do better and we can do more.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is one of FAO's important global partners. As partners we share the belief in the power of science and technology as the drivers for transitioning millions of

people out of poverty, improving people's health and wellbeing, ensuring that all people have access to adequate and nutritious food.

I was pleased to welcome Mr Gates to our office in New York in September 2019 as the newly-elected Director-General. At this meeting, I shared my vision for FAO and the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, which prioritizes targeted work to benefit people in the world's most vulnerable regions. Mr Gates reiterated his commitment to FAO and stressed the need to play the complementary role and to scale up efforts for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has generously contributed to FAO's work, most recently in combating Desert Locusts which poses a significant threat to the food production and threatens to provoke a humanitarian crisis. We are building strong ties for the future and will continue to work together in reducing world hunger and poverty.

I look forward to being able to welcome Bill Gates physically at the Headquarters in the near future.

Now, I have the pleasure to introduce the McDougall Memorial Lecture presented by Mr Bill Gates through a recorded video message.

Mr Bill GATES (Co-Chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation)

Hello everyone. It is good to be with you.

First, I want to thank Director-General QU for inviting me to speak today, and for his leadership in advancing FAO's core mission to fight hunger and food insecurity around the world. Director-General QU is building a great team and I am excited about the progress to come.

I am honoured to give this year's Frank McDougall Memorial Lecture, and to follow in the footsteps of the many world leaders, thinkers, and innovators who have been a part of this series since 1958.

In his famous memo, McDougall called for a global organization that would work toward, "the goal of diets adequate for health for all." This lecture series is a fitting way to honour McDougall and to recommit to his vision of ending hunger worldwide. The world relies on the expertise and leadership of FAO to make progress towards that goal.

Even before the pandemic struck, we were starting to lose ground. The number of people experiencing food insecurity has gone up by 60 million since 2014.

We are now facing the largest global public health and development crisis in a century. While estimates vary, COVID-19 may have pushed as many as 132 million people into hunger. Nations all over the world are in danger of acute food crises in the coming months.

As you all know, climate change is making everything more difficult. Hundreds of millions of smallholder farmers across the world are feeling these impacts – lower yields, shorter growing seasons, more unpredictable weather, and devastating pests like the giant locust swarms we saw last summer.

These climate pressures threaten farmers' livelihoods, as well as all those who rely on the food they grow. In some countries, half of the jobs are related to agriculture. In those places, this negative cycle could cause a catastrophic economic crash, pushing even more people into poverty and hunger.

Climate change is estimated to have already cost us seven years of growth in agricultural productivity. Over the several few decades, the warming climate is expected to cut growth in global yields by as much as 30 percent, increase farmers' exposure to droughts and floods by as much as 44 percent, also it will raise food prices by 20 percent. Overall this will plunge over 50 million more people into hunger.

The longer we delay in reducing our collective greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero, the worse these consequences will become.

It is particularly unjust that the nations who have contributed the least to greenhouse gas emissions – and who are now waiting the longest for COVID-19 vaccines – are the ones most impacted by these challenges.

That was the focus at the recent Africa COVID-Climate Leaders' Dialogue, where two dozen African leaders called for prioritizing investment in climate adaptation, launching the African Adaptation Acceleration Program.

As these leaders argued, investing in climate-resilient agriculture is crucial for Africa's eventual recovery from the pandemic and the longer-term goal of creating a sustainable, resilient economy.

Smallholder farmers are accustomed to overcoming incredible adversity and are constantly innovating based on changing weather and market demands.

But they cannot solve this alone. The scope of these challenges requires international solutions, and I remain optimistic that we can tackle them if we work together.

The world has set itself some ambitious targets for progress with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As you know, SDG2 aims to end hunger by 2030, and sustainably double both the income and productivity of small-scale producers.

But ambitious targets are not meaningful if we cannot measure the progress towards them – which is currently a challenge with productivity, income and sustainability targets.

To reach these goals, we need better data to track our progress and see where the exemplars are and follow those best practices. The African Union is working on this and our foundation is proud to support FAO's statistical work to fill these data gaps

For example, the "50 by 2030" initiative, co-led by FAO, IFAD, and the World Bank, aims to help fifty low- and middle-income countries gather, analyze, and use data to track progress and improve policymaking.

The Ceres2030 project uses new advances in machine learning and other powerful tools to build a database of knowledge on effective interventions for smallholder farmers, so we can scale up ones that are working and phase out those that are not.

More alignment on a "next tier" of metrics, as well as data-driven public scorecards to track progress, can also help ensure we are moving toward targets. The African Union's work on an African Agricultural Transformation scorecard is a promising example of what we need.

So better data and scorecards are crucial pieces of the puzzle. Another critical component is support for innovation. We need investments in agricultural Research and Development (R&D) now to ensure farmers can sustainably produce a broad assortment of nutritious food for years to come.

There is already good work in Africa to help farmers adapt and create long-term solutions. For example, Ethiopia is using big data to develop an early warning system for wheat rust outbreaks, which have cost farmers hundreds of millions of dollars over the last decade. This mobile-based system is updated daily and it is already prevented one potential wheat rust epidemic, which would have happened four years ago.

In Kenya, 1.4 million smallholder farmers are now using a mobile platform called Digifarm to purchase inputs, get technical advice, apply for credit and crop insurance, and find buyers, enabling them to more quickly adapt to changing conditions.

A key leader of innovation in this space is Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centres (CGIAR). Fifty years ago, when Norman Borlaug gave this lecture, he argued that, the first essential component of social justice is adequate food for all mankind.

Then, Borlaug and his team at CGIAR helped save more than a billion people from starvation. Working with governments, especially agriculture ministries, CGIAR is still doing game-changing work today. To help end hunger, provide for better nutrition, and safeguard biodiversity, their researchers are developing new crop varieties that are both more productive and resistant to climate threats.

Each dollar spent on CGIAR research produces about USD 10 in benefits for low-income farmers. It is critical that FAO and the other Rome-based Agencies provide the technical assistance and financing to scale up the innovations and adoptions coming from CGIAR.

We have two big opportunities later this year to take some big steps forward: the UN Food Systems Summit in September and the 26th UN Session on Climate Change (COP 26) Climate conference in November. We need additional commitments from donors, governments, and the private sector at these events to support innovation, better use of data, and other efforts to get new tools into farmers' fields. I hope the discussions today can lay the groundwork for how to maximize the potential of these moments to make a real push forward.

By working together, using data to find effective interventions, and encouraging innovation, I am confident we can tackle climate change and help farmers adapt. We can achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. And we can finally deliver on Frank McDougall's vision: a world where no child has to grow up hungry.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Thank you, my dear brother and friend for many years. Bill supports the global mandates and missions to end hunger by innovation.

Now, I would call upon the Australian Representative, Your Excellency, to take the floor.

Mr David HAZLEHURST (Deputy Secretary at the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment of Australia)

As a representative of the Australian Government, specifically the agriculture, water and environment portfolio, I am honoured to be responding to the McDougall Memorial Lecture delivered today. I have recorded this statement virtually from Canberra, Australia, as compelled by the new normal of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Australia has the privilege of providing this response in acknowledgement of the work of the eminent Australian economist, Frank McDougall. He played a significant part in the establishment of the Food and Agriculture Organization in the 1940s and widely promoted the crucial role of agriculture in contributing to food security, human health, and economic development worldwide.

The Food and Agriculture Organization is one of the critical pillars of the agriculture and food multilateral system that supports cooperation by countries to address global challenges. Australia will continue to actively engage in, contribute to, and support the rules-based international order.

Firstly, I wish to thank the Director-General, Qu Dongyu, for his vision of the four betters; better production, better nutrition, better environment and better life to promote an action-based, systems-orientated approach that will address the interconnected economic, social, and environmental dimensions of agri-food systems. I also commend the United Nations Secretary-General for calling this year's Food Systems Summit to support the vision of an equitable and healthy future for all.

Secondly, I wish to thank Bill Gates for his inspirational and informative lecture. As we work together to address the global challenge of our changing climate, we need to collaborate to foster creative and innovative solutions. Australia has a long history of investment in agricultural research and development, innovation, and strong engagement in the Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centres, or CGIAR, as it is now known.

As we focus on collaborating and expanding our agricultural innovations, we are enabling science-based and data-driven decisions and policy-making. This is good for our farmers and our rural communities by enhancing existing approaches and delivering new ways to sustainably increase agricultural productivity, improve livelihoods, conserve nature and biodiversity, and adapt and build resilience to climate change. Modernizing the agricultural innovation system to drive improvements in collaboration, commercialization, and uptake is a key element of the Australian Government's plans to assist the agricultural industry reach its ambitious goal of USD 100 billion in production by 2030.

Business as usual will not be enough. The health of the environment is crucial to the health of agriculture and food systems. I am proud to say that Australia's farmers are some of our greatest environmental stewards. Like other countries, Australia acknowledges our farmers as custodians and the government is piloting and implementing new initiatives to support farmers' own efforts to maintain and improve biodiversity and sustainability of their land. Out of the challenges we face come

clear opportunities, as new technologies and innovations can improve sustainability, productivity, profitability, and resilience of our production systems.

We will continue to collaborate globally and learn from others. The convening power of the Food and Agriculture Organization to bring countries together is one of its great strengths. Of course, every country's situation is different, so any approach to addressing food system challenges must not only fit the nation's context and priorities but the approach must also be informed by scientific evidence.

Together we can make our food systems more resilient, sustainable, and inclusive. Together in this Decade of Action we can work to deliver the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 to support the world's food security, and together we can achieve the aims of the Food and Agriculture Organization. These aims include raising the levels of nutrition and standards of living to contribute to expanding the world economy, and most importantly, ensuring humanity's freedom from hunger.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Thank you, Australia. It is a long commitment and long partnership with the FAO mandate and mission from the founding period. Also, you have a lot to share with your more efficient, more inclusive, more resilient and more sustainable agri-food systems in Australia, based on the innovation and science, based on the green and climate-resilient experience.

We wish all your work and your tasks to be beneficial to the Australian people and to that part of the world and, of course, to FAO Members in the future.

Now I would like to pass the floor to the Chief Economist, Máximo Torero Cullen, to moderate the Ministerial Round Table Meeting.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist of FAO)

Thank you very much, Director-General, and thank you very much to the Deputy-Secretary of the Department of Agriculture of Australia, David Hazlehurst. Thank you very much to Bill Gates for his talk and especially for the core topic or the core objective that he mentioned, of a world where no child has to go hungry. That is the objective of FAO, to try to give access to healthy diets to everybody and to reduce undernourishment to 5 percent in the world by 2030.

Mr Gates raised several topics of crucial importance. The importance of climate change and how climate change can affect the extremes that could affect productivity, he referred to seven years of growth of agricultural productivity being lost, effect of increases in prices, and also how 50 million more people will go hungry, in addition to the numbers that we have today, which have been exacerbated by COVID-19.

He also talked about the uncertainties and how much the information is central, because if we have significant volatility of weather, of course that will imply that farmers could not make optimal decisions and the extreme temperatures could also destroy what they produce and bring pests like locusts, as he has mentioned. He also talked about inequalities and how nations which have contributed the least for greenhouse gas emissions today are the most affected, and how we can try to find ways to resolve this. Mr Gates mentioned four areas where he believes we can move forward, which are completely aligned to the Strategic Framework of FAO.

First, better data, and how we can bring knowledge to target and make better decisions like, for example, the 50x2030 Initiative of the big data lab that FAO is working on. He also mentioned the importance of monitoring and scoring cards to track progress and how much Africa is trying to do that.

He mentioned thirdly the innovation and how important innovation is, and investment in agricultural research and development, especially for nutritious food. We know today that 3 billion people do not have access to healthy diets, and that is something that needs to change, and how the inter-relationship between data and innovation, through big data and early warning systems and mobile platforms, like the ones he presented, could make a huge difference.

Finally, he talked about partnerships and he mentioned the CGIAR as a source of innovation and results of research and development in agriculture, and how FAO can play a role in also scaling up those interventions. A few weeks ago, we had the Nobel Prize in economics, Esther Duflo, and we

were talking about how to scale up innovations so that we can do it properly, so that we can intervene properly and implement the proper scaling up of those interventions.

And, of course, the opportunities on the UN Food System Summit and the COP 26 in November. So now we are going to move to the Round Table discussion, and the idea is that we will invite each representative from each region to give a five-minute speech and if there is time, we will ask some basic questions.

Let me start by first inviting Ms Jewel Brunaugh, Deputy-Secretary of the US Department of Agriculture.

Ms Jewel BRONAUGH (United States of America)

We all know that the climate crisis is an existential threat that affects livelihoods of people all over the world. We feel strongly that agriculture is one of the best sectors to find solutions to several pressing global challenges, including hunger and climate change.

Under the leadership of the Biden-Harris Administration, the United States re-joined the Paris Climate Accords, and during Earth Week in April our country hosted its first ever Global Climate Summit for world leaders, to make commitments to reduce their emissions. The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) is taking steps to put agriculture and forestry at the centre of climate-smart solutions to address the climate crisis.

To achieve our ambitious climate goals, the United States is investing in scientific breakthrough research, applied innovation and development, and building capacity for adoption and scaling of sustainable practices and innovative technology. The United States is also refreshing our global food security strategy which provides an opportunity for the United States to elevate climate change into our national food security policies and associated developmental programming.

Climate change is a shared challenge and opportunity, requiring countries in all sectors and stakeholders to work together to design and implement effective solutions that consider synergies and trade-offs through a systems approach. The importance of international cooperation in trade cannot be overlooked as the global community works to address food security and food insecurity, and transition to net zero emission economies by 2050.

The UN Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) along with this FAO Conference and other international meetings this year, including the UN Food Systems Summit, provide a valuable opportunity to bring diverse stakeholders together and catalyse action to address climate change and global hunger and ensure that all have access to safe, nutritious and affordable food.

The conflict, the climate crisis and economic disruptions from COVID-19 are exacerbating already worsening trends in food security. The United States is committed to a UN Food Systems Summit that puts addressing hunger, poverty, and malnutrition and their causes at the centre of discussion for global action. We are aligning our efforts to deliver improved nutrition for the most vulnerable, empower youth and women for greater inclusivity, address the food production and climate change nexus, and step-up investments in agricultural innovation and rural infrastructure to significantly improve the sustainability and resilience of food systems.

Agriculture, forestry, and food systems hold significant potential for climate adaptation and mitigation. Our producers are working hard on the frontlines of the climate crisis, but we must double down and work collaboratively to overcome some complex policy challenges to harness this potential at scale. Addressing hunger through innovation and transformation to more sustainable food and agricultural systems require approaches that are as innovative as our farmers, and as dynamic as the shifting context in which they operate.

Sustainable agricultural productivity growth through good production practices and innovation is a powerful engine for increased food and nutrition security and improved standards of living. This means producing more with less: less land, less water, fewer inputs and resources. Innovation is critical not only for achieving SDG 2 and ending global hunger, malnutrition, and poverty, but also for

sustaining food security advances, even as new threats to agricultural production, food safety, nutrition, and animal and plant health emerge because of climate change.

These challenges require a big tent for the promotion of innovative new approaches. Effective, impactful innovation of every type, including those based in new cutting-edge technologies, those incorporating ecological and regenerative management approaches, and those rooted in tried-and-true farming practices should be welcomed. This includes development and deployment of practical, actionable tools and information to producers which we do through our national extension systems and our network of climate hubs.

Investments in agricultural research and development and promoting equitable access to financing are amongst the most effective strategies for significantly reducing poverty, particularly in Africa and Asia, helping to ensure that small and disadvantaged farmers, both at home and abroad, have equal access to appropriate tools.

Ambitious and cooperative investment in agricultural research and development can enhance existing approaches and deliver new ways to increase sustainability and agricultural productivity, improve livelihoods, conserve nature and biodiversity, and adapt and build resilience to climate change, all while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and sequestering carbon.

In this regard, I am pleased to share some information with you about a new initiative the United States is joining with the United Arab Emirates to launch at the 26th Session of the UN Climate Conference (COP 26) called the Agriculture Innovation Mission (AIM) for Climate. Announced in April at President Biden's Leaders Summit for Climate, the goal of the Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate is to increase and accelerate global innovation, research and development on agriculture and food systems in support of climate action.

To achieve this goal, AIM for Climate participants intend to catalyse greater investment in, and/or support for, agricultural research and development and innovation, to help raise global ambition and underpin more rapid and transformative climate action in all countries, including by enabling science-based and data-driven decision and policymaking. Along with partnering with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to launch the initiative, we are also excited to have an endorsement from the United Kingdom's COP 26 presidency and support from Australia, Brazil, Denmark, Israel, Singapore and Uruguay.

We encourage and welcome you to consider participation in AIM for Climate as this is an exciting opportunity. We know the costs of the ongoing climate crisis are high. The financial and human toll of forest fires, floods, droughts, and other extreme events, has been astronomical. We cannot afford delay in addressing the climate impact of, and on, our food systems and food security. So let us get to work and thank you for this opportunity to speak.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist of FAO)

Thank you Deputy-Secretary of the United States. You raise very important issues which are central for us, most importantly, the US re-joining the Paris Climate Agreement, but especially putting agriculture and forestry at the centre to address the food.

This is central, as you raised the importance of measuring trade-offs using the agri-food system and that is so important because normally we did not look at things in a systems approach and that is where the trade-offs play a crucial role breaking the silos. That is where we can make a transformation to minimize the effects of the drivers of conflict climate and the slowdown and economic recessions, as you mentioned.

We need to strengthen our collaboration and we believe that through innovation and data, as you correctly mentioned, is central. Finally, the new initiative that you announced today, the Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate with transformative action, based on science and data-driven, that is music to the ears of FAO. That is exactly what we are trying to do in the agri-food system transformation.

Thank you very much for your time.

Continúa en español

Permítanme ahora pasar al Secretario de Agricultura de México, el Doctor Víctor Villalobos.

Su Excelencia Víctor Manuel VILLALOBOS ARÁMBULA (México)

Excelentísimas señoras y señores Ministros y Secretarios de Estado, Excelentísimo Señor Director, Doctor Qu Dongyu, honorable Señor Bill Gates, amigos todos.

Agradezco al Director de la FAO por la distinción que me ha hecho para participar en esta mesa redonda de alto nivel para conversar sobre dos temas de vital importancia para el futuro de la humanidad y de nuestra madre tierra. Lo hago con la esperanza de poder aportar desde la perspectiva mexicana, y como parte de la comunidad latinoamericana y del Caribe, algunas ideas que nos permitan impulsar acciones colectivas para atender a dos de los más grandes retos que enfrenta nuestra generación: el hambre y el cambio climático.

Coincidimos en la necesidad de transformar los sistemas alimentarios y, por lo tanto, vemos con agrado la realización de la próxima cumbre global sobre este tema. Sin embargo, nos parece necesario insistir en que debemos referirnos a estos sistemas como agroalimentarios y reconocer de manera particular el tema agrícola en la construcción de estos nuevos paradigmas. Nos comprometemos a sumar esfuerzos para lograr que esta cumbre se materialice en acciones concretas y compromisos realistas.

La cumbre ha generado una enorme expectativa a nivel mundial y está en nuestras manos el no perder la oportunidad para lograr mejorar las condiciones de bienestar de billones de personas y hacerlo de manera sustentable. Afortunadamente, este proceso se da en un momento de la historia de la humanidad donde las sociedades han adquirido una gran conciencia sobre los imperfectos que han sido nuestros modelos de desarrollo económico, cuyas limitantes se han hecho profundamente manifiestas como consecuencia de la pandemia del COVID-19.

Afortunadamente, comenzamos a notar un avance en la transformación de los modelos de gobernanza política y convivencia social y apuntamos hacia un nuevo modelo de desarrollo. Sin embargo, y a pesar de esos avances, no podemos negar la presencia de fuertes tendencias con pocos requerimientos y, sobre todo, temas que aún faltan por resolver.

Hoy podemos imaginar nuevos derroteros y podemos encontrar soluciones que eviten cometer los errores del pasado, gracias al crecimiento exponencial del conocimiento. También del acelerado cambio tecnológico, al enorme valor que hoy damos a la innovación, y la renovada visión que se está construyendo día a día. Nunca en la historia de la civilización, se había acumulado tal cantidad de conocimiento: eso lo debemos aprovechar en beneficio de todos. Los gobiernos debemos hacer un serio compromiso con la innovación mediante políticas públicas que permitan a la sociedad desencadenar sus efectos transformadores en todas las áreas de la actividad humana. Debemos conjuntar esfuerzos con los sectores sociales, los sistemas educativos, de investigación y con los sectores financieros.

La innovación es una tarea de la sociedad. Fomentarla y crear condiciones para su desarrollo son tareas del Estado. En particular, hablando del sector agropecuario, y pesquero, la innovación debe orientarse a producir más, producir mejor y alimentar a todos. Sin olvidar mejorar las condiciones de vida de los territorios rurales: es decir, darles de comer a quienes nos dan de comer. Existe un adagio que dice: “No se puede mejorar aquello que no se puede medir”. De manera que para transformar los sistemas agroalimentarios, revertir el cambio climático y resolver las condiciones del hambre y pobreza que afectan a millones de seres, tenemos la necesidad de contar con datos precisos y oportunos para la toma de decisiones.

Si bien esto parece obvio, la realidad es que muchos de nuestros países carecen tanto de las infraestructuras como de las capacidades para generar, obtener y procesar datos. Tristemente esto se ve agravado en muchos casos por la negativa de hacer de la información un proceso transparente y democrático. Uno de los procesos de innovación que definen este siglo está justamente en el área de la información y la comunicación. Y es fundamental que en el proceso de transformación que queremos, tanto herramientas y aplicaciones como la difusión y el acceso a datos se democratizen y se pongan al

servicio de todos. Sabemos que la innovación puede ser producto de un esfuerzo individual o colectivo. Pero si queremos resolver los problemas globales, como el cambio climático o el ambiente, debemos hacer que los procesos innovadores alcancen al conjunto de cada sociedad.

Una tercera idea, que será la última que comparto en aras del tiempo, es mi visión de que este proceso transformador solo podrá ser logrado si podemos alcanzar visiones globales construidas alrededor de puntos de encuentros comunes y mediante el impulso de alianzas internacionales. Construir esas alianzas y encontrar estas perspectivas globales implica reconocer la diversidad entre nuestras naciones y la diferencia de condiciones económicas y sociales. Reconocer que requerimos de soluciones compartidas y no visiones únicas e impuestas. Reconocer, también, la necesidad de todos los países de construir respetando la integralidad de todas las personas.

No coartemos la imaginación de las nuevas generaciones. Impulsemos la curiosidad. Recuperemos los conocimientos ancestrales y adoptemos los nuevos. Apostemos a la búsqueda de soluciones arriesgadas y llevemoslas, como el doctor Norman Borlaug decía a los productores: "Es ahí donde rendirán sus frutos y es ahí donde ellos mejorarán sus niveles de vida".

México, en su proceso de transformación actual, busca corregir los múltiples desequilibrios que hoy frenan su desarrollo económico, combatiendo la pobreza, la desigualdad económica y la corrupción. En este proceso transformador, México no olvida su compromiso con la comunidad de naciones, con el futuro del planeta, con la conservación de nuestro ambiente y con la salud de nuestra población. Es por eso, por lo que nos sentimos parte de este proceso de cambio universal y estamos seguros de que si sumamos esfuerzos lograremos dejar a las siguientes generaciones un mundo mejor que este que hoy estamos viviendo.

Sr. Máximo TORERO (Economista Jefe de la FAO)

Es importantísimo, como usted bien mencionó, hablar de los sistemas agroalimentarios. Porque la agricultura, además de alimentos, también provee ingresos a los productores a través de productos que no son destinados a la alimentación.

Es importantísima la multisectorialidad que usted mencionó. El sector de la agricultura tiene que interrelacionarse con la salud y con otros sectores para poder hacer la transformación que se requiere. Y de nuevo, escuchamos muy fuerte el mensaje de los datos y la información y qué tan importante es esto para la toma de decisiones. Lo hemos visto en el caso del COVID-19: a importancia de la calidad de la información en tiempo real para poder ayudar a los países a tomar mejores decisiones. Pero sobre todo, la parte de democratización, no solo de los datos, sino también de la tecnología. Todos esos elementos los retomamos en nuestro nuevo *framework* de estrategia. Los complementos son los que van a ayudar a las instituciones, el capital humano y la gobernanza, ayudando a que no sea excluyente la información y que la tecnología e innovación no sea excluyente.

Finalmente, su mención a la cooperación es algo central para poder llevar el conocimiento a los productores. ¿Cómo podemos hacer que esa masa de conocimiento crítico que usted mencionó llegue a los productores y se puedan dar los resultados esperados para que podamos tener el acceso para todos de las dietas saludables?

Continues in English

Let me now please pass to the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development of the Republic of South Africa, Thoko Didiza.

Her Excellency Thoko DIDIZA (Republic of South Africa)

I would like to thank the Director-General for having presented this panel to make sure that we reflect on the important lecture that has been given by Mr Bill Gates. I would also like to thank Mr Bill Gates for his insightful lecture in memory of Frank McDougall, but also for firmly putting the climate agenda in the agriculture and food security space.

The impact of climate variability and change on agriculture has been severe, causing a lot of uncertainties in our production systems. There is evidence of possible mass failures in cropping and livestock systems due to climate change. This poses a major threat to food security. Climate variability

and change has also impacted on the productivity of some crops. In the livestock sector, changes in climate have shown to have a major impact on the wellbeing of animals and on the availability of feedstock.

Ambient temperature is the factor that has the largest direct effect on livestock production. Heat stress is a common cause of reproductive inefficiency in animals, since both semen quality and female fertility are affected. Subsequently, there may be a change in areas suitable to produce certain crops or animal breeds. It is thus critical for the agricultural sector to develop innovative methods of addressing the expected climate change impacts geared towards ensuring sufficient production while still conserving precious natural resources.

Production output must be sustained or increased while conserving rangelands, water resources, and soil properties, among others, creating a more resilient environment to manage during climate stress. Informed Management Strategies depend on building blocks such as better preparedness for adverse conditions, more resilient cultivars or breeds, and an emphasis on conservation. Most importantly, there is a need for the agricultural sector to mitigate the impact of climate change by adopting low carbon production systems, with economic benefits to the farming community.

There is an urgent need for ground-breaking solutions that ensure that farmers can both adapt to climate change as well as reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from the agricultural sector. Some of these innovative approaches can come from the scientific community and particularly from the application of the fourth industrial revolution and biotechnology to the specific issues faced in Southern Africa. There are many climate-smart agriculture practices using these techniques and applications and others are in the process of being developed. This has a potential to increase yields and make agriculture more sustainable and efficient, which in themselves raise the issue of investment in agricultural research in our country.

A major contribution of biotechnology and breeding is the development of new crop varieties. Seed companies and the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) in South Africa are looking at using new technology to come up with varieties that are highly adaptable to harsh climate conditions. For example, the ARC working with international partners has developed a drought-tolerant maize cultivar under the programme, I quote “Water Efficient Maize for African Women”. There has been good uptake of such varieties by farmers across the semiarid regions of Southern Africa and this has enabled many of these regions to build resilience and increase their food security.

At the same time, it is important to leverage public-private partnerships in combating the effects of climate change. Precision agriculture has been shown to be one of the solutions that can increase productivity as well as reducing carbon and water footprint of crop production systems. It presents an opportunity for site-specific management as well as the use of variable rate application of fertilizers, taking into consideration the soil characteristics of that section and the nutrient requirements at stages of the crop.

Innovative and undercover farming techniques are increasingly being promoted and adopted to reduce our carbon footprint. This includes vertical farming, which requires an even smaller footprint and uses less, but efficient, water and fertilizers. This is based on the concept of urban farming in which crops are stacked vertically and successfully grown indoors using methods such as hydroponics and aeroponics. The use of drone technology has been increasing in this country and worldwide as a tool to digitize agricultural operations to ensure optimum utilization of the natural environment and increasing productivity without compromising the environment.

In a similar way, there is a need for tackling climate change in the livestock sector. The improvement of the indigenous livestock that has a high heat tolerance has the potential to increase animal productivity under a changing climate. Other advantages of indigenous livestock include less dependence on water, better maintenance of body condition during winter, tick resistance, and genes associated with adaptation. The improvement of cattle breeds like Nguni in my country, the Drakensbergers, and Bonsmara in South Africa, has shown a lot of promise in the fight against climate change.

In collaboration with scientists from other countries, new technology presents an opportunity to breed animals that emit less greenhouse gas emissions. It is well known that greenhouse gas emissions from the livestock sector globally contribute up to 18 percent of the total emissions. Undergoing work will ensure that the future sustainability of the livestock sector, such as breeding livestock with a higher feed conversion efficiency, becomes possible.

As previously mentioned, farmers being highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change has led to the establishment of climate services, including early warning systems for climate hazards by several organizations. The development and updating of climate services that are usable by the farming community is key towards sustainability. The use of artificial intelligence and machine learning presents an opportunity for the advancement of the climate services in the agricultural sector.

The recent development in mobile technology coverage and cell phone technology also provides an efficient means to disseminate tailor-made information to the rural farming communities and agricultural sector. As we have heard, in our lecture when I was presenting, citing such as Nairobi in Kenya, as well as in Ethiopia, where they have used some application that addresses some of these challenges and informs farmers on what to do. This resulted in usable mobile applications that have been highly successful in helping farmers cope with climate variability and change.

No single organization in the world can ensure that the agricultural sector is advancing at the rate that is required to safeguard food security of the people of our countries, in our country for instance as well as in Southern Africa. Thus, addressing climate change requires a lot of investment in research and development by all the stakeholders, including government, private sector, universities, research councils, and non-profit organizations. There is a need for partnerships, within countries and across the world, to address climate change, as we heard from one of our panellists, my colleague from the United States, indicating some of the initiatives that they have launched in partnership with the United Arab Emirates and supported by the United Kingdom and others.

I am sure, as different countries, we can also learn from one another on how best our countries can cope with climate change. The development of climate services is key towards adaptation and mitigation. The establishment of centres of excellence in climate-smart agricultural production, involving a number of institutions, is key towards a highly innovative agricultural sector that has the potential to cope with all the challenges.

As the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development in South Africa, we are committed towards ensuring that there is an enabling environment for the development and application of innovative solutions to combat the impact of climate change for sustainability of future generations.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist of FAO)

You brought so many important topics about the importance of climate variability and especially having sufficient production, while conserving our natural resources, the issue of trade-offs that we have been talking about, and several panellists have raised.

One very important topic is the early warning systems that you referred to, and this is something that we are working extremely hard, to be able to have more predictive power to help farmers and producers. FAO is trying to build up and bring all the early warning systems together in the situation room. This is central and is central to use technology, as you mentioned, artificial intelligence and mobile applications, so that we can touch farmers and it can help us.

Finally, partnerships is something central and is at the core of our new Strategic Framework. Thank you very much for your words, Minister of Agriculture.

Let me now please pass the floor to the Secretary of Agriculture of the Philippines, Mr William D. Dar. Many thanks to you for being awake at this hour, at so late a time of the day, we really appreciate your contribution to this panel.

His Excellency William D. DAR (Philippines)

Your Excellencies, Mr Bill Gates, Director-General, Qu Dongyu, of FAO, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, good day to all.

The Philippines commends the UN Food and Agriculture Organization for supporting countries in efforts to adapt to the growing impact of climate change. Through a wide range of research-based programmes and projects, governments the world over have adopted significant climate actions and measures as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Indeed, because of the complexities brought about by climate change and its impact on food systems, we keenly recognize the urgency of greater collective action in concert with the international community.

Agriculture is the mainspring of rural economic activities in the Philippines and its development is key to addressing the bigger part of our continuing problem of poverty. We encourage strong private sector investments and partnerships in our drive towards a more sustainable development, equitable prosperity, and national food security. For decades now, the extreme weather events caused by climate change, which range from extended droughts to super typhoons, have disrupted food production and destroyed lives within the Philippine archipelago. The human and economic costs have been tremendous.

CGIAR estimates that Filipino farmers lose an average of about USD 670 million annually due to the effects of climate change. These costs are equally borne by consumers who invariably deal with shortages in the supply of food commodities and sudden price hikes. Fortunately, however, we are at a moment in history where technology and globalization are changing the dynamics of economic progress. Added to this is the new normal brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This gathering brings together leaders and experts who are at the cutting edge of innovative changes, including digital agriculture, that greatly helps our rural populations and the agriculture sector at large. Today's technologies and innovations offer enormous opportunities for building a more resilient Philippine agriculture, one that employs science and technological know-how as we confront the uncertainties brought about by climate change.

Our ongoing efforts to revitalize productivity and increase incomes of our farmers and fishers will see such technologies and know-how as invaluable tools, like early warning systems as we also intensify our efforts to mitigate the impact of climate change on food security. This is the reason why it is important that international pooling of knowledge, science, and technology, and new innovations, should be further encouraged among our community of nations. The benefits of science-driven innovation should find a place in our farms as well as in the homes of every rural family, and ultimately, in every home in all societies.

We hope that from the suggestions that may be proposed and adopted during this assembly, we can together find ways to extend the benefits of today's new technologies and innovations, including disruptive technologies to all sectors and stakeholders across all our nations. We believe we have, here and now, an excellent opportunity to reboot together and to foster together hope, trust and mutual understanding that are essential for all citizens of the world to survive and prosper.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist of FAO)

Thank you very much, for being up so late to be part of this panel. You brought something so important of the international pooling of knowledge and innovation and technology. That is the only way we can collaborate a panel together to be able to do the agri-food transformation that we need, but working together to extend the benefits of this technology and innovation to all economies and sectors. It is, as you said, time to reboot together the system and to find the transformation that we need.

Let me now pass to Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Wealth and Water Resources of the Sultanate of Oman.

His Excellency Saud bin Hamoud bin Ahmed AL-HABSI (Oman) (Original language Arabic)

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you, and I would like to say that it is a great honour for me to be here with you this evening to be able to present to you the situation of the agriculture sector. [Interpretation issues].

Conflict and climate change has a negative impact on agriculture development, and we see that climate change is having an especially heavy impact on the region that is already facing so many challenges. [Interpretation issues].

There is a need to adopt an innovative approach to be able to address the many challenges before us, and this is important in rural areas. We need policies, we need technology, we need innovative approaches to be able to foster the necessary development. [Interpretation issues].

As far as the use of technology is concerned and using techniques such as drones or digital technology, and this can be important to monitor production chains and distribution and marketing, there is need for progress in this area. Finally I would like to commend the efforts of the Director-General, of all those who have worked to organize this Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization. [Interpretation issues].

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist of FAO)

Thank you very much, for your important words, especially on how important is climate change and agriculture. As we know, it is central for what could happen in the future. It is not only extreme temperatures but also variability, as it was mentioned before, and the importance of innovation in trying to bring solutions.

Let me now pass to Stefano Patuanelli, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies of the Republic of Italy. The Minister has provided us with a video message.

His Excellency Stefano PATUANELLI (Italy)

I would like to thank the Director-General Qu Dongyu for having allowed me to represent my country, Italy, here, and represent Europe as well in this very important panel. Combating climate change and poverty is the great ambitious challenge of our era. The Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda of the United Nations, and the objectives of the European Commission in the Green Deal, which are translated into the Farm to Fork strategy, are a tangible sign of the awareness at a global European level, of the importance of the challenge that lies before us, and the need to strengthen the policies in the different states to ensure that they are increasingly comprehensive and cohesive.

With the Green Deal, Europe has set itself the objective of promoting an efficient use of resources, shifting to a circular economy, restoring biodiversity and drastically reducing pollution. To achieve these results, it is important to have strong financial endowment and also projectural vision to promote investments in cutting edge technology that is innovative and at the same time, respectful of the environment.

It would also be essential to strengthen cooperation among European partners and international partners to improve European and global standards, ensuring that they are increasingly sustainable, both environmentally and socially. To be truly effective in addressing hunger in the world, and climate change, it is important that there be measures and investments in the area of innovation and research.

Europe stands ready to take part and we have shown it with the publication of the Farm to Fork strategy, a 10-year plan developed by the European Commission to guide this transition towards food systems that are equitable, healthy and respectful of the environment. It is the first time that our continent has embarked on a project of this scale and scope.

Our aim is to develop a policy that will involve the agri-food system as a whole, from production to consumption, covering distribution. The goal is to ensure sustainable and healthy food production, supporting the transition towards healthy diets, and here we can count on the support of the agriculture sector, which is ever more deeply committed to renewal and modernization.

I am also firmly convinced that a strong momentum in addressing this challenge will come from the new generations, and that is why we must increasingly emphasize the importance of nutrition education in schools, starting from early childhood. We must teach young people, and remind older people, how important it is to combat food waste and loss. There is no possibility of real change in this area unless we truly address food waste, and this needs to be done through prevention and appropriate enforcement measures.

Italy is among the countries that is most strongly committed in Europe in this area, as we are also committed to countering food uniformity, to recognize the precious contribution of culture, values and tradition that come from the different food styles that exist in every part of the world. Italy is, of

course, deeply attached to the Mediterranean diet which has been recognized as a model of sustainable food that can ensure food safety while promoting healthy lifestyles, avoiding food loss, and contributing to reducing the environmental impact, and improving the wellbeing of current and future generations.

It is a model that can provide a decisive contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, and also the farm to fork strategy. An increasingly close and loyal relationship – an alliance I would call it – between the producers of the agri-food systems and consumers/citizens, will be the linchpin of this approach which will ensure achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as economic and social goals that we have set ourselves.

I think it is essential that in the European area we adopt policies that are increasingly uniform in terms of food labelling. They must provide clear, accurate and thorough information that can help consumers make choices that are based on their awareness. I know that the path is still very long but I am deeply convinced of the fact that we have laid the groundwork to take this to the end. Europe has embarked on this path, fully aware of the importance of Europe's role in winning this, the challenge of our century.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist of FAO)

Thank you very much, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies of the Republic of Italy. You have raised very important topics today. First, the commitment of the agricultural sector, and the commitment of Europe to create this transformational change. Second, investing in technology while respecting the environment, and how important it is to have policy coherence and transparency.

Then, you raise the topic of food loss and waste. Today, 14 percent of the food in the world on average is lost, this means from harvest, including wholesale market, and 17 percent is waste from wholesale to retail and to consumers.

That is unacceptable, given what we are observing today in terms of non-access to healthy diets by 3 billion people in the world. So, a topic of food loss and waste is a triple win, as you said: it increases productivity, it increases efficiency and use of our natural resources, but it also reduces emissions and brings more access to food, especially to healthy diets, to our consumers.

Thank you, again, for these kind words, and thank you to all the panelists for all their kind words and all that you have shared today.

Let me now pass to the Director-General for his closing remarks.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Thank you Mr Máximo Torero Cullen and dear colleagues, Vice Chairperson and also Minister from Mexico, Vice Minister from the United States, Minister from South Africa, Oman and also my dear friend from the Philippines, Mr William Dar. I saw he is still there. I just told Mr Torero Cullen, you are early morning, about 1:00/2:00 hours and it is really very much appreciated. I also thank the Italian Minister.

All your points are important. It is very difficult for me to wrap up but it crossed my mind, number one, we are facing two big challenges now for agri-food systems. The first is the climate change, or climate crisis. Second, hunger – especially during pandemic. We are really facing the hunger, not only in the vulnerable countries, middle-income countries, but also in the developed nations. Not only in the rural areas, but also in the city.

I really appreciated all the speakers, as you mentioned we have to produce more and with less: produce more food, more quantity, more quality, and more food diversity.

Mr Dar, you are working since so many years, in the CGIAR, and also Bill Gates, he is personally involved in this for quite a long time. We had a lot of interaction before. We need to transfer from biodiversity to food diversity. However, we do not simply produce more as business as usual, before, more input and more chemical and more pollution. No, we have to produce more and with less input – less impact on the environment and less water consumption.

The only solution is what all the Ministers mentioned, innovation. Innovation in the different technologies, from agronomy to the breeding, from animals to the crop, fishery, forestry and others. From production to the process, and also from the supply chain and the post-harvest treatment and for the cold chain systems. Therefore, innovation covers the whole value chain and supply chain and is essential.

Second, we have to have more investments in innovation. What is the most important investment on with the highest marginal utility, as Mr Bill Gates mentioned. If you invest USD 1, it brings about USD 10 return by CGAIR. Of course, we need more complement among the institutions and policymakers, capacity building.

On innovation, we also have to have a new business model and full application of the ICT, Information and Communication Technology. As well, develop the e-commerce, develop the new business model and C2C, B2C and all this.

Because it is so important for transforming agri-food systems for the smallholder farmers. Of course, 84 percent of our global farmers are smallholder farmers. How to transform their agri-food systems on the ground and get closer, accessible to the market, domestically, internationally, locally and also international trading.

Really, the only solution comes from innovation.

Second, I heard from you we also need more inclusiveness. Leave no one behind. Get more women and youth benefiting from the innovation, from the development in the agri-food systems.

Third, I said more resilience. Resilience, also we need more agro-engineering improvement investment: irrigation systems, flooding proof, and all those infrastructure. Also broadband in the rural areas.

We really commend all the Members to get more investments on agriculture food systems and on rural areas. There is a really big gap, not only across the nations, but also within one country, in different regions. Between city and the rural areas, there are really digital divides there. Therefore, we really encourage all of you.

That brings me to my last point, we want to build the real sustainable systems, from the production to the consumer. Zero waste will be the new phenomenon for global consumers. Because on the one hand we produce a lot and, on the other hand, we waste too much, especially in the rich areas, in the city, and in some specific locations, the big potential is to reduce the food waste.

I encourage all of you, we have to establish a greener lifestyle, which is more favourable to the environment.

That is why in agriculture I always say the 5 F's – food, feeder, fuel, fibre and friends.

I fully agree with the Mexico Minister and William Dar and others: agriculture is the basic for all the transformation of food systems and rural development.

We really need some specific and tangible action plans for each country. Transformation of agri-food systems starts from better production, and then, we have a better nutrition and, of course, we want a better environment. Finally, we have a better livelihood and life quality. That is what we want.

I hope during this Conference, during the discussion in the coming days we can get more suggestions, more advice from the colleagues around the world, and then we, FAO, we will look at each specific scenario on the case.

Let us work together on how to specify your action, how to transform your agri-food systems to feed your local conditions.

FAO wants to be your bigger partner and also the platform to let all the Members sharing their experience, share their best practice, of course, also through the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, through the Geospatial Platform, Big Data analysis and all the cutting edge technologies.

Let us close here.

Once we can use the innovation and then we can really feed the world, even 10 billion consumers on the table by 2050.

Let us work together.

I thank you for your support. FAO's new Strategic Framework is there. I need your endorsement and suggestions. We will bring you concrete action together, and then help the farmers and the consumers and build back better, greener and stronger. Thank you.

Mr Máximo TORERO (Chief Economist of FAO)

Thank you very much, Director-General. Thank you very much to Mr Bill Gates, co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; thank you very much to Jewel Bronaugh, Deputy Secretary of the US Department of Agriculture; to Secretary of Agriculture of Mexico, Victor Villalobos; to Thoko Didiza, Minister of Social and Land Reform and Rural Development of the Republic of South Africa; to William D Dar, Secretary of Agriculture, Philippines; to Saud bin Hamoud bin Ahmed Al-Habsi, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Wealth and Water Resources of the Sultanate of Oman; and to Stefano Patuanelli, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies for Italy.

Thank you very much, Excellencies, for this great panel, and this brings to an end the McDougall Memorial Lecture. Let me now pass the floor to the Chairperson of the Conference.

VICEPRESIDENTE

Un saludo, Doctor Qu Dongyu, por el éxito de este primer día, de esta 42° Conferencia de la FAO.

Con esto se da por concluido el tema 28.1. Deseo manifestar el agradecimiento a todos y todas, los que han contribuido a que este acto haya sido de mucho éxito y coincidir que debemos coincidir que la humanidad no padezca hambre. Declaro clausurada nuestra segunda sesión plenaria, invitándolos a que nos reunamos mañana a las 8.30 en punto.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Thank you. Muchas gracias, amigo. Hasta mañana. Thank you, bye bye.

The meeting rose at 19:29 p.m.

La séance est levée à 19 h 29

Se levanta la sesión a las 19.29

CONFERENCE CONFERENCE CONFERENCIA

<p>Forty-second Session Quarante et deuxième session 42.º período de sesiones</p>
<p>Virtual Meeting, 14-18 June 2021 Réunion Virtuelle, 14-18 juin 2021 Reunión Virtual, 14-18 de junio de 2021</p>
<p>THIRD PLENARY MEETING TROISIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE TERCERA SESIÓN PLENARIA</p>
<p>15 June 2021</p>

The Third Meeting was opened at 08:38 hours
Ms Yael Rubinstein,
Vice-Chairperson of the Conference, presiding

La troisième séance est ouverte à 08 h 38
sous la présidence de Mme. Yael Rubinstein,
Vice-Président de la Conférence

Se abre la tercera reunión a las 08.38
bajo la presidencia de la Sra. Yael Rubinstein,
Vicepresidenta de la Conferencia

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Item 9. Review of the State of Food and Agriculture (continued)**Point 9. Examen de la situation de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture (suite)****Tema 9. Examen del estado de la alimentación y la agricultura (continuación)****VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

I bring the meeting to order. We will now continue with Item 9, *Review of the State of Food and Agriculture*. May I remind delegates to stay within the agreed upon five-minute time limit. Should you run out of time, the full version of your intervention can be submitted to the Secretariat for uploading to the Conference website and for inclusion in the Verbatim Records of this Session.

I would like to give the floor to the Chairperson of the Credentials Committee to make a short intervention regarding the Report of yesterday's meeting.

Ms Daniela ROTONDARO (Chairperson of the Credentials Committee)

I would like to inform you that we are convening another meeting of the Credentials Committee this morning at 10:00 hours. So all Members of the Credentials Committee, please be ready at 10:00, as we have to discuss the credentials that were submitted and credentials that were posted on the list of yesterday evening.

Statements by Heads of Delegation**Déclarations des chefs de délégation****Declaraciones de los jefes de delegación**

Saudi Arabia, Portugal, Netherlands, Bangladesh, South Africa, Burkina Faso, Eswatini, Canada, Indonesia, Norway, Cameroon, Japan, San Marino, Myanmar, Poland, Iraq, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Belarus, Burkina Faso

His Excellency Abdulrahman Bin Abdulmohsen AL-FADHLI (Saudi Arabia) (Original language Arabic)

In the name of God, the all Merciful, the Compassionate, thank you very much for organizing this Conference.

Your Excellency, Chair of the Conference, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Excellency, the Director-General of the Conference, Ladies and Gentlemen, I salute you and may the blessing of God be upon you.

On this occasion, first of all, I would like, on behalf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to express my gratitude to the Director-General of the FAO Organization. Thank you for the efforts exerted by the Organization and by yourself in organizing this Conference. We wish the 42nd session of the FAO Conference success.

We hope that this Conference will achieve its objectives. We, furthermore, hope that the discussions during this Conference will achieve better sustainable development and better food security across the globe.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia believes that it is part of its responsibility to grant the utmost importance to sustainable development and food security and sustainable agriculture.

We believe, therefore, that it is quite important to focus on the environmental issues and on sustainability. We have been working with a number of international and regional organizations in that regard. Many strategies and programmes were adopted within the government in order to uphold sustainable development and sustainable agriculture, therefore achieving food security at the national level, regional level and international level.

We have been working also on the preservation of our natural resources. For example, we have had a national strategy for food security. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia launched the biggest programme in that regard with a cost of about USD 3 billion. This programme allows small producers to thrive and it allows as well for small livestock producers to thrive as well. Likewise for fisherfolk. These together

will be able to use their resources. They will, therefore, bring better livelihoods to the rural areas. Food security will, therefore, be achieved even in the far remote rural areas. We have been collaborating with FAO for technical support and for consultation technical support in order to achieve our objectives.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has adopted one strategy for agriculture and another one for food security. We believe that food security is extremely important. We have many challenges that we need to face across the globe now and the COVID-19 pandemic has shown how fragile we were to shocks and to problems and challenges. We therefore decided to work on improving productivity and on ensuring better resources, better agriculture inputs and we decided also to work on our sub-strategies for agriculture. For example, we worked on better use of resources. Of course, we are not protected from any natural disasters but we can do our best in order to achieve a better sustainability in terms of agriculture.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, fighting against hunger means better investments in agriculture. It also implies better productivity. We need, therefore, a paradigm change. We need to achieve sustainable agriculture but we need as well to eradicate hunger, thus achieving better livelihoods for our people, especially in rural areas where agriculture is of paramount importance. This means that we need to use our resources in a better way. We need to develop agriculture. We need as well to limit the impact of climate change.

We need to increase our use of our resources in a more sustainable way. We need as well to work on food loss and food waste. Remember how much is lost in terms of percentage right after harvest. We need, therefore, to work on food loss and food waste right at the level of the farm. We notice as well that there is quite a bit of food loss during transportation and there is a lot of food loss and food waste all along the supply chain.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would like to reassert one more time its support to the Organization, now and in the future. We stand by you to fight against food loss and food waste. We stand with you to fight against food insecurity. We would like to thank you one more time for organizing this conference and we thank the organizers for their work. We hope for those meetings to be successful.

Thank you very much for your attention.

I salute you one more time and may the blessing of God be upon you.

Mr Pedro Nuno DE ABREU E MELO BARTOLO (Portugal)

Madam Chair, I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. I should add that the Republic of North Macedonia and San Marino and the Republic of Serbia align with this statement.

Agriculture and Food Systems have developed in line with population growth, meeting the demand for food of more than seven billion people. In the European Union, the combined effect of public policies and entrepreneurship have led the move from food insecurity, at the end of the second world war, to the present, where a community of countries aims to ensure sufficient safe and high-quality food for its citizens, respect the rules of international trade, make its food and agriculture systems sustainable and respond to the climate crisis.

Given the current and emerging socio-economic and environmental trends affecting and being impacted by agriculture and food systems, we all have to reinforce our efforts. Switching to a sustainable, climate-neutral, nature-based and resilient pathway will allow to deliver the food security and nutrition outcomes that countries aim to achieve by 2030, while staying within the planetary boundaries.

On the side of the European Union and its Member States, we are ready to do our part at FAO and elsewhere to reshape food systems at the global level. We delivered the EU priorities to the United Nations Food Systems Summit, which were approved last May at the Council of Agricultural Ministers, with a list of bold actions to be delivered in the Summit follow-up, based on the EU Green Deal, in particular in the agreed Biodiversity and Farm to Fork Strategies.

At FAO, we are reiterating the need for a Strategic Framework and a Programme of Work that can address, on an equal footing, the social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainability, and lead to the needed transformation of food systems in their diversity. We also wish to underline the need to better integrate and mainstream climate change, the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources within FAO's mandate and the importance of the One Health Approach.

In conclusion, Madame Chair, we are fully committed to working with countries from all regions and with all relevant stakeholders to achieve the 2030 Agenda through sustainable, inclusive, and resilient agriculture and food systems, driven by the overarching human rights principles and the right to adequate food approach. We are ready to engage in this joint endeavour, guided by the 2030 Agenda and the vision of a sustainable, climate-neutral and resource-efficient future.

Thank you, Madame Chair.

Her Excellency Carola SCHOUTEN (Netherlands)

Good morning Rome and anyone who is with us now online,

It is an honour for me to speak to you and "From Strategy to Action", I think no motto could have been more appropriate for this year's FAO Conference. Indeed, action is urgently needed, and more than ever, we feel the need to join hands.

The COVID-19 pandemic has left deep scars and revealed the vulnerabilities of both local and global food systems.

People who were already suffering from hunger and malnutrition are hit hardest.

Meanwhile, prices of food and raw materials are soaring.

The Dutch Government is committed to contributing its share to make the world's food system more sustainable and resilient.

We support the systems-based approach to contributing, because when it comes to the food system, challenges are interconnected.

For example, tackling food scarcity and hunger should not undermine our commitment to increasing biodiversity. And improving our health through food should go hand in hand with measures to prevent carbon emissions.

We want to work towards a food system that relies on the power of nature and does not harm it. A resilient food system, that can absorb blows such as pandemics, market shocks and global warming.

In order to achieve this and in anticipation of the UN Food Systems Summit later this year, we would like to focus on three points in particular:

- Firstly, the food system needs better governance, locally, nationally and internationally.
- Secondly, our international agricultural policy requires a stronger scientific basis. When redesigning the food system, we should base our decisions on evidence, on what has been proven to work.
- Thirdly, governments are not the only stakeholders. There is also a role to be played by consumers, civil society organizations, knowledge institutions and private companies. They can make the difference if they are truly involved and committed, as we all are.

Finally, I would like to point out that the Netherlands has an excellent candidate for the post of Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council. I would therefore like to encourage you to cast your vote for him later this week.

I wish you all the best.

Thank you.

His Excellency Muhammad Abdur RAZZAQUE (Bangladesh)

Mr Chairperson, His Excellency the Director-General of FAO, Distinguished Delegates, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Good morning to you all.

It is my pleasure to represent the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh at this 42nd Session of the FAO Conference, which is being convened on the zoom platform for the first time. I would like to convey the warm greetings from my delegation, the Government and the people of Bangladesh to Dr Qu Dongyu, FAO Director-General, for his dynamic leadership and fortitude amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr Chairperson, Bangladesh has made substantial improvements in the food security and nutritional status of its population over the last two decades. Self-sufficiency, especially in rice production of Bangladesh –achieved over 20 years ago –and so far, has been sustained. Per capita income has been rising steadily and poverty has declined by three quarters, resulting in better access to food for all. Rates of chronic malnutrition have also declined, especially over the past decade, by two thirds. The prevalence of undernourishment or 'hunger' declined to 13 percent in 2020 while the prevalence of severe food insecurity based on FAO's Food Insecurity Experience Scale also improved substantially.

I would like to point out that, at the onset of the pandemic, under the guidance of His Excellency the Prime Minister, the Government of Bangladesh responded promptly to maintain the pace of growth of agricultural production and supply and ensure access to food for the vulnerable population by distributing rice and other nutritious foods. The Government guaranteed continuity in the production of food by unveiling a stimulus package for farmers of US\$ 590 million apart from stimulus package to micro, small, and medium enterprises. The Government has put in place its immediate socio-economic response plans together with a COVID-19 response plan for agriculture to mitigate impacts.

Excellencies, Bangladesh is working to accelerate innovation and improve technology, data, governance, human resources and institutions to transform agri-food systems so that no one is left behind. These 'accelerators' which FAO advocates for in the State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) Report are the cornerstones of our policies and strategies. Technology and innovation are key to developing climate-smart technologies that will help to promote sustainability, diversification and food safety and reduced food losses and waste across the food chain.

In addition to harnessing technical innovations such as genetics, improved biosecurity and disease control alongside boosting trade and investment, we also look forward to the vertical extension through front-line research for high yielding varieties, climate stress tolerant varieties, and farming system development for reducing yield gaps. Recognizing the importance of nutrition sensitive agriculture, Bangladesh is promoting 'family nutrition gardens' across the country in the light of H.E Prime Minister's directives of 'not to keep an inch of fallow land'. Doubling rice yield initiative will also help free up space for diversified agriculture, an agenda aimed at impacting dietary diversity and nutrition.

Bangladesh is a proud participant of many programs of FAO at the global and country level. We are taking a food systems approach as advocated by the 2021 FAO SOFA on 'Agriculture Food Systems Transformation'. Last year the government approved the New Agricultural Extension Policy, the Agricultural Mechanisation Policy, the Good Agricultural Practice Policy and the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy 2020.

Mr Chair, In addition to threats and challenges posed by the advent of climate change and natural disasters, we have been hosting 1.1 million forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals (Rohingyas), a man-made disaster which is impacting our society, economy and environment severely. I call upon our development partners to come forward with targeted investments to complement to our development agenda – poverty eradication, agricultural transformation, employment of youth and women, etc.

We wish the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference a great success and look forward to seeing a more vibrant FAO under the dynamic leadership of the Director-General Dr Qu Dongyu. Bangladesh is reiterating its support and commitments to this end. Lastly, the Government of Bangladesh is privileged to be the host of the Thirty-Sixth Session of the Asia and the Pacific FAO Regional Conference in Dhaka from 8 to 11 March 2022. I would like to call upon the FAO and the member countries to support the successful holding of the conference. See you all again in Dhaka in 2022.

Thank you all.

Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu

Long live FAO Bangladesh partnership!

Thank you Mr Chair.

Her Excellency Thoko DIDIZA (South Africa)

Madam Chairperson, to the Director-General of FAO, to my colleagues, Ministers and Deputy Ministers present, Senior officials of FAO and various officials of the various Member countries, the region I am from, sub-Saharan Africa, remains on the backfoot of food security matters and broader agricultural development. As a region we remain a significant importer of food with an import bill averaging USD 44 billion a year and a trade deficit of USD 2 billion per annum. This makes food security a particular challenge within the region. Given the significance of the agricultural sector to the broader economy in sub-Saharan Africa of overreliance on food imports, today's discussion, which is agriculture and food transformation, From Strategy to Action, is crucial to us. This is more so as a number of the sub-Saharan African countries also have agriculture as part of the economic recovery strategies.

At the height of the pandemic, when the global food supply chains experienced glitches and some key food exporting countries placed temporary bans on exports, our region and, indeed, the broader continent was at a risky position. Thankfully, the intervention by FAO and other partners ensured that global leaders recognized this threat earlier and export bans were swiftly reversed. Still this was a hint that as a global community we need to work on a more resilient global food system, which is well diversified across all regions.

If I were to come back to South Africa, in my own country we are in a slightly fortunate position. Even at the height of the pandemic, South Africa remained a net exporter of agricultural and food products and 2020 was one of the best seasons because of favourable rainfall, increased investment that supported the crop yields.

There were bumper harvests of staple crops such as maize, soybean, major fruits such as citrus and deciduous fruits and sugar. Nevertheless, the essential imported agricultural and food products that South Africa is dependent on, such as rice, almost 100 percent; wheat, about 50 percent, dependent on imports; palm oil, 100 percent, dependent on imports; and also a small share of poultry products and pork.

South Africa is in a more fortunate position with higher levels of investment that enable access to better farming technologies through biotechnology and mechanical technology and favourable trade policy which ensures market access to various countries and encourages farmers to produce continuously.

The gains of the higher agricultural production have also been illustrated in food security levels in South Africa, which in various indices, such as the Global Food Security Index recently released by the Economist, still put South Africa at a relatively higher position of 69 out of 130 countries that are surveyed by the index, with 1 being the best and 130 being the worst. From a regional perspective, South Africa is the most food-secure country in the sub-Saharan region because of the aforementioned reasons about investment in agriculture.

With that said, in 2020 the number of South Africans in poverty increased, as previously stated. The major challenge was an overall increase in food prices and deterioration in South Africa's food safety net programmes. Food insecurity increased despite the government's efforts to issue food vouchers and different social grant support systems.

The challenge was not that South Africa's food prices were rising faster. Instead, most people were out of work with no buying power. Notably, before the COVID-19 pandemic, South Africa had pockets of food insecurity when one considers that household level perspective while at the national level the country is generally viewed as food secure. Over 6 million South Africans in low-income

households are not food secure, primarily due to affordability. I should also point out that South Africa's food system is a paradox.

On the one side we have a well-developed and commercially viable food production underpinned by modern technology and efficient value chains servicing domestic and export markets. On the other side we have vulnerable subsistence and smallholder farmers that struggle to be integrated into food value chains. The consequence of this dual food system is the increasing food insecurity in the country despite sufficient quantity of food produced by commercial farmers. The rising inability to access and afford safe and nutritious food is a function of growing unemployment, inequality and limited access to natural resources and underdevelopment infrastructure in rural and township areas.

For the near-term, various sub-Saharan governments' response to the rising food insecurity during the pandemic has primarily been through increased grain imports, primarily in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya, Nigeria and Malawi. Some of these countries also wrote out formal input support schemes to assist farmers ahead of the 2021 production season, which began from October 2020 for most countries. Direct income support to vulnerable households was limited to South Africa within the sub-Saharan region but household food insecurity rose even there.

As I conclude, Madam Chair, the various experiences seem to suggest that food systems in sub-Saharan Africa have experienced stress and disruptions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the set of policies that were implemented by governments across the African continent seem to have had limited impact in ensuring the optimal function of the food system. With prospects of various waves of COVID-19 pandemic emanating from a slow vaccination process, it is unlikely that the most vulnerable parts of the food systems, mainly smallholder farmers and informal supply chains, would maintain their resilience if the scale of the pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa increases.

With COVID-19, making the vulnerabilities and weaknesses of food supply chains more apparent and the effectiveness of government interventions becoming more apparent, questions remain about what a post-COVID-19 food system would look like.

Several structural considerations are likely to start shifting. Drawing from the lessons across sub-Saharan Africa, formal and informal supply chains need to evolve in such a way that adapt to COVID-19 pandemic and other crises such as climate change are necessary to be taken into consideration. Scale-specific technologies and food systems that enable farmers to establish multiple distribution channels outside of the existing conventional markets are critical in creating greater resilience. Rebalancing these considerations with scale and profitability remains a challenge.

With that said, there are various policy recommendations that would need to be in place to position sub-Saharan Africa food markets to better cope with COVID-19 and other crises in the future. These include the need to provide more holistic policy interventions that effectively redresses bottlenecks that affect the entire span of the value chain sectors, including but not limited to input suppliers, transporters and food transporters, processors, traders and retailers.

Two, significant interventions and market infrastructure, including grain silos and cold storage systems to support value chains of perishable products in most parts of Africa where this infrastructure systems are still underdeveloped and need to be expanded. Thirdly, to establish and expand social protections to vulnerable groups such as youth, women and people with disabilities but also those most affected by restrictions on economic activity, particularly urban poor and informal workers and resource-poor smallholder farmers.

Fourth, more effectively implement existing regional trade agreements as well as the alignment with the African continental free trade area, all of which represent an opportunity for greater levels of food market integration. The opening up of food markets under these sets of trade agreements will reduce the reliance of sub-Saharan Africa on food imports while increasing the growth potential and resilience of domestic and regional food systems.

In closing here, in South Africa, we are finalizing what we call the Agriculture and Agro-processing Master Plan, which seeks to improve the effectiveness of our food systems and foster inclusion, and through this we hope we will be able to sustain and improve our food security system in our country.

Thank you very much, Honourable Chairperson.

His Excellency Jabulani Clement MABUZA (Eswatini)

Thank you very much Chairperson and my colleagues, FAO Director-General, FAO staff members, Distinguished delegates, it is an honour and privilege for me to have the opportunity to address you at this 42nd Session of FAO Conference. Let me begin my address by extending warm greetings to you all on behalf of their Majesties, the Government and the people of the Kingdom of Eswatini.

Chairperson, the Kingdom of Eswatini recognises the good work that is being done by FAO in ensuring that we do not lose focus in the pursuit to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all without leaving anyone behind. This quest, dear colleagues, Honourable Heads of Delegations is without doubt not an easy task. It is even made worse by the many emerging challenges including the present situation of the COVID-19 Pandemic which has hit the world hard. May I, on that note, commend the decision to continue having this conference despite the pandemic utilising the virtual platform.

Chairperson, the Kingdom of Eswatini would like to align itself with the theme of the Conference, which is “Agriculture Food Systems Transformation: From Strategy to Action”. To me this simply means it is time we implement all the strategies we have been developing over the years. It is not the strategies that will provide the required food but the results of executing these strategies. So in order to achieve our goal of zero hunger, no poverty, improved health and the wellbeing of our people, we have to accelerate the implementation of planned programmes.

Chairperson, while we were still struggling to achieve food and nutrition security with our efforts being hampered by the climate change phenomenon the situation has since been made worse by the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. This has caused a near complete shutdown of various programmes of national development including those on food and nutrition security.

Chairperson, the Kingdom of Eswatini would like to congratulate FAO and development Partners for rendering development assistance to the different countries in the form of various projects and programmes of economic importance to the countries. Such projects and programmes include a number that are contributing remarkably to the food and nutrition security endeavour. Of particular importance to Eswatini is the use of climate smart agriculture approaches to increase smallholder farmer resilience to climate change. The various partners within and outside the United Nations umbrella are helping us build the capacity of our smallholder farmers to make meaningful contribution to the national economic development and improved livelihoods of our people. Eswatini, through the technical assistance of FAO and the World Food Programme is involved in the provision of food commodities for a school feeding programme. We have recently embarked on the home grown school feeding programme and that has changed for the better the production approach and way of thinking of the smallholder farmers. The farmers received training to improve the yield and quality of their produce and also to develop the necessary skills in proper handling, storage and marketing of the farm produce. The resultant effect has been direct market access for the smallholder farmers, improved yield and quality, reduction in the cost of providing food commodities to the national school feeding programme and the gradual change from producing for family sustenance to production for the market through the market-led approach.

Chairperson, Ladies and Gentlemen, another programme that Eswatini would like to attribute to the technical assistance and development cooperation with FAO and other development partners is in the development of resilience through climate smart agriculture approaches and technologies. Very recently the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Eswatini was taken on a conducted tour of an eco-friendly, climate smart agriculture project by a smallholder farmer in one of Eswatini’s regions that is susceptible to drought. The farmer is growing various field crops and fruits for business using the climate smart agriculture approach and eco-friendly methods for sustainability. This visit to the model farmer was used as a means to provoke the interest of other farmers in a similar position to copy and eventually replicate the good work by the model farmer.

Chairperson, allow me to conclude by expressing my country’s strong support to the vision to push for better production, better nutrition, better environment and better life through the transformation from

strategy to action. The food systems approach is a way to go in the quest to reduce global hunger, malnutrition and put the world back on track in the fight to improve food and nutrition security for all.

Thank you.

Ms Alexandra BUGAILISKIS (Canada)

Honourable Ministers, Director-General Qu, Dear Delegates, Notre thème cette année, la stratégie et l'action, est très pertinent, alors que nous célébrons les 75 ans de la FAO. Et pourtant, on regarde vers l'avenir afin de transformer nos systèmes alimentaires suite à l'une des années les plus difficiles depuis cette réunion qui a fondé la FAO en 1945 à Québec.

Canada fully supports the FAO Strategic Framework to support Agenda 2030 through the four betters of sustainable, inclusive and resilient agri-food systems – better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life. In support of SDG2, Zero Hunger, our Agri-food and Agriculture Department is leading Canada's national dialogue in advance of the UN Food Systems Summit.

We know that world hunger has worsened during the pandemic and today our challenge is to reverse the negative trend that started in 2016 and to transform our agri-food systems with all countries and all people in mind. We must not only meet the food needs of the growing population but also reduce the impacts in all sectors of agriculture, including fisheries and forestry, while strengthening the resilience to climate change and other shocks. We need to take a systems approach from production to consumption, from research to reducing food waste and loss. This is our common 21st Century challenge. To meet this challenge we all need to strengthen the three pillars of sustainability: environment, social and economy.

Firstly, our food systems must be environmentally sustainable. We know that agriculture is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and we are proud that in Canada farmers have succeeded in reducing their environmental footprint while strengthening biodiversity and increasing productivity, and they have done this through innovation, innovation in plant and livestock genetics, innovation in precision farming tools and innovation in farm practices, such as crop and pasture rotations, cover crops and reduced tillage.

Canada is making significant investments to help farmers build on this work through science and research, into new pest-resistant crops, clean technology, such as biodigestors and living laboratories, bringing farmers and researchers together in the field to develop sustainable practices that work on the farm, and we are stepping up internationally. This past weekend, Prime Minister Trudeau announced at the G7 a doubling of Canada's climate finance from USD 2.6 billion in 2015 to USD 5.3 billion over the next five years.

This funding will increase support for developing countries to build domestic capacity to take climate action to build resiliency and reduce pollution, including by finding nature-based solutions to climate change and protecting biodiversity. Farmers, we know, are the first to feel the effects of climate change.

At the same time, as the FAO clearly states in its strategic framework, we must ensure that these new tools are inclusive and equitable. In Canada we recognize the importance of giving voice and leadership at the table to women, to youth and to indigenous people and that is why a diverse and multidisciplinary group of experts has been established to advise the Ministry on new and emerging issues and it is a central part of Canada's very first food policy.

We have also established a Canadian agricultural youth council to advise on the future of the agriculture and agri-food sector from their perspective. And the third pillar is economic sustainability, to thrive agriculture producers and workers across the food system, need access to tools, innovation and markets.

Canada supports FAO's call for a science-based, rules-based business environment that ensures food gets to where it is needed and that agriculture producers have access to the tools and technologies that are necessary for them. We also need to reduce the digital gender divide and enable rural women and other groups to access digital technologies to strengthen communities and diversify incomes. We need to put women and girls at the centre of our activities and actions.

So, as I close, let me highlight that this year brings us, with the UN Food Systems Summit, a bold new strategic framework for the FAO but a great opportunity for us all to move from strategy to action and to deliver on Sustainable Development Goals. Let us take that advantage.

Merci beaucoup.

Ms Ida Ayu RATIH (Indonesia)

Madam, Vice Chairperson. We regretfully inform you that His Excellency Dr Syahrul Yasin Limpo, the Minister of Agriculture, is not able to attend this plenary due to in-country work commitments. We have sent a short notice to the Secretariat. We will send you the recorded statement of the Minister later today and we hope the Secretariat would accept and upload it to the platform. Thank you for your understanding and your patience.

Her Excellency Olaug Vervik BOLLESTAD (Norway)

Chair, this year the FAO Conference takes place in a global pandemic. People all over the world struggle and millions more are food insecure. This is not acceptable.

This year is also the year of the Food Systems Summit. The preparations, the pre-Summit and the Summit itself are essential for mobilizing political support for innovative and game-changing solutions. This is important both at the national and the global level.

These solutions must deliver progress on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. We trust FAO will extend its full support to the remaining Summit preparations, as well as the system of follow-up.

Chair, our food systems are put at risk by climate change, conflicts, loss of biodiversity and outbreaks of diseases. The poor and vulnerable suffer the most.

As the United Nations specialized agency in food and agriculture, FAO is key to meet these challenges. We need a strong FAO, building on its expertise and knowledge, fully in line with the UN-reform.

To end hunger, all actions must be grounded in human rights, in particular the right to food, leaving no-one behind and ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment. We would like to see these principles clearly reflected in FAO's vision and the future work of the organisation.

Chair, Norway would like to highlight some key priorities:

Firstly, sustainable management and use of natural resources for agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture and forestry is key, including climate change adaptation and mitigation. FAO plays a vital role in providing a knowledge base for sustainable forest management. We trust that FAO will continue to provide the main source of information on forest resources.

We need to realize the ocean's potential. Norway and the other partners in The High Level Ocean Panel are committed to implement the necessary means to that end, and we welcome the contribution of FAO.

Secondly, seed diversity is fundamental to food security. The realization of farmers' rights is an important part. Last year, I welcomed the deposit of seeds from 35 gene banks in the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. I hope more gene banks will make use of this to secure their important seed collections.

Thirdly, Antimicrobial resistance is one of the greatest global health threats. Infectious diseases become more difficult or impossible to treat. The AMR challenge can only be solved through a One Health approach. We call on FAO to take its position in the global collaboration on AMR.

The goal must be prudent and responsible use of antibiotics. Good agricultural and animal husbandry practices, hygiene measures and biosecurity are fundamental. We must end all use of antibiotics as growth promoters and as routine prophylaxis in animal food production.

Finally chair, let me affirm Norway's commitment to FAO's work. I wish everyone the best for this Conference.

Thank you!

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

Members of Government and fellow colleagues, The Director-General of FAO, Honourable Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, The Republic of Cameroon is honoured to take part of this deliberation of the 42nd session of the FAO Conference which we would have liked to hold, as usual, in plenary session but, unfortunately, because of the COVID-19 pandemic it has been a virtual meeting.

I would like to take this opportunity, me and my delegation, to congratulate the Secretary for sparing no effort in organizing this conference. Permit me, first of all, to reiterate the constant support and commitment of the Government of Cameroon to the Director-General of FAO and the actions of the prestigious United Nations Agency. Within the framework of the general debate of this 42nd session of the Conference, the central theme that has been submitted for consideration is agriculture food system transformation from strategy to action.

This is a global and current theme. In fact, the *2021 Report of the State of Food and Agriculture: Agriculture Food System Transformation from Strategy to Action* that was prepared as part of the review of the theme clearly identifies the issues at stake.

The theme was also discussed severely during the Technical Committee session held this year. The current world agri-food systems raise the issue of the planet's capacity to produce, by the year 2050, the quantity of food needed to feed a growing, an increasingly urbanized population with blaring gender inequality.

The effects of climate change coupled with the effects of various crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, are drastically changing the landscape of agriculture production. We are also aware of the fact that the genetic diversity of the plants and animals that we produce and consume, and which is the essence of the biological basis of the production for food security is under threat and records significant losses.

First, with these major challenges, it is only right that we examine the resilience and sustainability of our agri-food systems to ensure food security and nutrition today and for future generations without compromising the economic, social and environmental foundations. Therefore, it is urgent to transform our agri-food systems. Its role as a catalyst during this decade of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, essentially SDGs 1 and 2, is very obvious.

This really is more a requirement in Africa in general and in my country, Cameroon, in particular, where food security indications in this period of COVID-19 are alarming. By way of illustration, more than 250.3 million people, or 36.4 percent of the population, are undernourished in Africa. Projections for 2030 show that Africa will reach the figure of 433.2 million people or 51.5 percent of the population in a state of undernourishment.

Suite en français

Honorables délégués,

Mesdames et Messieurs, pour remédier à cette à situation, mon pays le Cameroun a adopté une stratégie pour la transformation structurelle de son économie et le développement inclusif dans un document de planification dénommé « stratégie nationale de développement 2020-2030 » impulsé comme vous pouvez vous en douter par son Excellence, Monsieur Paul Biya, Président de la République du Cameroun qui a initié ce concept d'agriculture de deuxième génération.

L'agriculture de deuxième génération est une vision politique visant le développement agricole et rural du Cameroun en vue de conforter son statut de grenier de l'Afrique centrale. Son opérationnalisation nécessite des actions et défis concrets à relever, à savoir la modernisation durable de l'appareil de production, le renforcement des mécanismes de financement de l'agriculture, la consolidation du processus de formation des acteurs du secteur agro-rural, la régulation du marché et la prévention des crises alimentaires, la mise en place des infrastructures de transport et de stockage. Bref, la transformation du système agroalimentaire camerounais, en mettant un accent particulier sur l'organisation des chaînes de valeur et des produits agricoles.

Mesdames et Messieurs, la situation ambiante est telle qu'il faut déployer une batterie de compétences techniques et un certain savoir-faire pour opérer une réelle métamorphose des systèmes alimentaires actuels afin qu'ils contribuent efficacement à la fois à atteindre la sécurité alimentaire et à garantir le développement durable. Evidemment, l'innovation scientifique par le biais de la technologie de pointe et des outils numériques résultant de la recherche, est la voie royale pour transformer significativement nos systèmes alimentaires, consolider l'intégration des producteurs, améliorer la productivité, assurer l'efficacité du fonctionnement des marchés, et contribuer à la sécurité sanitaire des aliments.

Le moment est arrivé où il n'est plus utile de s'attarder sur des concepts narratifs en travaillant sur des actions concrètes qui visent l'accélération de l'atteinte des ODD en intégrant le développement des systèmes alimentaires et en transformant les diagnostics holistiques en programmes et projets, en actions concrètes et en investissements. Une telle mise en action politique devra tenir compte de la nouvelle vision de la FAO qui concilie l'alimentation, l'agriculture, les moyens de subsistance, le bien-être des populations et la préservation des ressources naturelles.

Le Cameroun s'engage d'ailleurs à soutenir et à implémenter le principe de 4 améliorations développées par cette Organisation internationale, à savoir, amélioration de la production, amélioration de la nutrition, amélioration de l'environnement et amélioration des conditions de vie. Au moment où on s'achemine vers le Sommet 2021 des Nations Unies sur le système alimentaire, il nous revient d'innover les mécanismes agroalimentaires afin d'améliorer les aspects de la production des denrées alimentaires ou non alimentaires et de scruter attentivement comment est-il possible en tant que consommateur, producteur ou négociant, d'opérer des changements qui transforment nos systèmes pour les adapter au monde de demain.

Le Cameroun entend mettre à contribution sa présence à cette conférence pour tirer les leçons des expériences concluantes qui ont conduit à la définition et à l'implémentation des politiques qui ont su transformer avec succès les systèmes alimentaires dans le monde.

Merci de votre aimable attention.

His Excellency Yasuhiro HANASHI (Japan)

Director-General, Dr. Qu Dongyu, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am greatly honoured to be able to speak at the 42nd session of the FAO Conference on behalf of the Government of Japan. I would first like to pay my profound respects to Dr. QU and the Secretariat for their efforts in organising this session under the difficult circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The theme of this year's session, the transformation of agriculture and food systems, is a very timely issue.

With the growing awareness of global environmental issues, there is a need for the comprehensive establishment of sustainable, high-quality, and healthy diets as well as environmentally friendly food production, distribution and processing.

System-oriented approaches that encompass not only production but also procurement, processing, distribution, and consumption will be important in such transformation of agriculture and food systems.

It was against such a background that Japan formulated its Strategy for Sustainable Food Systems, in Japanese [speaks Japanese], in May this year. This strategy will achieve both enhancement of productivity potentials and sustainability in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food sectors by encouraging innovation to establish new technology systems at each stage of the supply chain from production to consumption.

In the formulation of this strategy, we held multiple direct dialogues with stakeholders including producers and food industries. With our minister and other high level officials including myself taking the lead, we held 22 of such dialogues, which allowed us to form the strategy with great care. The strategy's goals include implementing existing technologies in society by 2030, and, by 2050, reaching zero CO2 emissions from the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries sectors, reducing the use of chemical fertilisers by 30 percent, halving the risk-weighted use of chemical pesticides, and expanding organic agriculture.

While the Asian region including Japan accounts for around 40 percent of the world's agricultural greenhouse gases emissions, this region is also subject to high temperatures and humid climates. Japan's strategy seeks to solve problems under such conditions through innovation. We consider this approach to be

a model for food systems that could also be applied to the Asian Monsoon region. From this perspective, we will seek a deeper understanding of this strategy among the Southeast Asian nations and promote joint research and collaboration with them.

Food consumption aspects are also important, and we believe that the balanced Japanese diet and dietary patterns could serve as a model for the world.

Preparations are underway for the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit, which is scheduled to take place in December this year. This summit will be one of the biggest events at the end of 2021 and will carry on the achievements of September's UN Food Systems Summit, including in the areas I have just mentioned. Through the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit, we hope to contribute to the world by promoting international efforts to solve the global issue of improving nutrition.

We believe that FAO has the potential to make major contributions to solving the issues that will be discussed at the UN Food Systems Summit. Here, I would like to present two issues of our collaborative activities with FAO.

The first one is building resilience into global food supply chains after COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic caused disruptions to food supply chains around the world. Japan will work with FAO to develop guidelines for building more resilient, seamless food supply chains. We also hope to collaborate with the COVID-19 Food Coalitions advocated by the Italian Government and work with other countries, which have similar interests.

The second one is the International Conference on Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) 2021 to be held in Japan. It will take place in the Noto region of Ishikawa Prefecture in late November this year to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the designation of the region as a GIAHS site. As it will be possible to attend the conference online, we look forward to wide-ranging participation from relevant countries.

Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, Japan will continue to actively contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda by addressing global challenges through cooperation and collaboration with FAO and other relevant International Organizations, as well as other countries.

Thank you very much.

His Excellency Stefano CANTI (San Marino)

Good morning, Mr Chairperson, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of San Marino, I would like first of all to commend the Director-General for adopting all the preventive measures for FAO staff well-being during the pandemic outbreak and for keeping our Missions updated. A special thanks goes to all FAO staff for their efficiency and commitment in facing the most difficult challenge in our modern history.

By way of derogation from its rules, FAO has adopted virtual format thus allowing all governing bodies including this 42nd FAO Conference to carry out their works and member countries to participate in an inclusive way, while many of them are still facing challenges in this global fight.

We commend the Italian Government for all measures taken to prevent and contain the pandemic since 2020.

We need to unite by carrying out global vaccination, overcoming economic and geo-political interests in this global challenge.

Only together can we prevent escalation to a protracted humanitarian and food security catastrophe as the economic and social disruption caused by the pandemic.

San Marino has been severely affected by the pandemic and suffered one of the highest rates of infections, with a high loss of human lives and strong economic impact.

My Government firmly believes that this is the time for global solidarity and support. We have co-sponsored several UN resolutions and the UNGA Resolutions on Global Solidarity to Fight COVID-19 and on International Cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical

equipment to face COVID-19, thus highlighting the importance of international cooperation and equitable access to health products as a global priority.

The Republic of San Marino praises FAO for its important role in assessing and preventing global food emergency during and after the COVID-19 pandemic through the “COVID-19 Comprehensive Response and Recovery Program”.

We welcome the lead taken by the Director-General in promoting agricultural innovation through integrated innovative approaches and digital technologies in FAO core business in the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture.

Digital technologies are rapidly transforming people, business and governments in contributing to achieving the 2030 Agenda goals and the SDGs. However, digital technologies may also raise economic, social and ethical concerns in particular with respect to privacy and security.

One of the initiatives approved by FAO is the Strategy for Private Sector Engagement to include all stakeholders in accordance with FAO’s rules to prevent all forms of reputational risk for the Organization.

The 2030 Agenda is fundamental for the construction of healthy, resilient and peaceful societies for our future generations.

Last May, my Government adopted national strategies based on the 2030 Agenda goals. Food security and sustainable agriculture are being implemented through organic farming by encouraging multifunctional agriculture, certifying and enhancing local food and wine production, raising social awareness on eating habits and combating food loss and waste. In addition, support instruments were introduced to fight poverty. This needs an integrated approach from farm to fork.

In 2019 together with Andorra we sponsored the UNGA Resolution on the *International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste*, to raise awareness on the importance of food access and use.

Initiatives were taken at international level for the International Bees day focusing on the importance of bees and other pollinators for biodiversity, food security, nutrition and livelihoods.

As a Member of the Alliance for the promotion of the Mediterranean Diet, launched by Italy, San Marino shares the principles of the Mediterranean Diet, recognized by UNESCO as “Intangible Cultural Heritage”, as a powerful means to achieve the 2030 Agenda goals.

We support all healthy diets as an inclusive cultural and social promotion model of healthy nutrition and lifestyle.

In accordance with these principles we are strongly committed in the Pre-Summit on Food Systems, which will take place in July under the G20 Italian Presidency. The recommendations of this Pre-Summit must be taken into account by the UN Food Systems Summit, as an important FAO contribution and a unique opportunity to rethink how to improve access to healthy diets and increase income for small producers as well as reduce food loss and waste.

We are looking forward to taking part in it. Strong multilateralism and commitment are essential to build sustainable development.

Last but not least, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Independent Chairperson Mehboob for his excellent work during his mandate, his diplomatic ability in guiding Members through important negotiations, and I do hope that the new ICC will guide Members during constructive negotiations and consensus building, by bearing in mind our moral duty to not leave anyone behind.

Thank you for your attention.

Her Excellency Anna GEMBICKA (Poland)

Dear Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, we find ourselves at a time when external factors have a strong impact on agriculture and food systems as a whole. These factors cover in particular: accelerating climate change, economic and health crises caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and a growing human pressure on the natural environment. Moreover, we still deal with the

problems of unequal global access to food, inadequate diet of a large part of the world's population, and with the difficulties farmers face trying to make a living.

Only ten years remain to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals. A new, better food policy is therefore needed. It is also urgent to coordinate measures to support the transformation of agri-food systems, in order to make them resilient. We need to act quickly and globally to make food systems sustainable. The FAO should play a leading role in the relevant international work streams.

Food systems are very complex and diverse, and they require the development of multi-dimensional instruments adapted to the challenges. Their transformation is conditioned by robust, evidence-based, inclusive, and ambitious political decisions.

There is a growing recognition that the challenges we face are interlinked. This implies the need to develop internally-consistent policies addressing food systems. However, consistency alone has little value if the goals are not sufficiently ambitious.

The challenges identified above are addressed by a model of a multifunctional and sustainable agriculture. Such a model guarantees food security, supplies public goods, including environmental ones, promotes the development of entrepreneurship associated with the agri-food sector, and stimulates social and territorial development (including cultural functions of rural areas). Only efficient and coordinated public institutions have the potential to manage public policies in such a way as to respond effectively to emerging challenges.

Development of national food strategies is one of the methods to achieve greater consistency of policies. These strategies should enable reaching of sustainable development goals at the local level. When developing them, countries must answer the following questions: What is the real efficiency of the current food system? What is the role of the policy? Where are the barriers in the current system? What factors are an obstacle to implementing a better policy?

National food strategies should respond to these challenges, taking into account solutions resulting from modern communication methods, scientific achievements, new technologies, and digitalisation.

The new EU Common Agricultural Policy will support European farmers in the process of transformation. The *"farm to fork"* strategy which is an important element of the European Green Deal, sets out a strategic vision for the change in food production and consumption. But Europe alone is not enough. The transformation of agri-food systems must take place at the global level. The EU and FAO cooperate in the field of agriculture, fisheries, forestry, biodiversity, food security, food crises, and food safety. If we want to avert the threats we are facing, a similar cooperation between all states is needed.

One of the actions Poland has taken to transform our food systems is the development of a food identification system. It provides participants of the food chain with transparent and reliable information on how and where food is produced. This is a bottom-up initiative of the food chain participants.

The aim of the project is to develop a digital food traceability and food authenticity system at key stages of the supply chain, or "from farm to fork". The stakeholders expect a number of benefits from the implementation of such a system. It will provide a wide spectrum of food information as well as integrate the currently operating reference databases. Thus, the Polish agri-food sector will gain a system providing high-quality, reliable and not falsified data on the food product. This information will ultimately also be made available to consumers, among other users, to help them make conscious consumer choices. The project has been integrated with the national preparations for the UN Food Systems Summit 2021.

We hope that the mobilisation of the world community, related to the preparatory work streams of the summit, will allow to develop concrete solutions, enabling the implementation of our common goals set out in the 2030 Agenda.

Thank you for your attention.

His Excellency Mahdi Sahar GHAILAN (Iraq) (Original Language Arabic)

Distinguished Director-General of FAO, Excellencies, Heads of Delegations and Representatives of the different countries, May God's peace be with you all.

I am very glad to be able to represent my country's delegation in this 42nd Session of the FAO Conference. I am here to represent the Minister for Agriculture of the Republic of Iraq, Mr Muhammad Al-Khafaji, who wishes to convey his greetings to you and wishes this Conference the best of success.

Food security is one of the greatest challenges facing the international community, especially at this time of pandemic, which has been so difficult and which, unfortunately, has been with us for almost two years now. Of course, there are other challenges like the population explosion, climate change, a low productivity and production levels, not to mention the various climate catastrophes that have ravaged our planet recently and the changes affecting the agricultural sectors of our regions throughout the world.

It is absolutely necessary to rise to these challenges in this COVID time, but this means being able to anticipate human requirements and needs in order to be able to face the future. This in turn requires a more effective type of cooperation at all levels – national, regional and international – and this, through the implementation of sustainable development activities and peace-building endeavours, always paying special attention to young people to make sure that they are mainstreamed into the programmes of the Organization, and make sure that they are encouraged to develop their skills, taking into account the needs and priorities of every country, and of course the decisions taken by the Regional Conferences.

In this respect, I am very glad to be able to announce that my country, Iraq, will be organizing the 36th Regional Conference for the Near-East Region – and this in our capital, Baghdad – and the modalities will be coordinated with FAO according to the unfolding health situation.

[Inaudible to the interpreter]

We shall continue to work with FAO and we ask for a greater support of our agricultural support plans and programmes. Of course, during the pandemic, agricultural activities were put on the back burner so to speak, to give priority to the pandemic, but we need to go back to that and reinforce agricultural, animal and plant productivity through the implementation of the strategy devised by the Ministry of Agriculture and development projects, and through the training of stakeholders in order to achieve sustainable agricultural development that will be respectful of the need to preserve the planet and water resources.

Thank you very much.

His Excellency Taras KACHKA (Ukraine)

Dear Delegates, Invited Participants, Dear Madame Chair, I am pleased to welcome you all today on behalf of Ukraine. At the outset, let me thank the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for its great efforts and achievements in addressing hunger and malnutrition worldwide, as well as the promotion of agriculture and global food systems to achieve sustainable development goals. I hope that Ukraine's cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations will continue to deepen, covering new priorities.

Ukraine, like the rest of the world, is committed to the development of sustainable food systems and to improving human nutrition and health, preserving biodiversity and ecosystems, and increasing international trade in agricultural products, using territorial approaches.

First of all, a great deal of work has been done over the past year to prepare for the opening of the land market in Ukraine, and a number of important draft laws have been adopted, that will improve the functioning of financial markets and encourage further investments in and diversification of agriculture, while protecting the rights of small owners. Small owners and small farmers are key priorities of our land market reform and the full operation of land market will start in several weeks,

on 1 July 2021, and this is the real completion of the transition of Ukrainian agriculture from bland economy to an economy based on food ownership of the land for small and big owners.

Digital technologies, such as e-land registries and e-services, play a very important role in this process.

The effects of accelerated climate change are leading to the allocation of agriculture as the primary focus of available resources. Sustainable agri-food production and the development of sustainable agriculture are our priorities.

It should be noted that Ukraine has made significant progress in the implementation of national legislation to European standards on organic production, handling and labelling of organic products, as well as in the area of sanitary and phytosanitary measures.

In March of this year a new law «On Veterinary Medicine and Animal Welfare» was adopted, which envisages the introduction in Ukraine of world standards in the sphere of animal health and welfare and this law took into account a great range of European Union standards to which we aligned our legislation.

In terms of agricultural output, unfortunately we saw a decline of 4.7 percent between January and April of this year compared to the corresponding period of last year. Of course, the key impact for this was connected to Coronavirus.

At the same time, Ukraine is one of the few countries which, despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, has almost fully ensured the fulfilment of its obligations, thus confirming the status of a reliable and predictable partner, and has long been one of the leading players in international agricultural trade.

I would like to stress that for Ukraine it is especially important to ensure that we provide no obstacle to exporting our agricultural products for the nations in demand.

Forecasts of future harvests allow us to look to the future with confidence.

In conclusion, the Ukrainian side reaffirms its support for all the progressive initiatives of FAO and its readiness to join in their implementation. Remember that we are all shaping global food systems, and therefore the collective efforts of all countries to achieve food security, well-being and progress and sustainable development are important.

Thank you for your time.

His Excellency Amiri SHERSHAH (Afghanistan)

Honourable Director-General of FAO, Mr Secretary, Respected Chairpersons, Excellency, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, this is another great opportunity to highlight our shared goals for food provision and the fight against hunger.

As we discuss agriculture food systems' transformation, our common goals are the same but our needs and priorities might be different. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, like any other country in the globe, Afghanistan has been hit hard, not only in the health sector but also in food systems and farmers' livelihoods.

Afghanistan is an agricultural country and approximately 70 percent of its population is engaged in agriculture – where 70 percent earn their livelihood. At present, agriculture's contribution to National GDP is about 22 percent, however during the pre-war era, the contribution of agriculture to GDP was 50 percent. The total agricultural land in Afghanistan is about 7.8 million hectares, and only 12 percent is used for agriculture.

Based on the food security and nutrition strategy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, like many other developing countries in the world, Afghanistan is also coping with severe and widespread food and nutrition insecurity. Around 33 percent of Afghans suffer from food insecurity, and 40 percent of Afghan children, who are less than five years old, experience chronic under-nourishment. 55 percent of Afghans are living under the poverty line.

There are several impediments that are responsible for food and nutrition insecurity in Afghanistan. Climate change is one of the most important constraints, because of which Afghanistan occasionally experiences drought, making living conditions more difficult for the vast majority of Afghan people. In recent years, the amount of rainfall has decreased from 400 mm to 250 to 300 mm per year. Natural dry land farming depends on annual rainfall, whereas the majority of irrigated crops depend on water from snow melting.

If there is not sufficient snowfall during the winter season, there will be drought in the subsequent growing season, meaning that the reduced annual rainfall and insufficient annual snowfall will adversely affect crop productivity, the livestock sector and also rent land. It will also increase water stress on permanent crops and natural vegetation in the coming season. The low rainfall and insufficient snowfall in 2020 will most likely cause drought countrywide, and the Government of Afghanistan, in particular the Ministry of Agriculture, is taking necessary measures to address food and nutrition shortfalls in case of emergency.

To mitigate and reduce the negative impact of drought, Afghanistan needs urgent improvements in its irrigation systems by constructing watersheds, irrigation canals on concrete water channels, along with developing appropriate crop production packages, such as improved seeds, fertilizer, drought-tolerant, disease-resistant and high-yielding varieties for the major crops.

In addition, the Minister of Agriculture has been taking drastic steps for redressing other problems, such as pests and disease, natural disasters, loss of biodiversity, habitat destruction and ongoing conflict, which directly affects our current agri-systems. Therefore, one of our greatest challenges of the 21st century is to meet society's growing food needs, while concurrently mitigating the impact of the environment on agriculture.

For the great contribution made by FAO and other international donor organizations in the rebuilding of Afghanistan and boosting its economic growth in the past, the Government and the people of Afghanistan have been very grateful. Now, in order to tackle the possible food insecurity and malnutrition problems, because of COVID-19 and drought, the country urgently needs the general assistance of FAO and other international donors in the following high priority areas: in the improvement of irrigation systems, by building more watershed and irrigation canals to access more water and improve productivity; and also in increased reed and other cereal crop production, by assisting poor farmers with improved seed, fertilizer, pesticide and agricultural inputs [inaudible].

His Excellency Alexey BOGDANOV (Belarus) (Original Language Russian)

Good morning Madame Chair, Director-General, Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus, I would like to thank the FAO Secretariat for the opportunity to speak at this 42nd Session of the FAO Conference.

In the Republic of Belarus the sustainable development of food systems is a priority of the State's socio-economic and agricultural policy. For our country, agriculture is a core sector that provides the people with the food they need and we have a high export potential. Every year the agricultural sector generates around 7 percent of the country's GDP.

The national market is full of high quality domestic produce, and over 30 percent of agri-food products are exported. 2020, which was characterised by external and domestic challenges, showed the high level of efficiency of the food system in Belarus. In the global food security ranking of countries, Belarus has significantly improved its position, leaping from 36th place in 2019, to 23rd place today.

In 2015 the Republic of Belarus endorsed the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and we expressed our support for its implementation. The country is implementing large scale measures to modernise production logistics, promote cooperation and integration in industries, improve human resources, and build social infrastructure in rural areas.

All of this makes a significant contribution to the formation of sustainable food systems, creating favourable conditions for improving people's quality of life. Noting the work done and outcomes achieved, our country continues to work actively in this area. For the period 2021 to 2025, Belarus

adopted a State Agri-business Programme, thus providing for the development of environmentally friendly agriculture. It also ensures adequate nutrition and healthy lifestyles.

As regards new areas of work, the transition to precision farming is underway. This allows for greater use of data from satellite communication and navigation systems, automated information collection systems, and process management. Particular attention is paid to the development of organic farming. In 2018 a law on the production and handling of organic produce was passed in Belarus, and bodies have been established to certify organic products and production processes.

The Republic of Belarus has joined the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Belarus is implementing its domestic policies and is implementing measures aimed at reducing anthropogenic impacts on the climate. Climate change has required Belarussian farmers to develop new technologies and improve existing ones.

Currently, in order to adapt crops to climate conditions which have been changing, scientific research is constantly being conducted to increase the number of varieties and hybrids, and improve the soil cultivation system. In order to meet the needs of the livestock sector, the structure of cultivated crops is being changed, along with the fodder supply, and we are optimising our grain supplies.

Our country appreciates the many years of fruitful collaboration and cooperation with FAO. Important projects are underway to strengthen the capacity of phytosanitary services, market research, and rural development. Training seminars and webinars are also being held. Belarus is interested in continuing to strengthen its cooperation with FAO and with other countries, sharing experiences and implementing joint projects to form a highly efficient agro-industry, and develop entrepreneurship in agriculture.

In conclusion, Republic of Belarus, as a fully-fledged Member of FAO, supports the proposals on the programme of the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference, to scale up efforts to transform agri-food systems and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

I thank you Chair.

Mme Josephine Ouedraogo GUISSOU (Burkina Faso)

Madame la Présidente de la Conférence, Mesdames et Messieurs les Ministres, Mesdames et Messieurs les Ambassadeurs, je suis très honoré de prendre part au débat général de la 42^e session de la Conférence de la FAO. Je voudrais saluer les efforts et féliciter la FAO qui a pu tenir, dans les meilleures conditions possibles, cette rencontre mondiale malgré le contexte de pandémie.

Madame la Présidente, cette session consacrée aux défis liés à la transformation des systèmes alimentaires est une grande opportunité pour les pays de l’Afrique de l’Ouest et particulièrement le Burkina Faso qui essaie actuellement plusieurs leviers en vue de parvenir à des systèmes agroalimentaires à même d’améliorer durablement la production, protéger l’environnement et consolider les moyens d’existence des populations. L’enjeu est énorme au regard des risques multiformes dont font face les populations de la zone sahélienne.

Mesdames et Messieurs, le Burkina Faso à l’instar des autres pays du sahel, fait face à des chocs de nature diverse et récurrente (climatiques, conflits, économiques, sanitaires, etc.) qui affectent la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle de millions de personnes vivant en dessous du seuil de pauvreté. Au regard de cette situation, le pays multiplie des initiatives allant dans le sens d’une recherche de la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle durable pour l’ensemble de sa population.

Dans ce contexte, il convient de changer urgemment la manière d’investir dans les zones rurales pour qu’elles soient plus durables, résilientes et productives. Ceci permettra aux populations rurales d’atteindre leur potentiel de développement humain et trouver des emplois stables.

Ainsi notre vision repose surtout sur des programmes solides permettant d’améliorer les conditions de vie, stimuler la croissance, accroître les revenus, créer des emplois, intégrer pleinement les femmes et les jeunes dans l’économie, relever les défis environnementaux et climatiques, et soutenir une économie plus forte et stable au profit de tous.

Madame la Présidente, en cohérence avec cette vision et intégrant « l'effet accélérateur de la technologie et l'innovation », le Burkina Faso met progressivement un modèle d'exploitation basée sur l'utilisation efficiente de l'eau souterraine, l'exhaure de cette eau par la mise à profit de l'énergie et des approches automatisées d'irrigation. Cette action est en cohérence avec l'Initiative pour l'Adaptation de l'Agriculture Africaine au changement climatique, dite "Initiative Triple A".

Elle est également en conformité avec l'initiative triple « S » qui offre une perspective nouvelle, une promesse d'inclusion sociale qui va de pair avec une gestion de l'environnement basée sur l'exploitation des grandes forces de l'Afrique, à savoir ses terres, ses traditions et ses habitants.

La mise à l'échelle de ce modèle nous permettra de sortir du cercle vicieux des déficits et de créer de l'emploi pour la proportion croissante de jeunes. Cette technologie permettra de réaliser une hausse des revenus de plus de 35% et de créer plus de 500 000 emplois agricoles décents. Cette initiative s'accompagnera également par la mise en œuvre de projets agricoles, en s'appuyant sur les domaines prioritaires.

Alliant pisciculture, production agricole, accès à l'eau et à l'énergie solaire en milieu rural et mettant à profit les nouvelles technologies d'automatisation, la concentration de ces modèles d'exploitations dans un village pourrait constituer une marche importante vers la transformation rurale comme le prévoit la FAO à travers la création des villages intelligents.

Par ces actions, nous voulons inciter les petits agriculteurs à accéder aux technologies, aux innovations et aux pratiques de gestion intelligente face au climat.

Par ailleurs, la pandémie de covid-19 a mis en évidence les risques énormes que la concentration des marchés des intrants et des extrants alimentaires et agricoles font peser sur la capacité de résilience des systèmes agroalimentaires. Il devient ainsi nécessaire d'inciter la mise en place des systèmes d'approvisionnement en intrants et matériels agricoles plus résilients et durable capables de prémunir nos systèmes alimentaires des fortes hausses telle que constatées actuellement pour les engrais. Par ailleurs, cette crise a aussi montré les limites de la forte dépendance des systèmes d'approvisionnement alimentaire aux importations. Se fondant sur ces évidences et en cohérence avec les conclusions du rapport mondial sur la sécurité alimentaire, le Burkina Faso a lancé une initiative présidentielle de produire 1 millions de tonnes de riz et de mise en place d'une centrale d'approvisionnement en intrant et matériels agricoles sous le leadership du secteur privé.

L'objectif de produire 1 millions de tonnes de riz vise à réduire notre dépendance aux importations de riz et est en cours grâce à la forte participation du secteur privé national, des aménagements de grandes envergures, l'opérationnalisation d'une approche d'agrégation de la production des exploitants familiaux dans une logique de chaîne de valeur ajoutée territoriale propice à l'inclusion.

Pour accompagner toutes ces initiatives, nous avons amélioré le cadre institutionnel et réglementaire en mettant en place un code des investissements agricoles attractifs, une banque agricole, un fonds spécifique de développement agricole, une assurance agricole, un centre appel pour décentraliser la vulgarisation et l'appui-conseil agricole et une plateforme d'échange d'information sur les marchés agricoles et de mise en relation des acteurs.

Enfin, les implications du défi sécuritaire que vivent les pays de l'Afrique de l'ouest sur les moyens d'existence des ménages créent un contexte humanitaire préoccupant avec des effectifs de plus en plus élevés de personnes déplacées internes. Nous accordons donc une attention particulière à la reconstitution des moyens d'existence des populations, à la mise en place des instruments d'intervention d'urgence notamment des stocks de sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle. Considérant ces urgences et grâce à l'accompagnement des partenaires au développement, nous avons relevé le niveau de ses stocks alimentaires d'interventions, réajusté nos allocations budgétaires et mis l'accent sur le nexus urgence- développement.

Madame la Présidente, si toutes ces actions en cours de réalisation montrent, si besoin en était, la pertinence des conclusions du Rapport sur la situation mondiale de l'alimentation et l'agriculture ainsi que le Cadre Stratégique 2022-2031 de la FAO, les stratégies de mobilisation des ressources envisagées nécessitent d'être mises en cohérence dans une logique de synergie notamment en ce qui

concerne les institutions financières internationales (IFI) et les fonds verticaux comme le Fonds pour l'environnement mondial (FEM) et le Fonds vert pour le climat (FVC) dans le respect des attributions.

En outre, l'accélérateur intersectoriel et transversal que sont la technologie et l'innovation est extrêmement important même si la question de la biotechnologie doit être traitée en tenant compte de l'agroécologie et en évitant le risque de la concentration des marchés.

Madame la Présidente, telles sont les actions en cours au Burkina Faso en vue de la transformation des systèmes agroalimentaires qui pourraient inciter des mises à l'échelle au regard de leur cohérence avec le rapport mondial et le cadre stratégique de la FAO.

Je vous remercie.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Dear Excellencies, Ministers, Ambassadors, this brings us to the end of our meeting this morning. Thank you for a very fruitful and very interesting morning. We will reconvene today at 14:30 hours.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Thank you, Vice-Chairperson. Very good, you managed it very well. Thank you, Secretary-General. It was good.

The meeting rose at 10:36 hours

La séance est levée à 10 h 36

Se levanta la sesión a las 10.36

CONFERENCE CONFERENCE CONFERENCIA

<p>Forty-second Session Quarante et deuxième session 42.º período de sesiones</p>
<p>Virtual Meeting, 14-18 June 2021 Réunion Virtuelle, 14-18 juin 2021 Reunión Virtual, 14-18 de junio de 2021</p>
<p>FOURTH PLENARY MEETING QUATRIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE CUARTA SESIÓN PLENARIA</p>
<p>15 June 2021</p>

The Fourth Meeting was opened at 14:33 hours
Ms Yael Rubinstein,
Vice-Chairperson of the Conference, presiding

La quatrième séance est ouverte à 14 h 33
sous la présidence de Mme. Yael Rubinstein,
Vice-Président de la Conférence

Se abre la cuarta reunión a las 14.33
bajo la presidencia de la Sra. Yael Rubinstein,
Vicepresidenta de la Conferencia

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VICE-CHAIRPERSON

I trust you had a good lunch. I call the fourth plenary meeting to order. Before we start, I would like to give the floor to the Chairperson of the Credentials Committee to make a short intervention regarding the report of today's meeting.

Ms Daniela ROTONDARO (Chairperson of the Credentials Committee)

I would like to read the Report of the Session held this morning by the Credentials Committee.

The Credentials Committee held three meetings on 9 June, on 14 June, and on 15 June this morning to examine the credentials received. The Credentials Committee elected me as the Chairperson and H.E. Mónica Robelo Raffone of Nicaragua as Vice-Chairperson.

The Credentials Committee noted Rule III of the General Rules of the Organization on “delegations and credentials” as well as the practice and criteria followed by the Organization with respect to the acceptance of credentials in accordance with the prevailing practice in the United Nations System on the matter, in line with the General Assembly Resolution 396 (V).

The Credentials Committee also noted that the Council, at its 148th Session held in December 2013, endorsed proposals to further streamline the overall process of acceptance of credentials, including through increased reliance on credentials issued by Permanent Representatives accredited to the Organization and taking into account the reduction in the duration of sessions of the Conference as well as the recent practice of other organizations of the United Nations System.

170 Member Nations and one Member Organization, the European Union, have submitted valid credentials of their delegation as shown in the Annex. At its third meeting, the Credentials Committee reviewed the credentials as presented up to 15 June and reviewed procedural concerns raised regarding the credentials presented by Myanmar.

The Credentials Committee, noting the practice of the United Nations General Assembly and the decisions of other UN Organizations such as the World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization (WHO) at its 74th session held from 24 to 31 May 2021 and the International Labour Conference of the International Labour Organization (ILO) at its 109th Session held between 7 and 19 June 2021 decided to recommend to the FAO Conference to defer the decision on the credentials of Myanmar, pending guidance from the Credentials Committee of the United Nations Assembly.

Following the review, the Credentials Committee took the decision not to accredit at this stage any delegate from that Member Nation. The Credentials Committee recommended to the Conference that the credentials of the delegations listed in the Annex to the Second Report be accepted and that those delegations be authorised to participate fully in the Conference Session. The list reflects the situation as of 15 June 2021.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Before we move to the Agenda Item 9, any reaction, are there any comments from any Members?

The report of the Credentials Committee is adopted.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

Statements by Heads of Delegation**Déclarations des chefs de délégation****Declaraciones de los jefes de delegación**

Sudan, Venezuela, Denmark, Finland, Jamaica, Kenya, Brazil, Nicaragua, Sweden, Peru, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Switzerland, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Italy, Argentina, Panama, Chile, Israel, Spain, Ethiopia, Senegal, Angola, Costa Rica, Holy See (Observer)

Mr Abdelrahman ABDERAHEEM HATUR (Sudan) (Original Language Arabic)

Madam Vice-Chairperson, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

May God's peace be upon you.

It is a great pleasure for me to greet you today on behalf of the Government of Sudan on the occasion of the 42nd Session of FAO Conference. Now, we would like to support all Member States in order to reach the strategic goals of the Organization in cooperation with international, regional organizations and together with governments, civil society and private sector organizations, as well as with other development partners in order to achieve efficient results.

Madam Vice Chairperson, we greatly appreciate the role played by FAO in order to create a world free of hunger and malnutrition so that we can also improve and raise the living standards, especially in the poorest countries, and do this in a sustainable manner, economically, socially and environmentally speaking.

We endorse the efforts of the Organization to develop the agricultural sector using various mechanisms, also through approved initiatives, such as the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, in order to fight poverty and hunger efficiently while focusing on accelerating agricultural transformation and rural development.

Excellencies, the Organization has helped my country as well as other many developing countries to help reach the SDGs and to face the major challenges that we are suffering from in Africa. Indeed the Regional Conference for Africa stressed the importance of the challenges faced by the continent such as climate change, cross-border illness and pests, and the desert locust.

We have stressed the importance of climate change, which has led to great flooding. We have also focused on the importance of investing in the blue economy, in cooperation and in partnerships, in order to establish a resilience and capacity-building approach and to do this through social security plans.

Madam Vice Chairperson, in recent years, we have been facing very challenging times: a fragile economy, the enormous impact due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which was aggravated by flooding that we have suffered from. Five million hectares have been damaged and the number of people who have suffered from food insecurity in 2020 reached 9 600 000 people.

The most affected were the internally displaced people, as well as people who have suffered from conflicts like migrants from Ethiopia and the South of Sudan, and other impoverished people from rural and agricultural communities in the East, West and South. In fact, their living standards and livestock have suffered from the economic situation and droughts. Interventions were organized and indeed USD 70 million have been provided in order to establish a number of projects.

Excellencies, it is thanks to the support provided by the Organization that we were able to implement a number of important projects over recent years, which helped us improve nutritional and food security, and living standards as well. We did this by applying sustainable production strategies in the agricultural sector to provide for nutritional and food security so that we could reduce poverty in rural areas and safeguard natural resources while ensuring gender equality.

We have worked to develop the capacities of stakeholders. We have also benefited from the technical support of the Organization to build our national capacities, in Sudan, in order to achieve tangible results in the agricultural sector and improve livelihoods.

Ladies and Gentlemen, to develop the strategic guidelines and approaches of the Organization, Sudan has adopted a very strict and tangible approach. The achievement of specific and tangible results, and the deliverables, was possible thanks to FAO's support and to the boosting of national capacities in facing these enormous challenges that we have had to grapple with.

In conclusion, we reiterate the commitment of Sudan to implement projects and plans together with FAO and we promise to continue to endeavour cooperating with all stakeholders, in order to fully benefit from the expertise and lessons learned provided by the Organization.

Once again, thank you very much for your efforts and for the continued support you have provided us with. We thank all the countries present at this Conference. We should also like to work hand-in-hand

for sustainable development so that every citizen, man and woman, is able to have sufficient and nutritious food, and every single person can fully enjoy life.

Thank you very much, may the peace of God be upon you.

Su Excelencia Carlos LEAL TELLERÍA (Venezuela, República Bolivariana de)

Muchísimas gracias Señor Presidente, Honorables Ministros, Excelencias, permítanme en nombre de nuestro Presidente Nicolás Maduro Moros y del Pueblo de Venezuela, extenderle nuestro afectuoso saludo muy especialmente al Director General Dr. Qu Dongyu, agradeciendo esta importante oportunidad para dar a conocer los avances de Venezuela en esta importante materia.

Primeramente, reiteramos nuestro compromiso con el cumplimiento de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenibles. Para ello hemos creado un modelo de Seguridad Alimentaria orientado a garantizar la alimentación como Derecho Humano; tal como se encuentra consagrado en nuestra Constitución Nacional y en el Tercer Plan de Desarrollo de la Nación, como parte de la promoción de un Modelo de Igualdad y Justicia Social, que es la base fundamental de la estrategia de la República, en contra del hambre y la malnutrición que afecta a más del 50 por ciento de la población mundial.

Estos esfuerzos lograron que para el año 2015 en Venezuela, la población sub alimentada se redujera en más de 16 puntos porcentuales, situándose por debajo del 5 por ciento; siendo calificado por la FAO como un país con alta Seguridad Alimentaria, promotor del Derecho a la Alimentación y como un modelo exitoso.

Sin embargo, existe una campaña de agresión sistemática contra el derecho a la alimentación del Pueblo Venezolano, promovida por el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos y sus aliados; aun en medio de la pandemia del COVID19, aplicando persecución, extorsión y bloqueo, para evitar que Venezuela acceda a los recursos, bienes y servicios esenciales para atender las necesidades de su población, así mismo imponen ilegalmente medidas coercitivas unilaterales que causan daño indiscriminado en los Derechos Humanos, las cuales bien podrían ser calificadas como crímenes de lesa humanidad.

Estas medidas, han generado la caída de importaciones de alimentos en 83,7 por ciento impidiendo la procura internacional de materia prima, productos terminados e insumos para la producción agrícola, así como sanciones a la mayoría de empresas internacionales y nacionales proveedoras de alimentos al país.

Es por ello que reafirmamos los principios de la “Declaración de Río sobre el Medio Ambiente y el Desarrollo”. Por esta razón solicitamos ante esta Conferencia, su intermediación para que cese el bloqueo económico y las sanciones unilaterales, por considerarlas violatorias del Derecho Internacional y de todas las disposiciones que buscan evitar la utilización de los alimentos como instrumentos de guerra, desestabilización y destrucción.

Señor Presidente, a pesar del terrible impacto de tales medidas, hemos reimpulsado la “Gran Misión Agro Venezuela” como una importante política de Estado, a fin de aumentar la producción nacional y la disponibilidad de alimentos en todos sus componentes, con la aplicación de buenas prácticas orientadas a la preservación del medio ambiente, tomando como base los conocimientos ancestrales de nuestros Pueblos Indígenas, armonizados con la naturaleza, y el pueblo organizado, la participación de la mujer y los jóvenes en los sistemas alimentarios, como bastión de la lucha contra la desigualdad.

Por otra parte, en función de proteger a nuestro Pueblo, se hacen grandes esfuerzos para poder mantener 19 Programas Sociales Alimentarios, entre los cuales podemos mencionar:

- a. La conformación de 36.315 “Comités Locales de Abastecimiento y Producción” (CLAP), que son formas de organización popular; a través de las cuales se distribuyen complementos de alimentarios balanceados nutricionalmente, a 7,5 millones de familias, casa por casa, mensualmente; equivalentes a 2.160.000 toneladas al año, protegiendo a más del 74 por ciento de las familias del país.
- b. Igual esfuerzo se hace para mantener el acceso a la alimentación, al 80 por ciento de los niños, niñas y adolescentes en las escuelas, a través del “Programa de Alimentación Escolar” (PAE).

c. Es importante agradecer en el marco de este Programa el reciente convenio de cooperación, suscrito con el Programa Mundial de Alimentos, así como las alianzas con la FAO, UNICEF, OPS y OMS.

d. De igual forma, el Programa denominado “Casas de Alimentación”, el cual atiende mensualmente a más de 700 mil personas vulnerables, a través de 3.679 comedores populares; donde también brindamos atención especializada en nutrición a niños, niñas, madres que amamantan y embarazadas, fomentando hábitos alimentarios saludables y la lactancia materna.

Para finalizar, Señor Presidente, la República Bolivariana de Venezuela está convencida que solo a través de la cooperación, la solidaridad y la complementariedad se podrá transitar hacia modelos agroalimentarios sostenibles y sustentables, centrados en la satisfacción de las necesidades de los pueblos, junto con la preservación de los recursos de la Madre Tierra, y lo más importante combatiendo el interés mercantilista asociado a los alimentos, que caracteriza al modelo capitalista imperante.

Señoras y señores, muchas gracias.

Mr Mogens KJORUP (Denmark)

Thank you Madam Chairperson, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, Director-General, Dr. Qu Dongyu, I am honoured to speak on behalf of the Minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries of Denmark, His Excellency Rasmus Prehnat, at this important 42nd session of the FAO Conference.

Global food systems are crucial for progress towards all the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. Unfortunately, we are lagging behind leaving hundreds of millions of people behind. In 2030, nobody must be left behind.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the fragility of our food systems. But our food systems are also threatened by climate change and loss of biodiversity. This is a daily reminder of the planetary boundaries and the need for reflection on the true cost of food systems.

Reducing food losses and waste is of tremendous importance. This must be part of our response to the challenge of feeding a growing global population and eliminating hunger and malnutrition. Denmark is in the lead fighting food loss and waste. We need to use all tools in our toolbox. From innovation, digitalisation and legislation to consumer and producer behaviour.

We are also challenged by an ineffective use of energy, water, soil, fertilizers and pesticides.

Residues from food production must be put to use in the context of circular, bio-economy. Climate change mitigation and the conservation of fertile soils and biodiversity are crucial issues. The insufficient level of investments and innovation is an obstacle for improving the food chain.

The threat from Anti-Microbial Resistance is one of the biggest health challenges we are facing. Here we have to strengthen the prevention, namely:

- a) act on early warning,
- b) reduce the use of antibiotics, and
- c) introduce measures concerning the practices of prescription without any economic incentives.

The most crucial and effective antibiotics should be used for human beings only. Adequate resources for combating misuse of antibiotics – especially as growth promoters – is a core issue for us.

Our policies need to support deforestation-free value chains in line with UN and internationally agreed policy objectives. This includes conservation of critical ecosystems, sustainable energy usage and the protection of human rights. Solutions should focus on raising awareness and creating a demand for responsible and deforestation-free value chains.

Food insecurity prevents sustainable development. We must accelerate our collective efforts to reach Development Goal 2 on Zero Hunger. Right now, we are not on track. 155 million people were acute

food insecure in 2020 and now it's more unfortunately. We need to combine humanitarian short-term food assistance with longer-term sustainable solutions. In addition, we must build resilient food systems that can cope with external shocks.

We look forward to the development of the new FAO Strategy on Climate Action. Climate mitigation and adaptation of food systems to become more sustainable have a huge potential.

Denmark has joined the coalition on school feeding together with many other states. We know school feeding works on the ground. It keeps hunger and malnutrition at bay. And it provides a social security network for vulnerable children.

Denmark has engaged with enthusiasm in the preparation of the UN Food Systems Summit. We need concrete and scalable solutions.

Denmark has submitted ideas for game-changing solutions. These include:

- a) climate-friendly dietary guidelines,
- b) prevention and reduction of food loss and waste,
- c) fight of deforestation,
- d) antimicrobial resistance,
- e) action to prevent famines, and
- f) school feeding programs.

Denmark is committed to contribute actively to the Summit in order to reach progress towards all the Sustainable Development Goals and climate goals in the Paris Agreement.

Dr. Qu Dongyu, FAO can rely on Denmark as a member of the European Union to do our part to transform food systems in order to achieve sustainability. In its three dimensions: Economically, environmentally and socially. FAO's contribution to the Summit achieving the Agenda 2030 is on the right track, but we invite all to do more together.

Wishing you all a successful Conference, thank you for your attention.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Ms Jaana HUSU-KALLIO (Finland)

Thank you very much Madam Chairperson, for giving me the floor. It is indeed a great honour for me to speak on behalf of Finland and our Minister for Agriculture and Forestry, Mr. Leppä, who unfortunately could not be present today.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, First of all, I would like to thank you, Dr Qu, for the efforts you have made during the first two years as the Director-General of FAO. It is a great task, particularly during the pandemic era, to make FAO more effective, efficient and transparent, and to use its full potential to address FAO's crucial mission for mankind.

Global agriculture and food systems face tremendous challenges, and COVID-19 has shown how fragile the whole system is. Sustainable food systems are a prerequisite for reaching the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, Finland notes with satisfaction that the New Strategic Framework of FAO is better aligned with the SDGs, and we trust that all the SDGs under FAO's mandate will be treated equally and also interlinked with the Four Betters [Better Production, Better Nutrition, Better Environment and indeed Better Life].

Climate change, loss of biodiversity and unsustainable use of natural resources are major challenges that we need to fight against, also by changing our ways of producing and consuming food.

Finland has always stressed the important role of natural resources for food and nutrition security. It is crucial that we break down silos, and we see that the nexus or interlinkages between food-water-forest and energy should be more widely considered in our common actions. We were very glad to learn that "The Global Food Security Index 2020" ranked Finland as the most food secure country in the world. For the first time the category "Natural Resources and Resilience" was incorporated into the main index, which I find very well justified, considering our key challenges.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, it is also important to break down silos when talking about health. The current pandemic is a serious reminder that the health of human beings, animals, plants and the environment are inseparably interlinked. The excellent tripartite cooperation on One Health approach between FAO, OIE and WHO needs to be strengthened, as well as extended to the United Nations Environmental Programme.

I am happy to add that Finland, as the champion of the International Year of Plant Health 2020, has significantly contributed to producing one of its key legacy accomplishments: the scientific review study "*Climate-change impacts on plant pests*". The study, just published on the 1st of June, gives a number of recommendations to mitigate the changed plant health conditions and adapt to them, including by stepping up coordinated research on the matter and developing international policies to address the risks.

In this context, I would again like to underline the importance of the normative work of FAO, and we appreciate that the funding of IPPC and Codex Alimentarius scientific work will remain at the increased level.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Finally, I would like to stress the unique role and contribution of FAO in the preparation of the United Nations Food Systems Summit. In the global community and among the United Nations family, FAO holds a crucial position in helping the world to understand the fundamentals of food and agriculture, and to find innovative ways to solve our common challenges. I trust indeed, that this work will continue with a new determination and commitment also after the Summit.

Thank you very much Madam Chairperson

His Excellency Floyd GREEN (Jamaica)

Thank you very much Chair, Director-General Dr. Qu Dongyu, Secretary General and other distinguished members of the FAO Team, including Crispim Moreira our Country Manager, Excellencies and Colleague Ministers, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen, if there was any doubt across our collective minds about the critical need for us to eradicate poverty and end hunger in all forms, then this pandemic, I am sure, would have removed that doubt. If there was any lingering debate about the essential nature of Agriculture and Fisheries and our agri-food systems in achieving those goals, then this pandemic has removed the necessity of that debate. If there were any remaining questions about the fundamental nature of the FAO, to galvanize the world to transform its approach to food systems, food security and importantly our food heroes, then this pandemic has allowed all those questions to be answered.

Director-General, it is against this backdrop that I commend your leadership, especially during a time like this. Your reforms have been visionary and at the same time practical, leading to the structural change across FAO such as the establishment of a Chief-Economist and a Chief Scientist, and importantly providing a permanent seat at the table for youth and women. More importantly, however, your changes to make the FAO country offices more engaging and integral are bearing fruit and are helping us to transform our own food systems locally and across the region through technical assistance and as such, especially in this difficult time, we are grateful.

Where is our reality? The pandemic has had a more severe impact on small island developing States pushing us further away from the SDGs and calling for the urgent need for us here, members of the FAO, to move from international policy and strategy to on-the-ground action. The time for action is now.

As we discuss the state of food, it is worth noting that in my own island home, despite the challenges of the pandemic we were able to record a 1.2 percent growth in our food production last year. However, with the fall out of the worldwide tourism industry, our farmers lost their main markets and we have seen firsthand the shortcomings of our logistics network and our cold chain networks, leading to significant loss and wastage, and potential food insecurity. The Government had to directly intervene through a USD 2 million programme to buy excess agricultural produce and redistribute it to the vulnerable. The need for the FAO and our development partners to help Small Island Developing States establish appropriate storage and cold chain logistics is a priority.

There is however, Director-General, another greater threat to our food security. The majority of our Small Island Developing States depend on the importation of inputs to drive their own agricultural sector, especially our livestock industry with critical imports of animal feed. The significant rise in costs have put those sectors at risk. It is critical that FAO take action in helping Small Island Developing States to research appropriate alternate feed stock from local sources that can enable a sustainable and resilient food system, especially in relation to the livestock sector.

This has to be a part of the renewed drive by the FAO to ensure that developing countries are on the cutting edge of region specific research.

Nationally, colleagues, we have embarked on crafting a “New Face of Food” and as such continue to take important steps to ensure the incorporation of youth and women upon the clear recognition that they are critical to rural transformation and the establishment of viable food systems. Through policy we have mandated a percentage of benefits and land that are reserved for youth and women in our drive to create better lives. Specialty programmes, such as our “Advocate Council” to provide youth input in shaping agricultural policy, and our “Rural Youth Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Programme”, which provides direct training and mentorship and grants to help our youth, is helping us to build a more inclusive sector. There is, however, a reality. The financial systems of Small Island Developing States are often not developed enough to support agricultural enterprise, especially led by youth and women. The studies are clear. The FAO, as it moves from strategy to action, has to utilize its significant reach and network of our developmental partners and the private sector to mobilize resources that can help youth, especially across Latin America and the Caribbean, to embark on a career in agriculture.

Yesterday, our Guest Speaker at the McDougall Memorial Lecture, Bill Gates, rightly noted that those who contribute the least to our changing climate are impacted the most. The agri-food systems in our Small Island Developing States are at greatest risk, especially those in the Caribbean and the Pacific. Extended periods of drought and periods of intensive rainfall have been destroying gains that our farmers have been making. Access to and adoption of climate-smart technology is the answer, with the need for our food heroes to be able to practice more precision-based agriculture and protected agriculture with significant focus on soil regeneration and water conservation. As a Government we continue to expand our irrigation networks and enhance our training of our farmers regarding more strategic use of inputs and new technologies.

The most effective technologies, concepts of big data and the world’s finest innovations still remain largely out of the reach of rural farmers. As we engage in these discussions and prepare for the UN Food Systems Summit, we must leverage the world’s major technology companies to provide appropriate climate-smart technologies to assist the developing world if our food systems are to be sustainable.

Chair, Director-General and Colleagues, as I close, now more than ever, every Small Island Developing State cannot be adjudged on their income levels with no reference to the increased threats that are faced by climate change. The Hand-in-Hand initiative is an excellent one and should be expanded to incorporate more of Latin America and the Caribbean. The pandemic has shown us that we cannot succeed without global action. Jamaica is committed to playing our part in achieving our Sustainable Development Goals and to working with FAO to build back better, creating a more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agri-food system that focuses on better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life, which importantly leaves no-one behind.

Thank you.

Mr Harry KIMTAI (Kenya)

Thank you Chairperson for giving me the floor. I am honoured to speak on behalf of our Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives of the Republic of Kenya, The Honourable Peter Munya. My name is Harry Kimtai, I am the Principal Secretary, State Department for Livestock.

Excellencies, Chairperson, Ladies and Gentlemen, Kenya supports FAO’s multi-pronged approach of putting knowledge into action, from digitalization and promotion of aquaculture to sustainable

rural development and including the use of the Hand-in- Hand Initiative integrating actions towards agri-food systems transformation.

Ladies and Gentlemen, As you may know the region and Kenya have been adversely affected by Desert Locust invasions, and we thank FAO for the technical and budgetary support extended to us in controlling this menace. Without your strategic support the damage could have been devastating to food systems in the region.

Kenya developed the Agricultural Sector Transformation and Growth Strategy (ASTGS) to drive transformation of the sector over the next ten years. The ASTGS is anchored on three outcomes being: increasing small-scale farmer incomes, increasing agricultural output and value-addition, and boosting household food resilience; and it is based on a program implementation approach that follows functions rather than form, thus breaking down silos that currently exist across the supply chains.

Ladies and Gentlemen, The Constitution of Kenya (2010) recognizes that “Every person has the right to be free from hunger, and to have adequate food of acceptable quality” therefore, agricultural transformation is critical to growing the economy, reducing the cost of food, alleviating poverty and delivering 100 percent food and nutrition security.

In the advent of the COVID -19 Pandemic in Kenya we fast-tracked the launch of a number of initiatives including the digital-for-agriculture (D4Ag) projects. One key programme was the e-Voucher that aims at targeting over 1.4 million farming households and 2 300 agro-dealers to supply farm inputs to growers by 2023. We recognize the need to harness the power of digital innovation for linking rural, small-scale producers to various value chain actors and particularly end consumers. As a key enabler for poverty alleviation and increased agricultural outcomes, Kenya wholly embraces agri-technology innovation in the sector.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, i Kenya like many other Nations, we have also been affected by climate change, which has had negative impact on local and regional agri-food systems, food safety, and natural resources thus accelerating hunger and poverty in rural areas. Kenya is committed to increasing the implementation of climate smart agriculture practices across crops, livestock and fisheries activities in pursuit of meeting Food and Nutrition security in the country.

Ladies and Gentlemen, whilst our country continues to seek technical and budgetary support from FAO in implementing key initiatives for transformation of the sector, the Kenyan Government has enacted the Public Finance Management Act. This has entrenched the use of programme-based budgeting as a tool for government planning and budgeting, thus enhancing transparency, openness, and efficient use of public resources. To that end, we look forward to working with FAO in shaping a more integrated, collaborative approach to support offered to Kenya.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, i closing, Kenya’s aspirations for 100 percent food and nutrition security as articulated in His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta’s Big Four Agenda reaffirms our commitment to delivery of the 2030 Agenda; and we look forward to continued collaboration and support from FAO in achieving these aspirations.

Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and all the distinguished participants

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Director-General Qu Dongyu, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, the year 2021 represents a decisive moment on the path towards sustainable development. The beginning of the effectiveness of the Paris Agreement's goals and of the last decade to reach the Sustainable Development Goals show the urgency of seeking and implementing solutions.

The so-called transformation of agri-food systems is part of this process, but it should not be an end in itself. We must bear in mind its instrumental nature, in order to guarantee the full promotion of the 2030 Agenda.

The improvement of food systems must holistically consider the three dimensions of sustainable development, economic, social and environmental, considering local contexts and different national priorities.

We must remember, therefore, that there is no one-size-fits-all solution. There are numerous paths, equally legitimate, to this common goal of ours.

Furthermore, sustainability is associated with the forms of production, and not with an inherent characteristic of each food.

Therefore, it is essential that the FAO promotes the diversity of diets and considers that the concept of healthy diets also includes the cultural and social dimensions of eating practices.

For countries to actually grasp those opportunities, investment in research and innovation is essential, fully tapping the potential of the bioeconomy. It is also essential that access to technology is ensured to the most vulnerable, such as small producers, family farmers and traditional communities.

Providing means of implementation, in turn, is essential so that developing countries can also benefit from this movement. Payments for ecosystem services, for example, are a relevant tool that can help to recognize, among others, the value of the conservation of vegetation areas undertaken by producers in developing countries.

In all cases, free and transparent trade is essential if these trends are to generate opportunities for producers and countries, rather than causing unjustified barriers to trade or distortions in food prices.

For many years now, Brazil has been promoting production systems that bring greater income to the producer, efficiency in the use of inputs, resilience and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Specifically about climate change, we have launched the Carbon Neutral Meat, updated our Low Carbon Agriculture Plan, known as ABC+, and published collections of factors for emission and removal of greenhouse gases in Brazilian agriculture.

Agri-food systems can certainly contribute to global efforts to adapt and to mitigate climate change. However, their ultimate goal, that of ensuring global food and nutrition security must be respected and remain at the heart of FAO's work. Furthermore, we cannot lose sight of the fact that more than 70 percent of greenhouse gas emissions still come from fossil fuels.

Brazil is ready to do its fair share in the search for solutions that will make a difference for future generations. We expect the same frank and balanced commitment from other countries.

Thank you.

Sra. Mónica ROBELO RAFFONE (Nicaragua)

Gracias, Señora Vicepresidenta, voy a realizar esta declaración en nombre del Ministro Agropecuario de Nicaragua por no poder participar en esta sesión.

Excelentísimo Señor Qu Dongyu, Director General de la FAO, Honorables Representantes y Jefes de Delegación de los Estados Miembros, es un honor dirigirme a ustedes en el marco de este importante periodo de sesiones de la Conferencia y transmitirles el fraterno saludo del gobierno y del pueblo de Nicaragua.

El año 2020 ha marcado un hito en la historia contemporánea de la humanidad estableciendo un antes y un después en el escenario mundial. Antes de la pandemia COVID-19 el hambre está aumentando en casi todas las subregiones del mundo con alrededor de 2 000 millones de personas que padecían inseguridad alimentaria moderada o grave.

La actual pandemia tendrá inevitablemente repercusiones en la economía mundial, en los sistemas de salud, en la seguridad alimentaria nutricional, en los sistemas alimentarios y en muchos otros ámbitos representando un enorme desafío para alcanzar el objetivo del Hambre Cero y demás objetivos de la Agenda 2030 principalmente en los países en desarrollo.

El gobierno de Nicaragua, entendiendo la magnitud de este evento trascendental responsablemente, aplicó los debidos protocolos de sanidad con comunicación social masiva sin cerrar la economía ni

confinar a la población, lo que permitió incluso durante la fase más difícil de la pandemia, continuar impulsando sus programas y estrategias para garantizar el derecho a la alimentación, al trabajo, a la salud, la educación y preservar nuestra economía. Esto nos ha permitido mantener nuestros niveles de producción, garantizar el suministro de alimentos a la población e incluso aumentar las exportaciones de productos agropecuarios en un contexto mundial tan complejo.

Nicaragua comprendió antes y durante esa difícil fase, las premisas para lograr la transformación de los sistemas agrícolas sin menoscabos de la producción y lograr aplicar estrategias eficaces para inevitablemente pasar por la implementación de instrumentos y procesos transversales e interrelacionados que permitan desarrollar sistemas agrícolas y alimentarios más eficientes, inclusivos, resilientes y sostenibles.

En este sentido, el Gobierno de Reconciliación y Unidad Nacional en su política agropecuaria y en su plan de producción, consumo y comercio, ha establecido un sistema nacional de producción, consumo y comercio, instrumento de coordinación que aglutina todas las instituciones del sector público de Nicaragua, el cual ha sido fundamental para avanzar en nuestro plan de desarrollo humano.

A través de este importante mecanismo se han logrado implementar efectivas estrategias para el desarrollo y transformación de nuestros sistemas agroalimentarios sobre todo en las zonas rurales, creando las condiciones indispensables para orientar la inversión pública a todos los procesos productivos: cadena de suministros, consumo y comercio, y avanzando rápidamente en los procesos de transformación de nuestros sistemas agrícolas.

Señora Vicepresidenta, Señoras y Señores Delegados, si bien son los Estados en primera línea los llamados a defender estos avances, el multilateralismo reviste un elemento fundamental para responder a los desafíos que tenemos por delante, por lo cual la FAO como organismo especializado, debe continuar impulsando iniciativas aceleradas y armonizadas con los países en conjunto con las otras agencias del sistema de Naciones Unidas y la Comunidad Internacional, priorizando el desarrollo a través de acuerdos y medios de ejecución multilaterales no discriminatorios y transparentes para responder a las demandas urgentes de nuestras poblaciones, principalmente aquellas más desprotegidas, las comunidades rurales y los pueblos indígenas.

La FAO debe liderar y acompañar aún más en estos procesos aportando los conocimientos técnicos necesarios favoreciendo la cooperación Sur-Sur y Triangular y asesorando la gestión de financiamiento sostenible de programas para el desarrollo.

Señora Vicepresidenta, queremos hacer un llamado desde esta noble casa a todos los pueblos del mundo, a la Comunidad Internacional, para encontrarnos y complementarnos sumando esfuerzos y voluntades, cooperando de forma solidaria en una sola dirección para garantizar el bienestar de las generaciones actuales futuras y de nuestra madre tierra.

Nicaragua mantiene su compromiso de continuar luchando contra el hambre y la pobreza a través de nuestras políticas de justicia social donde el pueblo de Nicaragua es y será el protagonista de sus transformaciones.

Para finalizar queremos agradecer al Director General Qu Dongyu, a la Secretaría de la FAO, al Director de la Oficina Regional y Nacional y sus equipos por la excelente labor de coordinación realizada con nuestras autoridades durante la Conferencia Regional de la FAO realizada en nuestro país, oportunidad que ha permitido a los países de nuestra región subrayar nuestras principales prioridades, retos y expectativas a la vez de ratificar el compromiso con nuestra Organización y sus nobles principios.

Muchas gracias.

M. Paul Valentin NGOBO (Congo)

Je voudrais simplement dire que c'est Monsieur Paul Valentin Ngobo, vous m'entendez ? donc je voudrais savoir si le Congo est listé, est sur la liste pour passer, pour faire son message, parce que nous n'avons toujours pas de réponse dans ce sens. Vous m'avez compris?

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Congo, I would like the Secretary to reply.

SECRÉTAIRE GÉNÉRAL ADJOINT

Bonsoir Monsieur le Ministre, nous n'avons pas reçu votre requête, donc vous n'êtes pas dans la liste aujourd'hui. Je ne sais pas si vous avez soumis la requête pour le temps de parole. On va suivre ça et on vous tiendra informé. Merci.

Ms Pernilla IVARSSON (Sweden)

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is an honour to take the floor to speak on this important topic. Sweden aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union and its 27 Member States.

I particularly welcome the focus on action today. It is clear that time is not in our hands. As many have already stated – hunger, malnutrition, biodiversity loss and other effects of climate change are increasing.

We thank the FAO for their work in addressing these issues.

Looking towards the Food System Summit, but also beyond, it is my firm conviction that the will for change and that there is an understanding that Agriculture is part of the solution.

Sweden has held seven national dialogues in preparing for the summit. Our main conclusion from those dialogues is that the level of knowledge is high, and the will to contribute to change is even higher. This is true across sectors and stakeholders, not the least private sector.

We can also see a high engagement from youth. But, we cannot wait for the next generation. We must take charge now and do what we can to provide a better future. Or at the very least, a future that is acceptable.

Because we should be worried that climate change is accelerating, and policy to counter that change is slow. Even when the will is there, impact so far is too weak. It is our duty to ensure that there are real results.

So, what do we do?

First of all, we need to ensure systemic strength. By that I mean that our systems must be built in such a way that they are resilient and continue to serve their purpose even when there is a crisis.

To achieve this, we need continued worldwide openness and collaboration.

It also requires addressing inequalities. We cannot accept a world where some suffer while others have more than they need. Gender equality is a major transformative power. In this regard Sweden therefore supports and looks forward to the CFS voluntary guidelines on gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition.

Systemic strength also means having a holistic view of health, as so clearly shown by COVID19. A strong One health approach is necessary to protect people, animals and the environment. Combatting AMR is at the core of this approach.

I also want to give some more specific examples of actions for increased sustainability.

First, Sweden believes that schools are a fantastic infrastructure for transformation, in particular school meals. We have a very long experience of working with school meals and both free and nutritious school meals are a legal right for all children in Sweden. We know how important the school meal is for children and young people in terms of nutrition, health, equality and learning aspects with direct bearing on sustainable development.

Sweden therefore welcomes the initiative to strengthen global school meals through the School meal coalition that is being proposed for the Food System summit and we want to point out that the issue of school meals is important for all countries, including high-income countries.

Second, we cannot continue to waste resources. An overall circular approach is necessary, and I look forward to the implementation of the new European Circular Economy Action Plan agreed in March this year, as well as worldwide efforts to increase circularity.

As a part of a circular approach, food waste and loss can significantly be reduced. To achieve this, measurement is key since what gets measured gets managed.

In this context, I would like to highlight an interesting national initiative on methods for increasing knowledge about losses and resources in food production. It was developed by the Swedish Board of Agriculture and the Swedish Food Agency, and we are sharing this method in the preparations towards the Food Systems Summit.

Third, a successful transformation towards sustainable agriculture and food systems can only happen if all three dimensions of sustainability are respected. They go hand in hand.

The Swedish FAO-Committee recently produced a publication with the title “Towards 2030 – sustainability as the business case for agriculture and forestry”. A number of very interesting examples can be found there, and we are happy to share it with you.

Finally, diversity is key to success. Countries and their individual contexts require a multitude of solutions. But the end goal must be a joint one – we must reach the Sustainable development goals as set out in the 2030 Agenda and we must keep global warming below 1.3 degrees as set out in the Paris Agreement.

We can do this together.

Thank you.

Su Excelencia Federico Bernardo TENORIO CALDERÓN (Perú)

Muchas gracias señor Presidente de la Conferencia, Estimado Director General de la FAO, Estimados Ministros y Ministras de Estados, Distinguidos delegados, es para mí un placer intervenir a nombre del Gobierno del Perú en el 42° período de sesiones de la Conferencia de la FAO y referirme al tema sobre el estado de la alimentación y la agricultura: transformación de los sistemas alimentarios agrícolas: de la estrategia a la acción.

En los últimos 50 años la población mundial se ha duplicado llegando a 7.500 millones de personas, mientras que la proporción de la población que sufre inseguridad alimentaria acrecentada por el COVID19 alcanza alrededor del 9 por ciento. Un número inaceptablemente alto de 820 millones de personas todavía padece inseguridad alimentaria. La causa fundamental del hambre y la desnutrición es la pobreza, a menudo exacerbada por los conflictos, el cambio climático y las crisis económicas que impiden el acceso a los alimentos.

Los sistemas agroalimentarios representan el mayor sistema económico en términos de generación de empleo, medios de vida e impacto en el planeta. No obstante, la pobreza y la desigualdad siguen siendo endémicas en la población más vulnerable.

Producir alimentos siempre ha sido una actividad económica de riesgo y los sistemas agroalimentarios han respondido a las necesidades de una población mundial en crecimiento, pero estos enfrentan desafíos cada vez mayores como el agotamiento de los recursos, la pérdida de la biodiversidad, el cambio climático y crisis globales como la pandemia del COVID19.

Desafíos que también plantean oportunidades para enfrentarlos. En este sentido, los gobiernos tenemos un papel importante que desempeñar para asegurar que las políticas, instituciones e infraestructura sean adecuadas para generar un entorno propicio para que los sistemas agroalimentarios sean cada vez más productivos, sostenibles, resilientes y asequibles.

Reconocemos la necesidad de avanzar hacia sistemas alimentarios sostenibles y resilientes para que nadie pase hambre en el mundo de mañana. Estas transformaciones, según correspondan, deben tener en consideración la amplia diversidad de los sistemas agroalimentarios así como los diferentes contextos locales, las prioridades y las capacidades nacionales.

El Perú acoge la estrategia de la FAO para la transformación de los sistemas alimentarios, respaldada en la Agenda 2030, a través de las 4 mejoras, los 4 aceleradores transversales e intersectoriales y las 120 esferas programáticas prioritarias.

La forma en que evolucione el sistema mundial de alimentos, la agricultura, la ganadería, la silvicultura, la pesca y la acuicultura en las próximas décadas dependerá de las medidas específicas que se adopten para garantizar que nadie se quede atrás.

El comercio mundial y el buen funcionamiento de los mercados son fundamentales en el proceso de desarrollo, ya que pueden estimular el crecimiento económico inclusivo y el desarrollo sostenible y reforzar la resiliencia a las crisis.

Los países pueden hacer mucho más para abrir mercados, permitiendo que los bienes fluyan bajo un sistema de comercio internacional justo, transparente y predecible para lograr la seguridad alimentaria mundial, así como avanzar en el cumplimiento de la Agenda 2030 y sus Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenibles.

Para lograr este propósito, es importante que los países corrijan y prevengan restricciones y distorsiones comerciales, así como obstáculos innecesarios e injustificados al comercio que afectan a productores y consumidores, especialmente a la agricultura familiar y a las comunidades rurales y urbanas pobres y vulnerables.

El mundo está evolucionando de economías físicas a economías de servicios, y con mayor auge a economías digitales centradas en el aprovechamiento de las oportunidades asociadas a la digitalización, las cuales deben ofrecer un acceso equitativo sin que representen una desventaja para los países, sectores e individuos que no puedan invertir y beneficiarse de estas.

En este sentido, el Perú respalda plenamente la propuesta de la FAO de aprovechar la tecnología y la innovación para lograr un mayor impacto en la alimentación y en la agricultura, así como en su compromiso de apoyar a los gobiernos y asociados a reducir las brechas digitales multidisciplinares que permitan a todas las personas participar de los beneficios de la nueva sociedad digital.

En los países en desarrollo se requerirán mayores inversiones y colaboración público-privada en infraestructura digital, así como en educación y capacitación, y es allí donde la Cooperación Sur-Sur y Triangular puede desempeñar un papel preponderante.

Para terminar, señor Presidente, a nombre del Perú alentamos a la FAO a seguir trabajando y apoyando a sus Miembros para alcanzar el objetivo común de lograr sistemas agroalimentarios sostenibles y resilientes para el bienestar de todos y para que nadie se quede atrás.

Muchas gracias

Sr. José Carlos RODRÍGUEZ RUIZ (Cuba)

Hablo en nombre del Ministro de Agricultura de Cuba, Ydael Pérez Brito, porque por dificultades de conectividad desde La Habana no le será posible hacer su intervención, y por eso tengo el honor, como Representante Permanente de Cuba, de leerla.

Distinguidos Ministros, Delegados e invitados, Distinguido Director General de la Organización de Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura, Cuba reconoce el trabajo de la Organización en este período en el que, a pesar del negativo impacto mundial provocado por la pandemia de la COVID-19, no se han detenido las labores, iniciativas y eventos en modalidad virtual, entre otros, para continuar ocupándose de temas cruciales como la alimentación y la agricultura, enfrentando adicionalmente este desafío que hoy amenaza a todos.

El informe presentado por el Director General sintetiza los resultados alcanzados y muestra logros en esta compleja coyuntura.

Aún bajo las muy difíciles condiciones que ha impuesto la pandemia en Cuba, los productores agropecuarios, sean privados, cooperativistas y empresas estatales, con gran esfuerzo han continuado produciendo alimentos para la población nacional y para la exportación, como parte del propósito de sustituir importaciones, que son objetivos prioritarios en nuestro desarrollo.

Los trabajadores del campo cubano han tenido que producir en medio de sensibles reducciones de disponibilidad de insumos, entre ellos de combustibles. El país, debido al bloqueo económico, comercial y financiero que mantiene Estados Unidos por más de 60 años contra el pueblo cubano, una verdadera guerra económica, reforzada bajo la administración de Donald Trump con la implementación de 243 medidas ejecutivas adicionales, todas aún vigentes, tuvo afectaciones muy serias sobre nuestras producciones agrícolas.

Los daños ocasionados por el bloqueo al sector agroalimentario, entre abril de 2019 y marzo de 2020, fueron del monto de 428 894 637 de USD. En ese mismo período los daños generales al país ascendieron a 5 570 millones de USD.

Frente a esas adversas circunstancias, gracias a los resultados de nuestros científicos, especialistas e industria nacional, y el esfuerzo de los productores, el país pudo desarrollar producciones biológicas, lo cual contribuye a una alimentación más sana.

También un gran esfuerzo hace mi país en el enfrentamiento epidemiológico y sanitario a la COVID-19. Cuba ha desarrollado sus propias vacunas y el proceso de vacunación avanza satisfactoriamente. Esperamos en agosto tener inmunizado el 70 por ciento de la población cubana y en noviembre el 100 por ciento. Este esfuerzo también es decisivo para garantizar, además de la salud, la capacidad productiva y la seguridad alimentaria más en estas duras circunstancias.

Sr Director General, Cuba no se detiene. Avanzamos en la actualización de nuestro modelo socio económico y del plan nacional de desarrollo hasta el 2030. Se trabaja con intensidad y máxima prioridad en la aprobación de políticas públicas para desarrollar la producción de alimentos, entre ellas: el Plan de Soberanía Alimentaria y Educación Nutricional, así como en la implementación de otras ya aprobadas, como la Política para el Desarrollo Territorial.

Resulta pertinente y apreciamos la cooperación de la FAO en el impulso a esas políticas públicas, a favor de la seguridad alimentaria y la nutrición, contribuyendo a eliminar la discriminación en todas sus formas, así como las desigualdades en la distribución y suministros alimentarios.

La COVID-19 ha empeorado la volatilidad de los precios de los alimentos, tema en el que la contribución de la FAO debe ayudar a evitar crisis alimentarias. El hambre en el mundo, lejos de disminuir, ha aumentado en los últimos tres años. No es un dato abstracto, son millones de seres humanos hambrientos.

Cuba apoya la propuesta para el establecimiento de un Subcomité de Ganadería, con el propósito de debatir y crear consenso sobre temas prioritarios para el sector ganadero.

También apoya varios proyectos de resolución, entre ellos los concernientes a:

- El día Internacional de la Sanidad Vegetal.
- La propuesta para el Año Internacional de los Pastizales y Pastores en 2026.
- La propuesta para un Año Internacional de la Palma Datilera en 2027.
- La propuesta de erradicación de la peste de los pequeños rumiantes para 2030.

Debemos enfrentar con cooperación real los grandes desafíos de la humanidad, incluyendo las afectaciones derivadas del cambio climático.

Cuba considera firmemente que la imposición de medidas coercitivas unilaterales y sanciones económicas, son un obstáculo para la plena realización de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio y en particular el derecho a la alimentación. Es esencial velar por los principios de inclusión, diversidad y de cooperación entre todos, única manera para lograr enfrentar con éxito los desafíos actuales.

Cuba está en disposición de apoyar y cooperar con sus experiencias y desarrollo alcanzado en algunos ámbitos. Todos podemos y debemos contribuir a la eliminación del hambre en el mundo y a salvar el planeta. Y para ello, también debemos aprovechar más eficazmente los espacios y dinámicas que organizaciones como la FAO ofrecen para ello.

En nombre de Cuba, deseamos éxito a esta 42a Conferencia de la FAO.

Desbordemos el ruedo de la palabra, vayamos a los hechos, pensemos ante todo en los más necesitados.

Muchas gracias.

Su Excelencia Limber Lucas CRUZ LÓPEZ (República Dominicana)

Ministros, Delegados asistente a la 42a Conferencia General de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura.

La alimentación de nuestra nación siempre ha dependido, para bien o para mal, de las acertadas o desacertadas políticas agropecuarias que implementa el Estado a través de los diferentes gobiernos de turno.

Consciente de esta verdad, desde el 16 de agosto pasado, al frente del Ministerio de Agricultura, junto al equipo que me acompaña, hemos desarrollado políticas de producción agropecuarias que contribuyan a lograr la satisfacción de las necesidades nutricionales de nuestra población.

Políticas acertadas de capacitación y acompañamiento técnico de nuestros productores que constituyen la parte central de nuestra gestión. La agropecuaria para ser exitosa necesita productores con los conocimientos necesarios para llevar a cabo el proceso productivo y técnicos especializados que garanticen que los conocimientos se apliquen de la manera más correcta.

Trabajamos en el mejoramiento de las semillas y la genética de la agropecuaria dominicana para mejorar la producción mediante la aplicación de nuevas tecnologías.

Estamos desarrollando un programa de semillas acorde a las nuevas tecnologías en lo que se refiere al mejoramiento, producción, selección y almacenamiento de las mejores semillas para obtener mejores cosechas.

En cuanto a la mejora de la genética del ganado hemos creado un Centro de Biotecnología para la Reproducción Animal con la misión de realizar programas de inseminación artificial y transferencia de embriones en toda la geografía nacional.

La sanidad, inocuidad y manejo post-cosecha también constituyen ejes fundamentales de nuestra gestión: no solo basta producir, es nuestra meta hacerlo con los más altos estándares de calidad que requiere el mercado nacional e internacional. La cantidad sin calidad no es crecimiento.

En relación con el uso del agua, estamos desarrollando proyectos de protección a nuestras cuencas hidrográficas y técnicas de cultivo que reducen considerablemente el consumo de este preciado líquido.

Esta gestión desarrolla un programa de perforación de pozos, construcción de lagunas y reservorios en todo lo largo y ancho del territorio nacional para llevar el agua a los sectores más apartados y necesitados.

Además de nuestros esfuerzos para solucionar el problema del agua en el campo dominicano, mantenemos una colaboración muy estrecha con el Instituto Dominicano de Recursos Hidráulicos para limpiar y adecuar los canales de riego existentes, lo que ha hecho posible el aumento de las áreas de siembra y la productividad de las cosechas.

Todas estas políticas, programas e iniciativas serían meras ilusiones sin contar con el financiamiento necesario para llevarlos a cabo. El eje central de nuestra política financiera para el sector agropecuario ha sido un Programa de Financiamiento a Tasa Cero con un primer aporte de 5 mil millones de pesos, asignado por el Presidente Luis Abinader a través del Banco Agrícola de la República Dominicana; un hecho sin precedentes en la historia agropecuaria y financiera de nuestro país.

La comercialización es otra de las metas de nuestra gestión. Mediante la planificación, el mejoramiento de la calidad, la diversificación, la apertura de nuevos mercados nacionales e internacionales y la agricultura por contrato, estamos teniendo grandes avances. Una comercialización eficiente es la única garantía para lograr un sistema agropecuario sostenible y rentable.

Es importante reconocer que el problema de la alimentación es internacional y que todos los países tendrán que interconectarse de una u otra forma para poder encontrar soluciones globales. La pandemia nos ha enseñado que debemos fortalecer la buena relación entre los pueblos.

Agradecemos a la FAO la cooperación técnica para crear capacidades, buenas prácticas y fortalecimiento institucional.

De cara a la Cumbre Mundial de Alimentos 2021 de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas () a celebrarse en julio del presente año, hemos convocado los diálogos nacionales.

En estos diálogos, 12 en total, convocados por el Ministerio de Agricultura y con el apoyo del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, de Salud Pública y otras instituciones nacionales, hemos consensado las recomendaciones que aportaremos, esperanzados de que “gracias a la Cumbre, el mundo cobrará conciencia de que debemos trabajar todos juntos, para transformar la forma en que producimos, distribuimos y consumimos los alimentos”.

Nada de lo que hoy planteamos habría sido posible sin el apoyo decidido y el compromiso de nuestro Presidente Luis Abinader quien tiene como un de sus pilares de su programa de gobierno, el apoyo a la Agropecuaria nacional.

Hacia una agricultura eficiente, respetuosa con el medioambiente y sostenible para la consecución del Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible 2 de la Agenda 2030 (hambre cero).

Muchas gracias.

His Excellency Christian HOFER (Switzerland)

Madame La Présidente, Director-General, Distinguished Ministers, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a pleasure to be here with you today and to address the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference.

I was born in 1972 in Switzerland where I grew up as a farm boy and learned from an early age how important it is to care for nature in order to be able to produce food successfully and sustainably. Access to safe and sufficient food has never been an issue for my family.

Looking back over this time span, the sector achieved major improvements in agricultural productivity and innovation to satisfy the changing food demand of a growing global population.

The question for me is: will we continue to be able to satisfy this demand during my lifetime?

And even more importantly, can we do it in a way so that we can keep producing enough food for my children, grandchildren and their children, while guaranteeing the access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to everybody and preserving our indispensable production base at the same time?

The answer is a threefold “no”:

No, not if we do not transform our food systems. The current rhythm of incremental change is not enough.

No, not if we keep producing the way we do today;

No, not if we continue to consume and waste food like we do today.

Madame La Présidente, over the past years, the international community progressively reached the understanding that the way food is produced and consumed is not sustainable;

Today, 815 million people are hungry, and every third person is malnourished. The most recent estimates indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic will further increase this number. At the same time, more than a third of the food produced is either lost or wasted.

This reflects a global food system out of balance.

Food and agriculture stand at a crossroads. We need to change and we need to do it quickly.

That is why Switzerland welcomes the theme of today’s general debate "Transformation of food systems: from strategy to action", as well as the focus of the new FAO Strategic Framework 2022-

2031 and the selected biennial theme 2022-2023: we understand it as a determination to change fundamentally the way our food is produced and consumed today, and to accelerate the transformation towards more sustainable, resilient and healthy food systems.

The theme also relates to the upcoming UN Food Systems Summit 2021 that calls on political commitment to place the transformation of food systems at the centre stage of our future actions, both at global and national level.

In my country, the political debate on the challenges and future of food production is currently very intense. Last Sunday, citizens voted on two referendums in relation to banning synthetic pesticides in agriculture. Further referenda on biodiversity and landscape protection and on the ban of large-scale livestock farming will be submitted to the Swiss citizens for decision through voting in the coming months.

Switzerland sees three critical aspects to support the transformation to more sustainable agricultural and food systems:

Firstly, involving all relevant stakeholders: Governments, the private sector, research, civil society farmers, and consumer organisations. This implies, as SDG17 notes, the promotion of inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships and initiatives at all levels (National, Regional and Global). These partnerships need to build on a common vision and shared objectives, addressing both strategic decision-makers and operative actors on the ground;

Secondly, promoting all innovations especially co-creation of knowledge, farmer-to-farmer innovations and prioritising systemic approaches such as agroecology and;

Thirdly, putting young women and men at the centre of actions as key agents of change in the transformation towards sustainable food systems.

Madame La Présidente, FAO's role is central in this regard.

Switzerland calls on FAO to fully play its key role in promoting this transformational change:

1. by promoting networks with all stakeholders, strengthening its science and evidence-based work, and living the spirit of the UN Development Reform;
2. by supporting the development of methodologies and indicators to measure the sustainability performance of all agriculture and food systems;
3. by supporting members in addressing challenges of sustainability, and by strengthening knowledge and understanding about practical, innovative and dynamic solutions along local, regional and transboundary value chains.
4. Finally, by ensuring that issues that are among the greatest challenges facing humanity, such as climate change, biodiversity and soil loss, are central in the implementation of FAO's new strategic framework.

Once again, Madame Chair, Switzerland stands ready to continue working with FAO and its members to make the transformation of the current situation into more sustainable food systems a reality.

Thank you for your attention.

M. Mohamed Chérif DIALLO (Guinée)

Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Directeur général de la FAO, Monsieur le Président indépendant du Conseil, Mesdames et Messieurs les Ministres, Mesdames et Messieurs les Chefs de Délégation, Mesdames et Messieurs, c'est avec un immense plaisir que je prends la parole, au nom du Gouvernement de la République de Guinée et de la délégation que j'ai l'honneur de diriger à cette session, pour partager mes réflexions sur la problématique de l'alimentation et l'agriculture dans le monde à un moment où l'Humanité est particulièrement éprouvée par la nature et a, plus que jamais, besoin de la coopération et de la solidarité entre les nations.

Mesdames et Messieurs, au moment où la Planète entière est secouée par la pandémie de la Covid-19 et ses multiples conséquences qui bouleversent les acquis et accentuent les défis, le thème de cette

session, intitulé "Transformation des systèmes agroalimentaires: de la stratégie à l'action", trouve toute sa pertinence que ce soit au niveau de la résilience que nous devons bâtir ensemble, de la mission de la FAO, des agendas internationaux de développement ou de la réalisation du programme 2030.

Ma délégation partage le constat selon lequel des systèmes alimentaires résilients, inclusifs et durables sont nécessaires pour accélérer la réalisation des objectifs de développement durable et que de nombreux systèmes alimentaires mis en œuvre en ce moment à travers le monde donnent des résultats qui ne sont pas en adéquation avec les aspirations portées par l'agenda 2030.

Nous estimons également que les différents acteurs (gouvernements, secteur privé, société civile) doivent non seulement opérer des changements en vue d'améliorer la résilience et la durabilité de ces systèmes, mais aussi travailler ensemble pour la vulgarisation des systèmes alimentaires à même d'assurer la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle pour tous ; bien sûr sans compromettre les bases économiques, sociales et environnementales permettant aux générations futures d'assurer leur sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle.

- a) Nous sommes d'avis que ces systèmes doivent:
- b) Permettre la protection de la biodiversité et des écosystèmes;
- c) Être accessibles et culturellement acceptables;
- d) Être économiquement cohérents et réalistes;
- e) Être sûres, nutritionnellement adéquats et bons pour la santé;

Ils doivent aussi optimiser l'usage des ressources naturelles et humaines, notamment en réduisant les pertes et les gaspillages dans les systèmes alimentaires.

Dans cet esprit, le Sommet des Nations Unies sur les systèmes alimentaires, qui se tiendra dans quelques mois, en marge des activités de l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies, est l'occasion idéale pour formuler des engagements et déterminer une feuille de route d'actions concrètes devant être mises en œuvre et suivies pour une meilleure efficacité.

Monsieur la Présidente, Mesdames et Messieurs, la transformation structurelle du système alimentaire est au centre des préoccupations de mon Gouvernement, depuis plusieurs années. Le cadre stratégique national de développement général et sectoriel l'a toujours intégrée dans différents plans et programmes.

En 2016, sous l'impulsion du Président de la République, Professeur Alpha CONDE, le Gouvernement a lancé le Programme Accélééré de Sécurité Alimentaire et Nutritionnelle et de Développement Agricole Durable (2016-2020) comme composante du nouveau Plan National de Développement Economique et Social afin de servir d'outil de transformation du système agroalimentaire en Guinée.

En usant d'outils institutionnels comme le partenariat public-privé, en capitalisant sur les nouvelles technologies au service de l'agriculture et l'alimentation comme le commerce en ligne ou le service bancaire mobile, en s'appuyant sur les jeunes plus prompts à l'innovation, en encourageant les femmes, l'Etat s'emploie à agir sur tous les leviers de la chaîne de valeur pour transformer l'ensemble du système alimentaire en vue d'en faire un instrument de création et de distribution des richesses.

Ces outils innovants, en particulier la digitalisation progressive, a contribué à la résilience face à la Covid-19 en atténuant les effets des mesures restrictives de déplacement des personnes. Dans beaucoup de cas, le marché a continué d'être approvisionné car les commandes pouvaient être passées pour avoir les intrants agricoles ou pour commercialiser les produits.

Il est évident que le processus est confronté à des défis structurels comme le déficit de ressources dans un pays où les besoins se manifestent dans tous les domaines, mais la recherche constante de l'innovation au niveau local et la coopération internationale doivent constituer des éléments clefs pour trouver des solutions adaptées.

Madame la Présidente, Mesdames et Messieurs, en dépit des efforts fournis par la FAO, par l'ensemble de la Communauté du développement, les Etats membres et les autres acteurs, la situation des systèmes alimentaires dans le monde reste encore en-deçà des besoins des pays et des aspirations du programme de 2030. Si l'on peut se réjouir, à la lumière des déclarations faites ici sur le sujet, de constater que le diagnostic du problème est largement partagé et la sensibilisation acquise au niveau

des Membres et partenaires, notre crédo doit être l'action. Et c'est à chacun et à tous que revient cette tâche au moment où le compte à rebours a commencé au niveau de la décennie pour l'horizon 2030.

Pour nous, l'action passe par une mobilisation tous azimuts et irréversible de tous les acteurs et de toutes les ressources en faveur des systèmes alimentaires, mais aussi par la mise en œuvre cohérente de politiques adéquates aux niveaux international, régional, sous-régional, national et local. Et dans cette optique, les outils innovants doivent constituer un tremplin solide et efficace.

Au moment où tout porte à croire que les conséquences de la Covid-19 se feront sentir pour de nombreuses années, nous devons redoubler d'ardeur dans les mesures à prendre et à mettre en œuvre, non seulement pour réussir une transformation structurelle des systèmes alimentaires, mais aussi pour adopter une résilience appropriée face aux menaces conjoncturelles. Ce sont des gages nécessaires pour gagner le rendez-vous de 2030 et post-2030. Dans ce contexte, je puis vous assurer la disponibilité de mon Gouvernement à travailler à ce partenariat bénéfique et le traduire dans les politiques nationales de la manière la plus efficace possible.

Enfin, dans le but de maintenir le cap de la mobilisation et au regard de l'importance que revêt la question, ma délégation plaide pour la mise en place d'une année internationale dédiée aux systèmes alimentaires.

Je vous remercie.

Son Excellence Kobenan Kouassi ADJOUANI (Côte d'Ivoire)

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence, Monsieur le Président indépendant du Conseil de la FAO, Monsieur le Directeur général de la FAO, Honorables participants, je suis honoré de prendre la parole cet après-midi au nom de l'ensemble de la Délégation de la Côte d'Ivoire.

Mesdames et Messieurs, avant tout propos, je voudrais exprimer au nom de Son Excellence Monsieur Alassane Ouattara, Président de la République et du Gouvernement de Côte d'Ivoire, nos sincères remerciements à la FAO et saluer tous les participants à cette 42^e session de la Conférence.

En effet, cette conférence se tient dans un contexte particulièrement difficile de crise sanitaire due à la pandémie de la Covid-19, dont l'une des conséquences est d'avoir engendré un accroissement de près de 19 pour cent des personnes qui souffrent de la faim chronique, soit environ 132 millions de cas en plus, selon la récente évaluation de la FAO.

En ce qui concerne la Côte d'Ivoire, mon pays, le taux d'insécurité alimentaire en 2018 a été évalué à 10,8 pour cent avec la disparition de sa forme sévère.

Toutefois, le nombre de personnes nécessitant des interventions urgentes est passé de 23 180 à 542 497 entre 2019 et 2021, soit 519 317 personnes additionnelles, du fait des effets négatifs de la pandémie de Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Nous devons donc collectivement mettre en synergie nos efforts par la diversification des partenariats et des initiatives de mobilisation de ressources, des investissements résilients, impliquant les petits producteurs qui sont responsables à 70 pour cent de l'approvisionnement en vivres de nos populations.

C'est le lieu de remercier la FAO et l'OMS qui ont toujours développé un dynamisme exemplaire dans la recherche de solutions à ces fléaux, notamment tous les efforts qu'elles déploient afin d'améliorer la situation alimentaire et nutritionnelle dans nos pays.

Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, s'il est établi que la faim et la malnutrition gagnent du terrain partout, il est à relever que les différentes régions d'Afrique subsaharienne en sont particulièrement affectées.

C'est pourquoi, la Côte d'Ivoire soutient la FAO dans sa déclaration et aimerait rappeler que l'un des défis majeurs du 21^e siècle sera d'adresser efficacement la problématique de l'accroissement des besoins alimentaires de la population mondiale tout en atténuant les répercussions de l'agriculture sur l'environnement.

Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, sous la houlette du Chef de l'État, Son Excellence Monsieur Alassane Ouattara, le Gouvernement ivoirien s'est engagé à lutter contre la pauvreté, l'insécurité alimentaire et la malnutrition en privilégiant un cadre d'actions concertées et une synergie des politiques, en procédant à des réformes sectorielles et en accroissant les ressources de l'Etat allouées au secteur agricole.

A cet effet, la Côte d'Ivoire a élaboré et mis en œuvre avec succès le Programme national d'investissement agricole (PNIA), dont la deuxième phase met un accent particulier sur :

- la transformation locale de nos produits agricoles;
- la facilitation de l'accès au marché des produits alimentaires;
- le renforcement de la bio-fortification des aliments;
- et l'intensification de l'éducation nutritionnelle en milieu rural.

Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, pour terminer, il est important de rappeler que la Côte d'Ivoire, qui a pris part à la 31^e session de la Conférence régionale de la FAO pour l'Afrique, les 26 et 28 octobre 2020, approuve entièrement les conclusions de ses travaux.

En outre, le Gouvernement ivoirien sous la conduite éclairée de Son Excellence Monsieur Alassane Ouattara, est résolument engagé aux côtés de la FAO et des organisations onusiennes ayant leur siège à Rome pour relever l'ensemble des défis liés à l'alimentation et à la nutrition au profit des populations.

Nous fondons par ailleurs, beaucoup d'espoir sur la tenue de dialogues nationaux et sous-régionaux qui nous permettront de s'interroger et ensuite de transformer durablement nos systèmes alimentaires dans le cadre du Sommet mondial sur les systèmes alimentaires, prévu en septembre 2021, à New York.

Je vous remercie.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

Thank you very much Madam Chair, I have the honour to deliver this speech on behalf of the Minister for Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies, Minister Stefano Patuanelli, who is currently attending a European Union meeting in Lisbon. The message is the following:

Director-General, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a great pleasure to speak at the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference.

"Agriculture Food Systems Transformation: from Strategy to Action" is at the centre of ongoing international debate and Italy is honoured to provide its contribution to the discussion as well as to the progress of global policies towards increasingly sustainable models.

For this reason, the Italian G20 Presidency has brought to the attention of the G20 Agriculture Ministers the issue of the sustainability of food systems, which we will discuss in Florence from 16 to 18 September at the G20 Agriculture Ministerial meeting.

On the path towards increasingly sustainable systems, I would like to emphasise two principles: first of all the equal dignity of the three dimensions of sustainability: economic, social and environmental, and the link between agricultural and food systems and the territories that generate them and determine their specific characteristics.

The distinctive features of individual food systems must be safeguarded and protected because they are the result of the history, culture and geographical origin of the areas. This diversity is the basis of the Mediterranean diet, which distinguishes the evolutionary process of the Italian agri-food system, characterised by products of excellence strongly linked to the territory.

For the future, in line with the European strategies of the Green Deal and Farm to Fork, Italy wants to continue to promote sustainable approaches, taking into account the three dimensions of sustainability, to ensure greater prosperity while safeguarding the planet and people.

Agri-food systems have shown their capacity to respond to the challenges posed by the pandemic by ensuring the availability of food.

However, COVID-19 exacerbated pre-existing problems: stagnating prices, rising production costs, difficulty in financing investments, climate change.

These considerations also gave rise to the idea of the Food Coalition, an expression that combines a primary objective, namely access to quality food for all thanks to a method of alliances, complementarity and mutual aid. An initiative that we strongly support and that will be further explored at the Pre-Food System Summit to be held at the end of July.

Agriculture can be part of the solution but the commitment of all is needed to strengthen agricultural and food systems.

In this process, Italy believes that national and international efforts must go together.

At the national level we are working on the strategy for the future of the agricultural and food sector, focusing on a number of priority objectives, including:

- the competitiveness of the system by favouring the organisation of supply chains and strengthening the connections between producers and consumers;
- improving the climate and environmental performance of production systems. Farmers are being called upon to make increasingly ambitious commitments, and agricultural policy has the task of accompanying them towards sustainable management of natural capital;
- rural areas. The pandemic and the consequent possibility of working from home have encouraged a part of the national population to reconnect with rural areas, highlighting their merits. We want to make these territories more welcoming, capable of offering high standards of quality of life and employment opportunities;
- agricultural work. Safety in the workplace and the protection of workers' rights will be central to Italian policy for more sustainable food systems;
- Finally, innovation, because we are convinced that technology can contribute to strengthening the sustainability and resilience of the Italian agrifood system.

At the international level, I believe it is fundamental and indispensable to consolidate cooperation between countries and the sharing of common objectives.

We cannot overcome the challenges of climate change and the sustainability and resilience of agricultural and food systems on our own. Everyone's effort is needed, and shared work at the multilateral level is essential.

For this reason, I thank FAO for its contribution to the international debate and confirm Italy's willingness to cooperate actively for an increasingly sustainable future.

Thank you very much Madam Chair.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Señora Vicepresidente de la Conferencia, Señor Director General de la FAO, Dr. Qu Dongyu, Distinguidas autoridades y delegados, Estimada y querida Vice Presidente del Plenario,

es un honor representar a mi país, Argentina, en esta primera Conferencia virtual. Deseamos a todos muy buenas deliberaciones a fin de alcanzar resultados sustantivos, los desafíos son enormes. Manos a la obra.

Señora Vicepresidente, es claro que el incesante aumento del hambre, la profundización de la desigualdad y una temporada activa de desastres climáticos amenaza a los habitantes de todas las regiones del mundo, a menos que se tomen medidas rápidas.

A ello se suma la pandemia de COVID19. El COVID19 está operando como un acelerador del hambre y la inseguridad alimentaria, potenciando conflictos de todo tipo.

Ante este diagnóstico, nuestra región: América Latina y el Caribe, no tiene la visibilidad que se merece. A pesar que, América Latina se ha convertido en la región más afectada por el COVID19 a nivel mundial, y representa más de una cuarta parte de los casos del mundo. Y se espera un aumento del 269 por ciento en la cantidad de personas que enfrentarán inseguridad alimentaria grave. El mayor aumento en términos relativos entre todas las regiones del mundo.

La paradoja es que, al mismo tiempo, la región está llamada a cumplir un rol central frente a los desafíos que presenta el contexto internacional. Nuestros países se ubican dentro de los principales proveedores mundiales de alimentos sanos, nutritivos y de calidad, de conformidad con la Agenda 2030, de esta manera, la región puede contribuir a generar soluciones concretas para el logro de los ODS.

Y en lo que se refiere a la República Argentina, quiero destacar que cuenta con una amplia trayectoria como un país productor y exportador de alimentos, lo que nos impulsa a aportar nuestra experiencia a los debates y actividades de la FAO en materia de agricultura y alimentación.

Compartimos y apoyamos la visión del Director General de tener una FAO más fuerte que apunte a un mundo mejor, sin pobreza, sin hambre, sin desnutrición y comprometido a enfrentar los desafíos de todas las partes interesadas en la cadena de suministro para garantizar más y mejor producción al tiempo que se preserva y protege el medio ambiente y mejorar los ingresos de los pequeños agricultores.

Señora Vicepresidente, los sistemas de producción de alimentos son particularmente vulnerables a los efectos adversos del cambio climático. Los desafíos que impone el cambio climático hacen imprescindible centrar los esfuerzos en la adaptación, a fin de garantizar la resiliencia del sistema y mantener la producción necesaria para la seguridad alimentaria.

Reafirmamos nuestro compromiso de producir alimentos de forma sostenible, respetando el equilibrio entre los tres pilares de la sostenibilidad, de manera de contribuir a la reducción de la pobreza y la distribución progresiva del ingreso; el uso eficiente y responsable de los recursos naturales; y el desarrollo económico de nuestros países.

Resaltamos la importancia, conforme a la agenda 2030, de avanzar en medios de implementación efectivos, entre otros, propiciando mecanismos de financiamiento adecuados, inversiones en nuevas tecnologías e innovaciones orientadas a incrementar la productividad de forma sostenible, favoreciendo la transferencia de tecnología y la capacitación técnica.

Señora Vicepresidente, todos los países deben cooperar para la preservación del medio ambiente, pero, teniendo en cuenta las responsabilidades históricas, así como las capacidades nacionales por su nivel de desarrollo y por su condición socioeconómica.

Los países menos desarrollados son los más susceptibles a los impactos del cambio climático, debido a factores físicos, sociales y económicos.

Tal como reconoce la convención Marco de las Naciones Unidas sobre cambio climático, tanto históricamente como en la actualidad, la mayor parte de las emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero del mundo han tenido su origen en los países más desarrollados.

Los países que tienen responsabilidad principal, histórica y presente, por la delegación ambiental deberían proveer medios de implementación suficientes, predecibles y adecuados que permitan a los países en desarrollo mejorar la sostenibilidad de su producción, centrando la atención en la adaptación para garantizar sistemas agroalimentarios resilientes a shocks sean estos socioeconómicos, políticos o ambientales.

Señora Vicepresidente, a lo largo del presente bienio mucho se ha hablado de “transformación”. Creemos que, más que una transformación, debe ocurrir una transición hacia la sostenibilidad en los sistemas productivos, y esta debe ser gradual y en las formas y tiempos que decida cada país en base a su propia realidad productiva, económica y social, respetando las realidades locales de las diferentes regiones del mundo y sus particularidades productivas, sociales y ambientales, sin dejar a nadie atrás.

No hay un modelo único de desarrollo que sirva a todas las naciones del mundo, así que es fundamental una visión inclusiva de la sostenibilidad de los sistemas alimentarios con soluciones que se adapten a las realidades y necesidades locales, basados en argumentos científicos sólidos.

Al respecto, la Argentina quisiera puntualizar que las mujeres rurales cumplen un rol central en la seguridad alimentaria, especialmente en la producción familiar, campesina e indígena y son especialmente vulnerables al cambio climático en nuestro sector.

Asimismo, la población indígena presenta tasas de pobreza que son en promedio dos veces más altas que para el resto de los latinoamericanos.

Debemos acordar mecanismos efectivos que permitan cerrar las brechas de género, ya que representan un factor clave para la reducción de la pobreza y el logro de sistemas alimentarios sostenibles, económica, social y ambientalmente.

En cuanto a la cooperación internacional, destacamos el valor de la cooperación como herramienta para compartir experiencias, transferir conocimiento y tecnología y crear sinergias positivas para la acción climática y la sostenibilidad ambiental.

Se deben fortalecer las acciones de cooperación Sur-Sur, ajustadas a las necesidades locales.

Señora Vicepresidente, y terminando, pero de especial relevancia para mi país se encuentra la cuestión del comercio internacional. Como lo expresara de manera clara el Consejo Agrícola del Sur de nuestra Sub Región latinoamericana, es fundamental el logro de un sistema de comercio internacional abierto, transparente, previsible y equitativo. Los subsidios distorsivos de la producción y el comercio, así como las barreras no-arancelarias son negativos para los consumidores y productores. Al igual que lo planteara el G77+China, hacemos un llamamiento a los miembros de la Organización Mundial del Comercio a limitar y a reducir, al menos a la mitad, de aquí a 2030, las ayudas internas que distorsionan actualmente el comercio y la producción agrícola a nivel mundial.

Señora Vicepresidente, en función de lo expresado la Argentina hace un llamado a la comunidad internacional a concertar los acuerdos y mecanismos globales que permitan poner los principios y valores antes mencionados y otros igualmente relevantes en práctica, en el terreno.

Para “reconstruir el mundo mejor” no se requiere grandes ideas novedosas ni numerosos eventos de alto nivel, sino pasar de lo declarativo a lo operativo, honrar los compromisos asumidos y – principalmente – respetar los principios y valores compartidos por todos los miembros del sistema internacional. Ojalá así sea.

Muchas gracias Vicepresidente.

Sr. Tomás Duncan JURADO (Panamá)

Gracias Señora Vicepresidente, la República de Panamá extiende un saludo al Director General y a su equipo, así como a todos los países miembros.

Panamá reconoce la invitación realizada por la FAO en la necesidad de la transformación de los sistemas alimentarios agrícolas como una oportunidad post pandemia, para avanzar en los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible 2030.

La pandemia global que hemos y estamos viviendo, nos permite concluir que para lograr los objetivos de: cambiar el signo de la tendencia del hambre, invertir en la transformación rural y empoderar a la población más vulnerable, es necesario trabajar desde la Iniciativa Mano de la Mano, sin etiquetas, cooperando desde la perspectiva de una sola Salud, y sin dejar a atrás a nadie por su nivel de desarrollo o nivel de ingreso, al final y al cabo, todos necesitamos de todos, para ejecutar el enfoque múltiple, que la FAO nos propone, de pasar de los conocimientos a la acción, en el periodo más corto posible.

Panamá agradece, reconoce y respalda las contribuciones de la FAO para presentarnos soluciones transformadoras que optimicen lo que hoy surge como una necesidad distante para muchos de nosotros, pero que con seguridad alcanzaremos.

Compartimos la visión de un mundo libre del hambre y de la malnutrición, que sigue siendo una realidad en algunos de nuestros países, y lamentamos que existan alimentos para todos, pero que no llegan a la mesa de muchos.

Es por ello, que se debe seguir invirtiendo en la seguridad alimentaria y la nutrición: mi país confía plenamente con la implementación de las políticas aprobadas recientemente para el desarrollo de la agricultura familiar y la nutrición, se logrará la reducción en la huella de carbono, y se aportará productos nutritivos a los menores, en edad escolar y sus familias.

En ese sentido, aprovecho para compartirles que, en marzo de este año, el Informe Bienal de Actualización entregado a la Convención Marco de Naciones Unidas, sobre Cambio Climático, nos certificó como país negativo o sumidero de carbono, debido a que mantenemos una cobertura boscosa de 65.4 por ciento.

Igualmente, con el objetivo de contribuir en la protección de la biodiversidad marina mundial, el 9 de junio, extendimos una reserva en el océano pacífico de más de 67,000 km cuadrados.

Panamá tiene el compromiso global de continuar contribuyendo a la mejora del medioambiente, por eso apoyamos el proyecto de la plataforma geoespacial de la FAO y el laboratorio de macro datos. Para mi país ser parte de este proyecto desde sus inicios, será una oportunidad invaluable, y nos apoyará con la sostenibilidad de nuestras contribuciones ambientales y a la biodiversidad.

Panamá da la bienvenida a toda iniciativa que den soluciones a las zonas rurales, y que tengan como prioridad el equilibrio de género y a la población juvenil, en especial en materia de oportunidades de empleo dignos y de calidad.

Queremos aportar en este proceso de transformación, donde se nos invita a aglutinar y acelerar la innovación, la tecnología y la gobernanza. Sugerimos a la FAO, analizar la creación de *hub* alimentarios regionales de exportación, donde se elaboren y envasen alimentos con valor nutritivo para distribuirlos y comercializarlos. Un *hub* alimentario regional puede ser el catalizador para fomentar la producción agrícola de las regiones, reduciendo la huella de carbono en los alimentos, a través de la cadena de distribución y logística, y el aprovechamiento de la temporalidad de la producción regional.

Hoy Señora Vicepresidenta, nos encontramos en un momento histórico de la humanidad, con ventajas en tecnologías de la información, que son herramientas para seguir generando desarrollo, finalidad básica de la FAO, y de esta forma llegar a nuestro objetivo de una mejor producción, una mejor nutrición, un mejor medio ambiente y una mejor vida.

Gracias Vicepresidenta.

Su Excelencia María Emilia UNDURRAGA MARIMÓN (Chile)

Gracias Señora Vice-Presidenta, en primer lugar, quiero agradecer a la FAO y a su Director General, Señor Qu Dongyu por la organización de esta Conferencia, también quisiera saludar a los Ministros y Ministras presentes, a los jefes de delegación y a todos los presentes. Estas instancias de intercambio y cooperación son clave para avanzar en la transformación de nuestros sistemas alimentarios en un contexto desafiante como el que nos ha tocado enfrentar, especialmente durante los últimos dos años.

Los desafíos para el sector agroalimentario han ido cambiando en el tiempo. Junto con preocuparnos de producir más alimentos para una población creciente, debemos adaptarnos a las nuevas tendencias y desafíos, como el cambio climático, las nuevas tecnologías, crisis emergentes como la provocada por la pandemia del COVID19, y también a cambios en las exigencias de los consumidores que requieren alimentos saludables, inocuos, de calidad y producidos de forma sustentable. Ya no es solo producir, es alimentar. Para hacer frente a esto, agradecemos la visión propuesta por FAO orientada a una mejor producción, una mejor nutrición, un mejor medio ambiente y una vida mejor para todos y todas.

Reconocemos la contribución de los sistemas agroalimentarios a la lucha contra el hambre y la malnutrición a escala mundial, en ese sentido reafirmamos nuestro compromiso para enfrentar los desafíos que garanticen una mayor y mejor producción, preservando y protegiendo nuestro entorno.

Consideramos que se debe avanzar en un enfoque sistémico, que equilibre los tres pilares fundamentales de la sustentabilidad: el social, el económico y el ambiental.

Este enfoque busca promover una mirada integral para desarrollar una producción de alimentos sustentable, inclusiva, siendo un motor de desarrollo de las comunidades y sus territorios. La producción de alimentos y la agricultura descentralizan a los países, redistribuyen y son el pilar fundamental del desarrollo del mundo rural que, a su vez, es esencial para el futuro de nuestros países.

Relevamos la importancia de las esferas programáticas de transformación propuestas por FAO en torno a la digitalización, la transformación mediante la acuicultura, el desarrollo sostenible urbano y rural, y la integración de medidas a través de la iniciativa “mano de la mano”.

En relación a la digitalización y las nuevas tecnologías para el desarrollo de una producción de alimentos más eficiente y sustentable, nos gustaría extender el concepto de nuevas tecnologías al conocimiento amplio, que incluye el conocimiento ancestral de nuestros pueblos indígenas y comunidades rurales, quienes por décadas se han adaptado a las nuevas condiciones.

Estas nuevas condiciones que sin duda con el cambio climático se han acelerado requieren el poder compartir información y métodos para enfrentarlas de forma oportuna, no solo para adaptarnos, sino para poder aportar en el desafío de la mitigación con soluciones basadas en la naturaleza que nos dejan en el lado de las propuestas y no de la causa del problema.

El desarrollo y la valorización del mundo rural deben ser considerados, con el fin de mejorar la calidad de vida de sus habitantes, promoviendo una mirada integral de los territorios y coordinando las acciones sectoriales para lograr esto. Queremos reconocer el importante rol que tienen las mujeres para el desarrollo rural y la importante contribución que pueden hacer los jóvenes, en una agricultura que está envejeciendo.

Durante los últimos años, en Chile hemos estado enfocados en crear e implementar una política de desarrollo rural amplia y multidisciplinaria, con un fuerte énfasis en mejorar la calidad de vida de las personas que viven en los territorios rurales y en el acortamiento de las brechas existentes con el mundo urbano. Es así como en 2020 se promulgó de la Política Nacional de Desarrollo Rural, que coordina la acción de 14 ministerios, y que también tiene presente las interacciones entre los sectores urbanos y rurales.

Consideramos que, junto con erradicar la pobreza extrema, el hambre y la malnutrición de las poblaciones rurales, tal como señala esta iniciativa, debemos empujar una mejora integral de la calidad de vida de la población rural. El mundo rural es un espacio rico en cultura e identidad local, lo que debe ser resguardado a través de nuestras políticas, en ese sentido, consideramos importante que esta iniciativa también incorpore este importante elemento.

Quisiera también hacer mención al rol que tiene comercio internacional como un pilar fundamental para construir sistemas alimentarios sustentables, resilientes e inclusivos, y para el desarrollo de nuestras comunidades, y la importancia de que el comercio sea abierto, transparente y sin medidas arbitrarias que distorsionen su adecuado funcionamiento. No deben subestimarse los subsidios distorsionadores del comercio ni las barreras no arancelarias, especialmente aquellas no basadas en la ciencia, ya que este tipo de medidas afectan negativamente tanto a productores como a consumidores. Asimismo, la pandemia del COVID-19 ha demostrado que un comercio abierto es fundamental para garantizar la seguridad alimentaria mundial. En este sentido, y en el contexto de las diversas instancias de negociación internacional sobre desarrollo sostenible, es clave que los países respeten y sigan los principios y valores basados en acuerdos ya alcanzados a través de diferentes instrumentos y procesos de relevancia multilateral.

Muchas gracias Señora Vice-Presidenta.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON, Ms Yael RUBINSTEIN (Israel)

Thank you, Chair, Dear colleagues, Dear Director-General.

The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on our everyday life has driven us to a crossroad of transformations. We found ourselves making difficult and sometimes on the verge of impossible choices, all to provide and protect our people to the maximum extent.

This crossroad has emphasized the necessity of the world for crosscutting systems, especially systems dealing with food and health. This is our moment to rise, build and rebuild stronger, more sustainable and resilient systems.

In its 75 years of existence, the State of Israel has dealt with aged old challenge, feeding a rapidly growing population in a semi-arid land. Short on water and land, but enforced by a highly educated and professional workforce, Israel was able to transfer necessity to innovation and create ground-breaking and profitable solutions in the world of agriculture. Putting together new innovative technology with cyber, software and mobile allows agriculture to be a self-standing field, reducing the dependency on natural resources and making it available and accessible for all.

Developing and investing in agro-tech, Israel was ranked number five in the world in 2020 in the field of innovative development in agrifood, with an overall investment of more than USD 480 million. Every one of us holds a great asset information. The knowledge and data we have are priceless and we believe that by sharing and exchanging them we can move from ideas and strategy to action. Data is not a number and research, data is solutions that can be crossed and fitted throughout the system locally, regionally and globally.

Taking, for example, a drip irrigation, an Israeli invention in the irrigation field allowing to save water by targeting the plant and not the soil. This innovative solution is used in only 3 percent of the world. Can you imagine the long-term water saving possibilities if this technology was tailored to other countries in need? And in water saving is our goal, among others! Can you imagine using Israel's water purification technology around the world? In the last 20 years, 80 percent of Israel's water use for agriculture has been coming solely from using this technology.

The COVID-19 crisis has downsized the world to a tiny global village. The world realized that we all share the same goals and share the same challenges. Now is the time to share the solutions, leading to a world where no one is left behind. By 2050 global food production will have to increase by 70 percent. However, the suitable land for agriculture is already used up to 80 percent. The only resource we can enlarge to our benefit is our knowledge and the only way to do so is to share the technology we rely on.

As we look forward to the Food Systems Summit in September 2021, we are working to unite the food systems currently operating in the world under a wide umbrella of understanding. We hope to rebuild and integrate food systems that can provide, among other things, a joint platform to exchange data and information.

The delegation of Israel looks forward to share with all Member States our experience and lessons learned and to contribute to the discussion during the FAO Conference in our mutual efforts to bring better solutions and better future for all.

Thank you.

Sr. Alfonso María DASTIS QUECEDO (España)

Buenos tardes, Sra. Presidenta, Sr. Director General y Señores colegas, Me complace dirigirme nuevamente a este foro, por desgracia de nuevo de manera virtual. Hago votos para poder hacerlo la próxima vez presencialmente.

Brevemente, quisiera subrayar algunos de los puntos de esta Conferencia que son de especial importancia para España, más allá de suscribir plenamente las declaraciones de la Unión Europea y sus Estados miembros.

En primer lugar, agradecemos a FAO su trabajo y liderazgo global para acabar con el hambre y le animamos a continuar y tomar aún más peso en la transformación de los sistemas alimentarios, aprovechando su capital humano, técnico y su reconocimiento global. Sus análisis técnicos

independientes y basados en la ciencia son fundamentales para avanzar hacia los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenibles y debemos velar porque así se mantengan.

Igualmente, debemos responder a las necesidades alimentarias crecientes y cambiantes de una sociedad global, en las difíciles circunstancias actuales y que busca reducir el impacto ambiental, económico y social de los distintos tipos de sistemas alimentarios.

En este camino, la Estrategia Europea de la granja a la mesa persigue cambiar el paradigma para cumplir con múltiples ODS, ya que no es posible una sostenibilidad de los sistemas alimentarios, en los que disminuimos los precios de los alimentos y reducimos su impacto ambiental, si no conseguimos también el mantenimiento de un comercio local e internacional basado en cadenas de suministro transparentes y sostenibles que garanticen precios justos y equilibrados para los productores y los habitantes del medio rural, evitando su abandono y potenciando la presencia activa de jóvenes y mujeres, cuya incorporación a la sociedad productiva hay que incentivar y apoyar de forma explícita.

Para España, esta transformación pasa por la tecnificación de los sistemas que sirve, entre otras muchas cosas, para: reducir el desperdicio y las pérdidas alimentarias; hacer un uso responsable y sostenible de fertilizantes, plaguicidas y antimicrobianos; garantizar la trazabilidad de las producciones de calidad; realizar una gestión eficaz de la pesca y el desarrollo sostenible de la acuicultura; y mejorar el uso sostenible del agua basado en el regadío de precisión.

En este contexto, España está trabajando para ser uno de los países que lideren a escala global la transformación agrotecnológica y digital.

Además, no debemos olvidar que la amenaza sobre la biodiversidad, las resistencias antimicrobianas, la adaptación y lucha contra el cambio climático, o la aplicación del enfoque Una Salud son desafíos que se deben afrontar en conjunto, desde la multilateralidad.

Ejemplo de este tipo de esfuerzos es la propuesta de creación de una Red voluntaria de Puertos Azules para el desarrollo de las zonas costeras en colaboración con los Miembros y las organizaciones pertinentes. Esperamos información adicional al respecto.

Por todo ello, quisiera animar de nuevo a FAO a seguir por este camino, aprovechando oportunidades como la Cumbre de Sistemas Alimentarios, para construir, con sus miembros, un futuro mejor.

Sra. Presidenta, Sr. Director General, Queridos colegas, finalmente, es para mí un honor anunciar que nuestro firme compromiso con todos los ODS de la Agenda 2030, se ve ahora reforzado con la decisión del Gobierno de España de presentar la candidatura a la presidencia del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial del Embajador en Misión Especial, Gabriel Ferrero, una persona de la máxima experiencia y valía. Pretendemos contribuir así a la consecución de nuestro objetivo común e irrenunciable de disminuir y acabar erradicando el hambre y la malnutrición en el mundo.

Muchas gracias.

Mr Efa Muleta BORU (Ethiopia)

Thank you, Madame Chair, Director-general Qu Dongyu, Distinguished Delegates from all Member States of FAO countries, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a great honour for me to present to you the statement of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, on behalf of our Minister for Agriculture, His Excellency Omer Hussein, on this historical virtual 42nd Conference of FAO, which is taking place in the context of a world that is facing a pandemic and many other serious challenges to our globe.

As you all know, currently the numbers of food insecure people are rising in alarming rate due to multiple factors such as climate shocks, the COVID-19, conflicts and others. Recent predictions indicated that 174 million people will face food insecurity by this year.

The COVID-19 pandemic has furtherly worsened the global hunger and malnutrition, while laying bare the systemic inequalities that underpin current agri-food systems.

In order to overcome these difficulties and to meet these challenges effectively, it is time that the International Community must be able to find effective solutions that transform the agri-food systems. Although Africa has 60 percent of the world's available arable land, the continent is still producing too little to feed its people and encompasses the largest humanitarian crisis.

We have the honour of sharing our thoughts with other nations on the issues that are most important to us, and to discuss the solutions that we propose. African agriculture is overwhelmed by low productivity, under-investment, poor rural infrastructure, soil degradation, poor implementation capacity and other related issues.

Moreover, the drivers for the rise of global hunger and malnutrition particularly in Africa are also caused by climate change posed shocks, conflicts and violences. The climate change and vulnerabilities are negatively affecting all dimensions of food security as well as reinforcing other underlying causes of malnutrition.

Madame Chair, Your Excellency Director-General Qu Dongyu, with these facts, the Government of Ethiopia is highly committed to Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG1 & SDG2 (end of hunger and poverty), and is taking holistic approaches, such as Green Legacy Initiatives, initiated by His Excellency the Prime Minister, Dr. Abiy Ahmed, targeting to plant 20 billion seedlings by 2024, the expansion of giant agro-industrial parks, agro-mechanisation, investment on innovation, research and development, and many others.

Therefore, while we are coming close to the global Food Systems Summit, we highlight the importance of establishing holistic and ground-breaking strategies that tackle the contemporary and future challenges.

Ethiopia appreciates the bold vision and the move of FAO with its Medium Term Plan and Strategic Framework to push for better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life.

We also underline the important role of agri-food systems to address global hunger and malnutrition. Thus, our Government believes that innovative agri-food systems are the core tenet in either Africa or any other areas to address global hunger and malnutrition.

Most importantly, the FAO initiative such the Hand-in-Hand Initiative is important to support the most disadvantaged countries to integrate actions, and to achieve agri-food systems transformation.

With this fact, priority should be given to small-holder farmers in providing access to finance, agricultural inputs, mechanization, small-scale irrigation and allowing for diverse agricultural production; additionally, my Government also wishes to support the initiation for digital agricultural system development, initiated by FAO and its medium-term strategic plan.

Finally, we urge all partners and organizations to work on hand-in-hand initiatives to go from strategies to actions to bring agricultural and food transformation.

Thank you.

M. Papa Abdoulaye SECK (Sénégal)

Madame la Vice-Présidente, Mesdames, Messieurs les Ministres, Monsieur le Directeur général de la FAO, Mesdames et Messieurs les participants, au nom du Gouvernement de la République du Sénégal, je voudrais tout d'abord saluer et magnifier le leadership, la vision, l'enthousiasme et l'attachement du Directeur général de la FAO aux principes directeurs de transparence, d'équité et d'obligation de résultats, conditions sine qua non pour un impact plus significatif de l'intervention de la FAO dans mon pays.

Madame la Vice-Présidente, Mon pays, le Sénégal, est dans une dynamique ininterrompue et par étapes de transformation de ses systèmes agroalimentaires entend rendre bien évidemment ceux-ci plus efficaces, plus efficaces et plus durables.

Un tel exercice est complexe, car il consiste à combiner productivité, durabilité, diversification, amélioration de la qualité, équité et enfin, accroissement des valeurs ajoutées agricoles. Un tel exercice conduit aussi à opter pour des approches systémiques interdisciplinaires et pour un

actionnariat mondial en vue d'une mise en synergie des contributions des différents acteurs et intervenants de l'approvisionnement en facteurs de production jusqu'à la mise en marché.

Madame la Vice-Présidente, au demeurant, la démarche du Sénégal repose au moins sur cinq piliers consignés dans la vision stratégique de Son Excellence Monsieur Macky Sall, Président de la République. Il s'agit du plan «Sénégal émergent».

Le premier pilier consiste à construire une souveraineté alimentaire durable, qui ne signifie nullement une autarcie. Pour nous, il faut entendre sous ce vocable une autosuffisance en produits de base, une relance des exportations et une minimisation des importations.

C'est pourquoi au Sénégal, nous avons un ambitieux programme d'autosuffisance rizicole, qui repose sur l'exploitation de variétés NERICA (*new rice for Africa*), qui, comme vous le savez, sont issues d'un croisement entre le riz africain *glaberrima* et le riz asiatique *sativa*, ce qui devrait permettre de doubler, voire tripler les rendements traditionnels. Je dois aussi vous dire que mon pays, le Sénégal, va lancer incessamment un vaste programme portant sur le blé, je dis bien le blé, grâce aux variétés qui ont été mises au point par les chercheurs sénégalais.

Madame la Vice-Présidente, Mesdames, Messieurs, il s'agit là véritablement d'une révolution agricole, dans un pays sahélien: produire du blé au Sahel. Et ceci grâce au génie créateur et potentiel des chercheurs sénégalais.

Nous sommes aussi en train d'augmenter notre part de marché en ce qui concerne les fruits et légumes de haute saison en exploitant nos avantages comparatifs. En réalité, mon pays le Sénégal veut passer du statut de pays importateur net de produits agricoles à un statut de pays exportateur net de produits agricoles, car la mondialisation est et reste à géométrie variable, et expose tout pays à un risque évident.

Le deuxième pilier que nous avançons, c'est dans le cadre de la lutte contre le changement climatique. Au Sénégal, nous distinguons bien l'incertitude et le risque. Car l'incertitude, on la subit, le risque, on le gère. Et ce du fait précisément que le risque n'est rien d'autre que la probabilité d'occurrence d'un événement défavorable. Et dans le cadre de la transformation de l'incertitude en risque, nous misons entre autres sur des statistiques fiables, sur le renforcement de nos services météo, le développement d'une capacité endogène de prospective pour mieux inventer notre futur au lieu de laisser le futur nous inventer.

Nous misons aussi sur la mise en place de laboratoires de contrôle de qualité, et enfin sur une numérisation progressive de notre secteur agricole. Et ici, c'est le lieu de remercier la FAO pour son assistance hautement appréciée dans le cadre du processus de numérisation de l'agriculture sénégalaise.

Le troisième pilier: pour le Sénégal, l'innovation technologique doit être considérée comme un intrant stratégique majeur pour produire plus et mieux. Toutefois, il est important de souligner que toute innovation technologique n'est pas nécessairement exploitable. Nous sommes donc pour un renforcement des interactions et des interfaces entre les centres du Groupe consultatif pour la recherche agricole (CGIAR) et les systèmes nationaux de recherche agricole pour pouvoir déboucher sur des résultats utiles et utilisables en vue de faire les choses autrement et mieux avec comme adjuvant l'innovation technologique.

Le quatrième pilier: une attention particulière est accordée aux exploitations familiales et à la préservation de nos bases productives, intérêt du Gouvernement de la République du Sénégal repérable à travers une augmentation des investissements publics pour que l'agriculture sénégalaise soit la locomotive de la relance de l'économie post-Covid.

Cette année, c'est grâce au secteur agricole en général que nous avons pu éviter une récession, en utilisant au mieux les conditions climatiques favorables, mais aussi en tenant compte des avancées de la science et de la technique. Nous voulons aussi promouvoir des programmes concernant les jeunes en vue de lutter contre le chômage et l'immigration clandestine, et tout ceci assorti d'un programme de restauration et d'amélioration de la fertilité des sols, d'électrification rurale, d'infrastructures d'accès

aux marchés et de maîtrise de l'eau, sans oublier bien évidemment l'alimentation scolaire qui constitue un enjeu de tout premier plan à considérer.

Enfin, le cinquième pilier: le Sénégal est pour l'exploitation du savoir et du savoir-faire endogène de nos populations et pour une promotion des approches agroécologiques fondées sur des évidences scientifiques en vue de réaliser une intensification durable pour nous nourrir sans nous détruire, car l'humanité a besoin effectivement d'une solidarité agricole générationnelle pour que l'agriculture et les systèmes alimentaires de demain soient meilleurs que ceux d'aujourd'hui, compte tenu du fait que les problèmes deviennent de plus en plus complexes et qu'il faut bien y faire face.

Pour conclure, Madame la Vice-Présidente, le Sénégal est optimiste parce que nous réfutons toute forme de fatalité concernant les systèmes agroalimentaires et nous pensons que tout est possible sauf ce qui n'a pas été entrepris. Et le lancement de notre programme blé en tant que pays sahélien, en est l'illustration. Tout est effectivement possible.

Forts de tout cela, nous pensons que le Sommet de 2021 doit être celui d'une rupture raisonnée, c'est-à-dire des ruptures non improvisées, mais fondées, soutenues par la science et la technologie qui sont les vecteurs essentiels de transformation de nos systèmes alimentaires. Sans nul doute, la mission de la FAO va devenir plus complexe parce que les problèmes le sont de plus en plus, et aujourd'hui plus que jamais, l'humanité a besoin d'une FAO forte, qui passe bien évidemment par d'autres soutiens durables et contribue à cette organisation, fondamentale en ce qui concerne la transformation de nos systèmes alimentaires.

Mesdames, Messieurs, telle est la communication que je voulais faire au nom du Gouvernement de la République du Sénégal.

Je vous remercie de votre aimable attention.

Mme Maria De Fatima JARDIM (Angola)

Madame la Vice-Présidente, en premier lieu, c'est un honneur pour nous au nom de notre pays et au nom de mon Gouvernement, souhaiter et transmettre mes salutations cordiales à toutes les délégations ici présentes. Je tiens également à féliciter Monsieur Michal Kurtyka et vous-même pour votre élection à la présidence et vice-présidence de cette Conférence. Nous félicitons également la FAO pour l'élaboration du rapport d'état de l'agriculture et l'alimentation dans le monde, qui reflète la situation préoccupante en matière d'alimentation avec augmentation du nombre de personnes souffrant de la faim et de la pauvreté, et qui confirme la dimension multidisciplinaire et transversale de nos objectifs.

Madame la Vice-Présidente, il reste beaucoup à faire pour atteindre les Objectifs de développement durable d'ici à 2030. Et cela me donne l'espoir que cela peut être réalisé avec l'engagement de tous. Nous soutenons la vision stratégique de la FAO pour relever les défis et que nous ne pouvons y parvenir qu'en accélérant les engagements proposés avec un renforcement adéquat des capacités, innovation, amélioration des indicateurs, des programmes nationaux avec une dimension de développement, afin de transformer et de rendre les systèmes alimentaires plus résilients tout en respectant les spécificités de chaque pays et de chaque région.

L'Angola, Excellence, est en train de développer des priorités nationales pour soutenir la transformation agricole. La transformation de l'agriculture se base sur un programme agricole et un agenda national jusqu'à 2025. C'est essentiel pour la croissance productive de l'agriculture et aussi pour améliorer l'organisation de la vie dans les zones rurales ainsi que leur interdépendance avec les villes. Nous sommes en train d'améliorer les centres de consommateurs avec le soutien des associations, des coopératives, et de donner la priorité à l'agriculture familiale pour augmenter la production et lutter contre la pauvreté, mais aussi pour améliorer la circulation des produits placés au crédit avec un programme dénommé «Agrobusiness» qui pourra augmenter la production et l'approvisionnement.

Nous considérons aussi que l'agroécologie, les biotechnologies, les énergies renouvelables peuvent également contribuer à augmenter les revenus, et c'est pourquoi nous avons l'intention d'étendre l'expérience des petits centres agroécologiques, intégrés dans toutes les provinces de notre pays, pour

soutenir des milliers de familles comme une solution de processus approprié aux dimensions du développement durable.

Nous sommes aussi en train d'augmenter nos capacités. La gestion des terres, de l'eau. Nous devons éviter les impacts négatifs sur les femmes, sur les jeunes, avec les difficultés en matière d'emploi, de production alimentaire, et nous devons améliorer les revenus de nos familles. Les effets du changement climatique continuent jusqu'à aujourd'hui de s'aggraver. Cette question est une priorité dans l'agenda et le programme national de l'Angola. Nous devons augmenter nos capacités de prévision, d'alerte et aussi voir comment développer de petits projets agricoles d'adaptation.

C'est une innovation parce que nous pourrions créer un mécanisme de gestion intégrée à partir de nos structures locales. Nous avons besoin d'encourager le soutien de tous les partenaires. Nous connaissons dans une province du sud de l'Angola, une situation de flux migratoires de criquets pèlerins. Nous remercions le Directeur général de la FAO, la direction de la Division des urgences de FAO et le Coordonnateur régional, ainsi que la représentation locale et le Gouvernement de la Belgique, pour l'appui rapide et urgent qu'ils ont apporté dans la gestion d'un modèle innovateur d'intégration communautaire régionale pour ce phénomène.

Nous considérons que des centres d'urgences devraient être créés dans les différentes localités sous-régionales pour faire les études, la recherche et la gestion de crises comme les criquets. Nous avons bien un centre d'information, mais nous avons besoin d'un centre qui puisse prévoir les impacts qui affectent la production, causent la famine dans les zones rurales et augmentent en conséquence les mouvements migratoires des familles. Nous travaillons aussi sur des programmes nationaux visant à créer la résilience des systèmes alimentaires. Mais, nous avons besoin de mettre en place une gestion équilibrée et durable des ressources et une réduction des émissions également.

Il nous faut donc soutenir la FAO qui joue un rôle très important et nous encourageons les autres initiatives de partenariat de développement qui permettent d'intégrer nos pays et nos régions dans la collaboration multilatérale lors de crises dues au changement climatique, aux criquets pèlerins, mais aussi lors de crises financières.

Madame la Vice-Présidente, je crois que nous devons saluer les initiatives de l'Afrique et celles de ses chefs d'États, pour qu'il y ait une zone de libre échange continental africain.

Nous sommes convaincus que c'est un pas important pour voir la croissance des relations commerciales, renforcer l'intégration régionale, améliorer la consommation et les aspects nutritionnels, mais aussi la stimulation, la coopération Sud-Sud et interrégionale.

Le Sommet international sur les systèmes alimentaires suscite de grandes attentes. Il est attendu que le dialogue avec les parties prenantes nationales, régionales et les autres, soit inclusif, constructif et que les conclusions et recommandations soient une source d'inspiration pour la réalisation de l'agenda 2030, pour le développement durable et la réduction des inégalités, le renforcement de la résilience des systèmes alimentaires spécifiques et une collaboration plus juste, plus équilibrée, entre les pays et les régions.

Pour conclure, Madame la Vice-Présidente, l'Angola approuve la nouvelle stratégie de la FAO, espère que le cadre d'amélioration prévu sera mis en œuvre et considère l'étroite collaboration avec la FAO et son Directeur général, ainsi que les autres organisations, comme essentielle, comme facteurs qui peuvent donner une impulsion différente et une dynamique, aussi, à la coopération que nous voulons pour ouvrir l'avenir vers un monde meilleur.

Merci beaucoup Excellence.

Su Excelencia Luis Renato ALVARADO RIVERA (Costa Rica)

Buenos días, a todos y todas, un gusto saludarlos desde Costa Rica. Bien, primero que nada, quisiera agradecer la oportunidad de participar en el foro. Quisiera comentarles rápidamente muchas de las acciones que hemos hecho durante la pandemia y post pandemia para garantizar que la actividad

agropecuaria y agrícola del país permaneciera trabajando. Nosotros tuvimos que realizar alrededor de 58 acciones para poder garantizar el funcionamiento de la actividad agrícola y pecuaria del país.

Iniciamos garantizando el funcionamiento de las ferias del agricultor desarrollando un protocolo sanitario para garantizar la salud de las personas, tanto como consumidores como productores que estaban en las Ferias del Agricultor disponiendo sus productos. Se generó, entonces, ese protocolo sanitario que garantizaba el buen funcionamiento de las ferias y que nos permitía poder continuar llevando los alimentos del campo a la mesa de los consumidores. Hicimos una gran articulación con el Ministerio de Salud Pública, con el Ministerio de Seguridad, con la institución que garantiza la salud que es la Caja Costarricense del Seguro Social y pudimos seguir avanzando en la producción y en la distribución.

Seguidamente desarrollamos protocolos para garantizar las cadenas de distribución de los productos, que no necesariamente iban a las Ferias del Agricultor, pero que sí tenían que llegar a otros centros de acopio y distribución. Generamos protocolos de manejo de fincas tanto para las fincas pecuarias como para las fincas agrícolas, de manera que tuviesen los distanciamientos y todos los protocolos requeridos sanitarios para garantizar la salud de los colaboradores.

Generamos dos protocolos: un protocolo binacional con el hermano país, Panamá, para una migración que históricamente se da de la población Ngobe de Panamá hacia Costa Rica, donde también desarrollamos un protocolo sanitario, logramos tener que los lugares de habitación donde vienen los Ngobes puedan tener y cumplir con las condiciones sanitarias para lograrlo de manera correcta.

Igual, hicimos un protocolo de ingreso desde Nicaragua para los recolectores de nuestro grano de oro, el café, y otras cosechas como la de naranja, la de melón, la sandía, que requerían de esa mano de obra extranjera y tuvimos que, entonces, hacer junto con las organizaciones internacionales que ven las migraciones un trabajo muy importante para poder tener la garantía que podíamos tener la mano de obra suficiente para poder desarrollar la recolección de esos cultivos.

Hemos venido insistiendo también, que es indispensable en todo esto post pandemia, seguir hablando de temas que para nosotros son vitales y que nos genera un desarrollo de una población que ha sido marginada históricamente, que es la población de mujeres del campo que hoy en el país representan el 47% de la fuerza laboral que tenemos y que ha estado fuera de visibilizarla como una fuente importante de ingresos para la agricultura familiar.

Muchas de las mujeres en el campo son jefas de hogar que alimentan a sus hijos y generan una economía rural indispensable para avanzar. Allí hemos planteado también la necesidad de la generación de mercados de proximidad donde se genere esa economía rural territorial que le permita a los productores el intercambio de sus productos y que de esa forma se genere riqueza en el territorio que le permita a las familias agricultoras poder salir adelante, tener una vida digna y garantizar que sus hijos van a permanecer en la actividad agropecuaria y agrícola del país porque tienen una oportunidad y un futuro.

Tenemos que llevar la conectividad, tenemos que seguir transfiriendo la información, el conocimiento y la tecnología que tenemos que desarrollar para que ellos sean mucho más eficientes, mucho más efectivos y mucho más prósperos. Pero, de cara eso, también hemos planteado la necesidad de discutir, tanto nacionalmente como internacionalmente, el manejo de las cadenas de distribución, los monopolios y oligopolios que hay tanto internacionalmente en la producción de alimentos y la comercialización de los mismos, como los monopolios y los oligopolios internos en el país.

Todos los esfuerzos que hemos venido haciendo como Ministerio y a nivel internacional para garantizar que más de 500 millones de productores de agricultura familiar permanezcan produciendo alimentos y llevándolos a las mesas de los consumidores, es indispensable empezar a discutir sobre los precios justos pagados al productor y a la productora para que puedan tener esa vida digna y permanezcan en el sistema productivo. Si no damos esa discusión pronto estaremos condenando a nuestras poblaciones agrícolas a la miseria y al hambre y a la malnutrición.

Es, entonces, indispensable que podamos entender que las relaciones internacionales y nuestros socios comerciales tienen que poner en el tapete la discusión de los subsidios y de las oportunidades de tener realmente ingresos efectivos de los productos de nuestros agricultores y agricultoras a los mercados a

los cuales somos socios comerciales. Las barreras no arancelarias, fitosanitarias y zoonosanitarias se han convertido en un instrumento de prohibición del comercio internacional. Y, bajo esa sombrilla, hemos justificado la destrucción de productos y alimentos necesarios para generar riqueza para los países exportadores y para las familias que producen esos alimentos.

Creo que estas discusiones están siendo urgentes porque la pandemia ha demostrado que muchos de nuestros países han perdido su seguridad alimentaria producto de que la importación ha sido superior y ha estado por encima de la producción nacional y ha desincentivado que nuestros productores y productoras logren seguir produciendo y nuestras políticas, en muchos de nuestros países, han sido enfocadas hacia el monocultivo que genera gran productividad y producción de muchos de los "commodities" que hoy están siendo vendidos en el mercado internacional y que, por razones de la necesidad de la alimentación de la población, han tenido crecimientos exorbitantes en su precio. Hablo de los granos básicos.

Y, desafortunadamente, hablo de los granos básicos porque es la comida de los que menos tienen y quienes más necesitan. Tener un incremento del maíz, la soya, el trigo hace que muchas poblaciones se vean frustradas y muy lejos la oportunidad y posibilidad de consumo real para su manutención, para su buena nutrición. Entonces, es indispensable, que sobre la mesa pongamos estos grandes temas para poder garantizar que nuestras poblaciones campesinas, productores y productoras, van a permanecer en el agro produciendo los alimentos de las grandes ciudades.

La agricultura familiar ha venido a demostrar que es resiliente, que es poderosa y que con adaptación al cambio climático y con oportunidades de inversión y de transformación y de transferencia de tecnología pueden seguir siendo resilientes, ser muy robustas, poder avanzar y seguir creciendo para alimentarse a sí mismas y alimentar a las poblaciones del mundo de las ciudades porque vamos a requerir de su esfuerzo, de su producción para que podamos seguir avanzando en el desarrollo de la humanidad.

La agricultura hoy, vuelve a convertirse en un pilar sustantivo del desarrollo de las economías post pandemia. Si olvidamos a nuestros agricultores y agricultoras y su función sustantiva y estructural dentro del desarrollo de las economías de nuestros países, vamos a condenar a nuestros pueblos al hambre.

Muchísimas gracias.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Last, but not least, I would like to give the floor to His Excellency, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to FAO.

Su Excelencia Monseñor Fernando CHICA ARELLANO (Santa Sede) (Observador)

Señora Vicepresidenta, en nombre de la Santa Sede, al tomar la palabra en este 42.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia de la FAO, deseo ante todo congratularme por la elección del Señor Michal Kurtyka, para presidir estas sesiones. A través de usted, deseo dirigir un deferente saludo a cuantos participan en esta magna reunión convocada bajo el lema "El estado de la alimentación y la agricultura. Transformación de los sistemas alimentarios agrícolas: de la estrategia a la acción".

Hoy, se constata de forma clara y rotunda lo que el Papa Francisco dijo ya en el año 2015 en su encíclica *Laudato Si'*, a saber, "que no hay dos crisis separadas, una ambiental y otra social, sino una sola y compleja crisis socioambiental. Las líneas para la solución requieren una aproximación integral para combatir la pobreza, para devolver la dignidad a los excluidos y, simultáneamente, para cuidar la naturaleza". Fueron palabras perspicaces verificadas en estos momentos en los que se entrelaza el impacto de la pandemia por COVID-19 y el impacto del cambio climático que golpea, de una manera muy fuerte, a las comunidades indígenas, a las poblaciones afrodescendientes y a los migrantes.

Ante este panorama, se pone de relieve la imperiosa necesidad de hacer realidad el quicio de la Agenda 2030 de las Naciones Unidas que incita a trabajar denodadamente para que nadie quede atrás, sobre todo los grupos más precisados de ayuda. Es decir, los ancianos, los niños, los jóvenes y los enfermos. En modo alguno podemos olvidar a las mujeres, sobre todo a las que viven en zonas rurales

que con enorme y significativo ahínco cuidan de sus familias, aportando un suplemento de humanidad.

El coronavirus, con las crisis preexistentes que ha exacerbado, nos ha hecho percibir nítidamente que nadie puede ser indiferente a los problemas de los demás. Por ello, es de vital importancia redoblar el compromiso, pues no se trata solamente de enumerar sugerencias, multiplicar teorías y acumular estadísticas. No es cuestión tampoco de llenar de eslóganes las pantallas de nuestros ordenadores ni de formular estrategias que únicamente conducen a la demora de soluciones o al final terminan archivándose. Se trata, sobre todo, de programar un presente consistente y un futuro sostenible para las personas y las comunidades. Y esto pasa por una real y verdadera cooperación que tenga presente las situaciones concretas y las esperanzas de las poblaciones más indigentes, tratando de comprender las raíces de su vulnerabilidad y afrontando decididamente sus exigencias efectivas. A este respecto, Su Santidad el Papa, ha afirmado sin ambages, "Sabemos que la cooperación está cada vez más condicionada por compromisos parciales, llegando incluso a limitar las ayudas en las emergencias. También las muertes a causa del hambre o el abandono de la propia tierra son una noticia habitual con el peligro de provocar indiferencia. Nos urge, pues, encontrar nuevos caminos para transformar las posibilidades de que disponemos en una garantía que permita a cada persona encarar el futuro con fundada confianza y no solo con alguna ilusión".

Los efectos del cambio climático en los estilos de vida humanos perturban dramáticamente a todos los países con fenómenos que, en muchas regiones del planeta, ponen a dura prueba no solo el ambiente rural sino también el sistema social y económico. Los más lacerados por estos daños son los pobres, cruelmente castigados por la pandemia, ellos experimentan la disminución de los niveles de producción en el sector agrícola y padecen la escasez de alimentos y de recursos, comenzando por el agua. A estas dificultades se añaden los efectos de una coyuntura económica desfavorable, la discriminación previa, la ausencia de oportunidades, la falta de respeto a sus derechos humanos y el predominio de intereses, muy sesgados que obstaculizan el tan necesario y urgente fortalecimiento de su capacidad de resiliencia.

No hay, pues, Sra. Vicepresidente, tiempo que perder. Actuar de manera coordinada y efectiva contra el cambio climático y sus nocivas repercusiones se ha vuelto algo prioritario. Ello conlleva una lucha sin tregua contra la deforestación que ha visto la desaparición de 420 millones de hectáreas de bosques desde 1990, con la consiguiente degradación del terreno. Si continuamos descuidando o, incluso, modificando de forma definitiva los delicados equilibrios de ecosistemas como la agricultura, la pesca y los recursos forestales, estaremos transitando por un camino sin retorno que haga aún más intrincado sostener los esfuerzos para socorrer a las personas marginadas y a las comunidades que ven amenazada su identidad.

En este contexto, el pensamiento se dirige inmediatamente a los diversos pueblos autóctonos que, a menudo, son víctimas de una economía excluyente, así como de una preponderancia tecnicista que priva de todo efecto su sabiduría tradicional, su relación ancestral con la tierra y el territorio y que solo hace de ellos espectadores pasivos de programas y proyectos lejanos de sus aspiraciones concretas.

Particular atención requieren, asimismo, las áreas tropicales del mundo y los pequeños Estados insulares que contemplan atónitos el aumento del nivel del mar. Estas zonas se están convirtiendo de exportadoras netas de alimentos a importadoras. Se corre el riesgo también de que se transformen en generadoras de flujos masivos de personas.

Ayudar a las personas a permanecer con dignidad en su hogar requerirá de acciones decididas y que abran oportunidades especialmente a los jóvenes. Además, hay que velar por la tutela de la biodiversidad que con frecuencia peligró por el papel determinante a que han asumido las nuevas tecnologías y los sistemas de cultivo agrícola no tradicionales que hacen amplio uso de los resultados de la investigación y solo buscan producir para responder a una demanda creciente de alimentos.

Señora Vicepresidente, ha llegado la hora de avanzar por un camino que comprometa a todos y no solo a unos pocos en la consecución de un auténtico e integral desarrollo humano. El mismo hombre que se ha empeñado en conquistar el espacio estelar, y lo está consiguiendo, ha de ser también el que preste en nuestro planeta la debida atención a las necesidades de quienes sufren a causa del hambre y de la malnutrición y de quienes obtienen del trabajo agrícola alimento, ocupación y ganancia.

En la práctica, esto quiere decir acabar con las desigualdades existentes que generan por doquier exclusión, limitar el uso de los recursos no renovables, moderar el consumo, maximizar la eficiencia del aprovechamiento, reutilizar y reciclar. No descuidar a quienes tienen un trabajo precario y viven apesadumbrados por el coronavirus o por inclemencias naturales o por razones económicas. Y, finalmente, no ignorar a cuantos se ven privados de servicios sociales eficientes, de asistencia médica y de adecuada instrucción y capacitación.

Tengamos esto muy en cuenta porque no podemos cometer el error, como recordaba el Papa Francisco en su visita a la FAO, de conformarnos con decir "otro lo hará".

Muchas gracias.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, very much. Dear colleagues, we have come to the end of our fourth plenary meeting. We will reconvene tomorrow morning at 8:30 hours.

Thank you and have a great evening.

The meeting rose at 17:54 hours

La séance est levée à 17 h 54

Se levanta la sesión a las 17.54

CONFERENCE CONFERENCE CONFERENCIA

<p>Forty-second Session Quarante et deuxième session 42.º período de sesiones</p>
<p>Virtual Meeting, 14-18 June 2021 Réunion Virtuelle, 14-18 juin 2021 Reunión Virtual, 14-18 de junio de 2021</p>
<p>FIFTH PLENARY MEETING CINQUIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE QUINTA SESIÓN PLENARIA</p>
<p>16 June 2021</p>

The Fifth Meeting was opened at 08:32 hours
Ms Yael Rubinstein,
Vice-Chairperson of the Conference, presiding

La cinquième séance est ouverte à 08 h 32
sous la présidence de Mme. Yael Rubinstein,
Vice-Président de la Conférence

Se abre la quinta reunión a las 08.32
bajo la presidencia de la Sra. Yael Rubinstein,
Vice-Presidente de la Conferencia

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VICE-CHAIRPERSON

I call the fifth Plenary Session to order. I wish to inform that a request has been received from the FAO Staff Bodies to deliver a statement to the Conference. If the Conference is in agreement, I would propose that the statement be delivered under Item 28, Any Other Matters, scheduled to be taken up later this morning.

We will continue with Item 9: *Review of the State of Food and Agriculture*. May I remind delegates to respect the agreed upon five minutes time limit?

Statements by Heads of Delegation

Déclarations des Chefs de Délégation

Declaraciones de los jefes de delegación

Fiji, Oman, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Bahamas, Monaco, Pakistan, Germany, Congo, Ghana, Zambia, Ecuador, Argentina, Nigeria, Hungary, International Telecommunication Union

His Excellency Mahendra REDDY (Fiji)

Chairperson, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, the Government of Fiji recognizes the work that FAO has undertaken to push for better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life through accelerating innovation, technology, data, governance and institutions to transform today's agri-food systems for a tomorrow where no-one goes hungry.

FAO, over the years, has always been a partner in the development of Fiji's agriculture sector through provision of technical support in policy formulation and planning, creation of opportunities for investment and enhancement of commercial agriculture. This engagement considers multi-dimensional vulnerabilities that will ensure resilience and sustainability of the industry.

Through FAO's guidance, the Government of Fiji is looking at other alternatives and the best way forward to build a more sustainable and resilient food system in light of the current pandemic and climate related shocks. In response to COVID-19, Fiji, through the Ministry of Agriculture, has designed an Agriculture Growth and Expansion Plan focusing on initiatives to support the priorities of the Agriculture five-year Strategic Development Plan (2019-2023).

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Delegates, the plan includes long-term food and nutrition security through the distribution of seeds and seedlings to rural and urban communities, support to commercial agriculture ventures through investment promotion, construction and upgrade of farm roads to create market access, as well as the establishment of nurseries and orchards to ensure a sustainable and extensive seed bank. Progressively, the plan focusses on expanding agriculture to its full potential to raise national income and become the leading export earner for the country, at the same time addressing key objectives for the improvement of rural livelihoods.

Further to the above, there are a series of policies and initiatives formulated to bolster agricultural output and growth. These strategies realize agriculture's aspiration to "Grow Beyond", targeting incremental growth and spearheading a paradigm shift in agriculture. This was evident in the total gross volume and value of agriculture production of 2020, which increased by 5.6 percent and 2.9 percent respectively, as compared to 2019. Fiji acknowledges the importance of the multi sectorial approach, which will ensure increased production, elimination of multi-dimensional vulnerabilities and mitigation of shocks.

Despite the current pandemic, Fiji has also experienced its fair share of tropical cyclones. Towards the end of 2020 and earlier this year, the devastating impact of two back-to-back cyclones resulted in more than Fijian Dollar 160 million worth of damages. Both cyclones occurred amidst the pandemic causing unprecedented financial challenges to our farmers.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Delegates, Fiji recognizes that through FAO's partnership, designing and implementing comprehensive programmes and coherent public policies will address the achievement of the outcomes of the "four betters" which will reflect the interconnected economic, social and environmental dimensions of agri-food systems. Therefore, Fiji will continue to ensure the

implementation of agricultural programmes that encourage a strategic and systems-oriented approach to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals.

Fiji's food systems approach facilitates the identification of leverage points along the continuum from production to consumption. The approach also requires that different sectors work together to push for transformations of different parts of food systems. As food security cannot only be addressed as an agricultural issue, obesity, overweight or anemia cannot be seen as a mere health problem. As such, Fiji is vigorously pursuing the finalization of the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security aimed at bringing together multi-sectorial players within Government to prioritize and coordinate interventions that will ensure a sustainable and healthy food system.

For the past five years, Fiji has invested more than Fijian Dollars 300 million through its Annual Budget Allocation on Fiji's agriculture sector, with the vision of establishing a sustainable, competitive and resilient agriculture industry that will create an enabling environment for economic opportunities, climatic viability and food and nutrition security for all Fijians. This mandate has been the guiding principle in transforming Fiji's agri-food systems through initiatives that will ensure, improved food and nutrition security, farmers' livelihoods and effective implementation of climate smart agriculture and continuous support to farming as a business.

Since May 2021, Fiji has organized national dialogues on the five Action Tracks of the upcoming UN Food Systems Summit scheduled for September, 2021. Completion of these national dialogues recorded participation of 580 interested stakeholders from different sectors throughout the country such as Government officials, NGOs and Civil Society Organizations, external and bilateral partners, community leaders, academics, food processors and farmers. The outcome of these discussions focused on new policies and approaches that will be reflected in future strategies to transforming Fiji's agri-food system.

The Government of Fiji recognizes the role of the agri-food system in addressing hunger and malnutrition through the COVID-19 pandemic; notes FAO's strategies on its systems-based approach in transforming agri-food systems to reverse the hunger trend, investing in rural transformation and empowering vulnerable populations and supports FAO's multi-pronged approach of putting knowledge into action through digitalization and sustainable rural development.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Delegates, on that note, Fiji is grateful to be part of the 42nd Session of FAO Conference and wishes all delegates a successful meeting and deliberation that will foster positive outcomes and ensure continued transformation of our agri-Food system strategy into action.

Thank you, Vinaka Vakalevu and Dhanyavaad

His Excellency Saud Bin Hamoud Bin Ahmed AL-HABSI (Oman) (Original Language Arabic)

Thank you, in the name of God, all Merciful, all Compassionate, Your Excellency Qu Dongyu, Director-General of FAO, Your Excellencies Ministers, Heads of Delegations, Your Excellencies heads of NGOs and governmental organizations, donor funds, representatives of the civil society, Ladies and Gentlemen, Peace be upon you and God's blessings.

It is my honour to address this esteemed assembly of decision-makers, representatives of countries and scientists as a representative of the Sultanate of Oman. It is also my pleasure to take part in this important event where we explore and exchange ideas about the state of food and agriculture in the world and transformation of cultural food systems, from strategy to action.

Agriculture is extremely important and it requires collaboration of all efforts of all countries of the world together in order to reach practical and successful solutions to the most important issues pertaining to food and agriculture in the world and to find the necessary means to guarantee the provision of food to the people of the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the documents of this Conference included several ideas and very good visions that we look positively upon in the Sultanate of Oman and we feel that addressing them and taking them into consideration will contribute to solving several problems pertaining to agriculture and food production and nutrition in different countries of the world.

The vision of FAO in focussing on food and agricultural systems that include the four betters – better production, better nutrition, better environment and better life – and the translation of this vision in practice into reality by transforming food and agricultural systems, from strategy to action, will certainly contribute positively to resolving and limiting problems connected to food production and nutrition in different countries of the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Sultanate of Oman over the past few years has worked hard to develop its agriculture and food systems, to improve the methods and chains of production and develop them, as well as the production and provision of food, which had a very good impact on improving the living conditions of the Omani people. The Sultanate has also adopted a comprehensive methodology for food security that includes several objectives to improve the food security system in the Sultanate by focussing on basic principles: the demand for food, the quality and safety of food, local production of food and securing imports from abroad in addition to economic sustainability.

In accordance with the vision of Oman 2040, the Ministry has aligned its strategy for sustainable agriculture and rural development 2040; the strategy for the development of the fishing sector for 2040; and its investment plans that aim at increasing food production, creating job opportunities for its citizens, supporting rural societies, consolidating the food and water security systems, and contributing to enhancing economic returns.

Within this framework the contribution to the gross domestic product of animal and fish production was 59 percent in 2020 of the total available for consumption compared to 36 percent in 2011. This is extremely good. Despite the increase in the population, of course, we have a marked improvement in consumption patterns, according to the annual report of the World Food Security Indicator 2020, which looks at standards such as food availability, accessibility to food, stable provision of food and food quality and safety, the Sultanate is second at the Arab level and 34th at world level for this indicator.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the numbers in the documents of this Conference that reflect the food situation in the world are extremely worrying. The numbers speak of 690 million people who suffer from undernourishment and another 132 million who suffer from malnutrition. This situation requires that all countries in the world continue to collaborate in various areas relating to food production and improvement in its methods, starting from agriculture and harvest up to nutrition and reduction of food waste.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate the Director-General, His Excellency Dr Qu Dongyu, for developing a forward-looking vision within the FAO Strategic Framework for 2020-2031 concerning support for transformation into more efficient and effective agricultural and food systems, which could be sustainable in order to reach better production and nutrition, environment and life. It is also in line with the vision of Oman 2040, which focuses on the best use and the most balanced use of land and natural resources, and the protection of a sustainable environment to achieve food, water and energy security.

Looking forward to enhancing the partnership between the Sultanate of Oman and FAO to reinforce food security.

Thank you very much.

Mme Rita EL KAMAR (Liban) (Langue originale arabe)

Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs. La Délégation du Liban a une objection quant au déroulé de la session. La Représentante d'Israël préside cette session, notre représentant ne fera donc pas sa déclaration aujourd'hui, qui sera mise à disposition sur le site web de la conférence.

His Excellency Inam KARIMOV (Azerbaijan)

Madam Chair, Mr Director-General, Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a great pleasure to attend the 42nd session of FAO Conference and to have a chance to deliver a statement on this important theme when the world is tackling the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Along with highlighting the importance of sustainable agriculture, the pandemic has also laid the foundation for new international relations to achieve common goals.

Agri-food systems cover all food and non-food means and measures, which constitute the better livelihood and welfare of people. Unfortunately, today due to globalization stresses the system has triggered several threats. Unless we take immediate action, we risk a global food emergency that could have long-term impacts and the transformation is the best way out at all means.

By enthusiastically responding to all global challenges Azerbaijan is today effectively collaborating with FAO and we attach great importance to this collaboration. The strategies and COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme designed by FAO pursue the global agri-food system to be more resilient to shocks during and after the pandemic.

The Azerbaijan Government in its term took necessary measures to avoid risks and have minimum impacts in agriculture and farmer's welfare during the pandemic period. These measures led the country to two percent increased agriculture production in 2020.

Today, our main goal is the reconstruction and development of the liberated territories of Azerbaijan, Karabakh. These territories own full agricultural potential and have been announced as Green Energy Zones. The rural development of these territories will also be based on the Smart Villages concept, which will help transfer these territories to Green Energy Zones. This intention also matches the FAO future plan on a Smart Village Approach by digitalizing one thousand villages, where we can shake a hand for close cooperation with FAO.

Proximity to farmers, use of innovations and good governance are the main principles of our agro development policy. The main goal is also to create a sustainable agri-food system that balances environmental protection, food security, resilient livelihood and healthy nutrition.

Moreover, the transformation done in national public services to farmers following principle "leaving no-one behind". The innovation in particular in agriculture, is a central driving force for achieving a world free from hunger and malnutrition. We are in the process of transforming the country's agriculture to modern and digital agriculture. This transformation is based on the transfer of modern technologies, application of innovations and data/research development. The recently launched e-agriculture system allows Azerbaijan farmers to have an easy access to all services with mobility anytime and anywhere.

Climate change is one of the main drivers affecting agri-food systems along with other efforts by ensuring the use of innovations, research development and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, we can successfully respond to climate threats. I would like to underline that, Azerbaijan has had a successful path in reducing greenhouse gas emissions under the Paris Agreement and will continue for better contribution.

Dear Colleagues, once we are talking about achieving a sustainable agri-food system via transformation, the fundamental transformation should also be witnessed in global partnership as well. We should already be ready to come up from strategy to action. The partnership in the framework of the global policies and strategies also must strive to achieve the FAO four betters (better production, better nutrition, better environment and better life) which are anchored to support 2030 SDG Agenda.

The Hand-in-Hand Initiative, From Farm to Fork Strategy, One Health Initiative and other related strategic narratives are the modern guides for responding to the critical drivers affecting agri-food systems. Azerbaijan joins these initiatives with great enthusiasm and ready to effectively collaborate at these multilateral platforms. Furthermore, as a Member State, Azerbaijan is actively taking part in the UN Food Systems Summit work. The extended national dialogues organized at the Member State level will certainly contribute to the global measures for achieving sustainable food systems.

At the end, by highly appreciating the great efforts of the FAO Director-General towards global digitalization activities in agriculture, I feel confident that the work of the Conference will have a substantial impact on global agriculture transformation.

I wish success to the work of the Conference and look forward to prospering cooperation.

Thank you for your attention.

Ms Nigina ANVARI (Tajikistan)(Original Language Russian)

Distinguished Colleagues, Distinguished Director-General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, Mr Qu Dongyu, Distinguished Participants in the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference, Ladies and Gentlemen, On behalf of the Agriculture Ministry of the Republic of Tajikistan, may I greet all the participants in the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference and express deep gratitude to the organizers of this meeting for providing us with a virtual opportunity to discuss the state of food and agriculture.

I would like to highlight that the theme, which we will be considering at this meeting is very topical in the post-COVID period since the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how vulnerable supply chains are to crises. In the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has spread around the whole globe, the protection of nutrition and agriculture is becoming a pressing issue for each country, and the exchange of experience and coordination of work in the field of policy are the most important building blocks in order to achieve this goal.

I am convinced that in the context of the 42nd Session, we will not only exchange information and successful experience, but also comprehensively discuss the possibilities for transforming food systems for sustainable development.

I would like to take this opportunity to briefly talk about the measures taken by the Tajikistan Government and development partners in order to alleviate the impact of COVID-19 on the socioeconomic spheres, including the agricultural sector. The pandemic has compounded the rates of food shortages outside the farming season, notwithstanding the growth in agricultural production in the summer and autumn.

The slump in household incomes and the loss of jobs, as well as the drop in money transfer exchanges and the closure of firms, have all led to a reduction in food consumption. At the same time, the prices for a number of socially significant foodstuffs have led sharply as panic consumers have bought up and hoarded staple foodstuffs. The pandemic has led to a reduction in the quality of nutrition of poor and vulnerable parts of the population, whose access to safe, diverse and healthy nutrition has been jeopardized.

Our Government has developed two action plans: the first to guarantee the readiness of the country in the health sector and the second to prevent and reduce the vulnerability of the national economy to potential risks from COVID-19. In order to alleviate the adverse economic consequences, our Government has taken the necessary measures of a monetary and fiscal easing nature, concentrating on additional important priorities, such as agriculture and food security. The final goals have been consistent with the common recommendations of the international community. They have been aimed at avoiding breakages in the domestic food supply chains, protecting the purchasing power of poor households, guaranteeing their access to food while also guaranteeing access to resources for the forthcoming seeding season.

At present the Government is gearing all its efforts to guaranteeing stable and continuous production of agriculture and is working on updating the agricultural development strategies geared to improving the production and marketing chains, introducing modern technologies and modern productive infrastructure for storing and processing food.

Distinguished Participants, In highlighting the importance of the force majeure circumstances that have arisen as a result of the COVID pandemic, Tajikistan, as a landlocked country experiencing difficulties in transporting staple goods, calls for the creation of an effective cooperation mechanism for agricultural food system transformation in order to guarantee food security.

We propose a cooperation in developing and building regional electronic production platforms with information and marketing functions, guaranteeing the functioning of national production and marketing chains related to food production.

Secondly, developing cooperation to organize green transport corridors and routes for providing and delivering food, first and foremost fresh agricultural produce.

Thirdly, to provide mutual assistance among countries for producers of food in integration in regional electronic food platforms and trade networks.

Fourthly, continuing cooperation on organizing procedures for mutual recognition of food quality and safety certificates, especially in cross border trade.

Fifthly, organizing joint work to develop work on food security and other measures.

Distinguished participants in the Conference, Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Director-General, we are confident that together, hand in hand we will work out effective instruments for cooperation to transform agri-food systems in order to create favourable conditions for improving people's nutrition around the whole world, thereby contributing to the growth in agricultural production, all of which are part and parcel of the UN sustainable development goals.

Thank you for your attention.

His Excellency Michael PINTARD (Bahamas)

Greetings from the sunny isles of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas and on behalf of the Government and people of the Bahamas, we look forward to a continued partnership with FAO and the strengthening of work towards the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030.

The theme for this 42nd Conference, *Agriculture Food Systems Transformation: From Strategy to Action*, is most timely as we must continue to act with the utmost urgency of sustained and meaningful action at all levels to progress accelerators behind the strategies.

Since 2019 the Bahamas experienced two food crises in the agri-food system. The first followed the devastation caused by Hurricane Dorian, the worst hurricane experience in our lifetime that devastated our country physically and resulted in taking two of the three most important economic centres offline in the Commonwealth of the Bahamas. Two of the most important areas of development were adversely affected by the hurricane and we saw it combine more than USD 3.4 billion impact on our overall economy.

This was followed a few months later by food issues and these food issues were exacerbated due to a global health pandemic, which we are still experiencing. That exacted, similarly, more than USD 3.4 billion impact on our overall economy, and in particular adversely affected our food systems. In both situations the country's food and agriculture sector were placed in an unfortunate state and we had to respond to the gaps that both of these crises revealed in our food systems.

We would like to applaud FAO for providing immediate responses to aid during these difficult times, notably the swift response in terms of helping us to assess the impact of Hurricane Dorian and, similarly, FAO assisted us in the midst of the pandemic. We had a number of missions that were dispatched to assist us and as a result we strengthened the strategic plan that we were already working on as a result of FAO and other multilateral interventions.

The assistance in particular concentrated on technical projects to rebuild rural livelihoods and, as of recent, the inclusion in the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, which will strengthen agri-business to become resilient. However, as we chart the pathway to transforming the agri-food system, the Bahamas is committed to proactively taking an interdisciplinary and holistic approach to better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better livelihood. Similar to other Small Island Developing States. in the Bahamas we like to refer to ourselves as a "Big Ocean State".

The Bahamas recognize that it has limitations in terms of human resources. Therefore, systematic approaches guided by management practices, such as agroecology and integrated agriculture, are key to navigating through the complexities of the food systems. Moreover, ensuring that governing measures are inclusive of private sector stakeholder inputs, developed to reduce the uncertainties of the agri-food environment, and also to manage risk and to prepare for any emergencies that may arise.

The Government of the Bahamas is in support of the UN Food Systems Summit and has engaged in a series of food systems dialogue within our country. These dialogues have allowed us to listen to the voices of less heard persons who, we believe, can contribute to transforming our sector and conclude several transformative outcomes that can be game-changing solutions for the Bahamas food system.

It is worth mentioning that such game-changing agents are aligned with the FAO crosscutting accelerators, that is the need for technology, research, innovation and finance. As we seek to further engage women and youth in agriculture and marine sciences to improve the sector, we acknowledge the role of big data collection, biotechnologies, the potential of digital tools such as blockchain for traceability of agro products, digitalization of advisory services and the importance of geospatial mapping for the research to improve production systems to become sustainable and resilient.

Increased investment, we believe, will catapult the bohemian food system by stimulating job creation in the green and blue economy, thereby strengthening the agri-businesses, encouraging new entrants to the sector, revitalizing the value chain and supporting its mechanisms to facilitate the increase in local food production and value-added products available in the market.

In closing, I would like to thank the technical staff of FAO for the assistance with past and ongoing projects. The Government and people of Italy for hosting this Conference. We look forward to the continued collaboration in supporting smallholder farmers and fisherfolks in the development of our agriculture and marine industries.

Thank you very much.

Mme Isabelle ROSABRUNETTO (Monaco)

Madame la Vice-Présidente, Mesdames et Messieurs les Ministres, Mesdames et Messieurs les Délégués, c'est avec regret que nous ne pouvons être réunis à Rome aujourd'hui, mais je suis heureuse de pouvoir m'adresser à vous par visioconférence à l'occasion de la 42e Conférence de la FAO.

Nous célébrons cette année, le 20e anniversaire de l'adhésion de Monaco à l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture.

Et, pour la première fois dans e son histoire, la Principauté de Monaco a été élue au Conseil de la FAO. À l'issue de cette Conférence, conformément aux accords de rotation établis, nous cèderons notre statut de membre du Conseil au Luxembourg, qui assurera les deux prochaines années.

Monsieur le Directeur général, je tiens à féliciter le travail que vous avez réalisé avec vos équipes depuis votre prise de fonction en 2019, à la veille d'une crise sanitaire sans précédents.

Avant la pandémie de Covid-19 des centaines de millions de personnes souffraient déjà de la faim. Aujourd'hui, malheureusement, la pandémie de Covid-19 a non seulement exacerbé la situation mondiale, mais aussi mis en lumière les inégalités inhérentes aux systèmes agroalimentaires. Il est urgent, il est impératif de transformer nos systèmes agroalimentaires.

Monaco compte sur l'action multilatérale des Nations Unies pour apporter des réponses d'envergure. En effet, nous considérons que seule une action concertée des États pourra apporter des solutions aux enjeux contemporains parmi lesquels figure encore la sécurité alimentaire.

Sous l'impulsion du Prince Souverain, Monaco a fait de la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle l'une de ses quatre priorités de coopération. Le Gouvernement de Monaco est fermement engagé en faveur de la réalisation de l'ODD n°2, de la Décennie sur la nutrition et de la Décennie sur l'agriculture familiale.

Les organisations qui ont leur siège à Rome sont ainsi devenues nos partenaires privilégiés.

L'appui de Monaco à la FAO s'inscrit essentiellement dans une approche de développement avec des engagements pluriannuels afin de sécuriser les financements et accorder une meilleure visibilité à nos partenaires, dans l'esprit du Sommet humanitaire d'Istanbul. Monaco tient à saluer le travail de la FAO pour soutenir les producteurs locaux et améliorer la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle des populations.

Monaco partage la vision de la FAO pour transformer durablement et de manière inclusive les systèmes alimentaires à travers les quatre axes qu'elle a définis: bien entendu, l'amélioration de la production, qui est essentielle, la production alimentaire locale, à travers le soutien aux filières nutritives et créatrices d'emplois. Par exemple, nous intervenons dans le Sud de Madagascar avec la Fondation Méricieux autour de l'initiative « Nutriset »; l'amélioration de la nutrition, ensuite, priorité de Monaco dans les pays les moins avancés, notamment en Afrique de l'Ouest et à Madagascar; l'amélioration de l'environnement, aussi, cher à notre Prince Souverain avec la lutte contre les pertes et les déchets alimentaires. Monaco soutient à ce titre le Code de conduite volontaire pour la réduction des pertes et du gaspillage alimentaire, qui est présenté au cours de cette Conférence; l'amélioration, enfin de manière générale, des conditions de vie des populations, et en particulier des populations les plus vulnérables, notamment les femmes et les jeunes, qui sont les acteurs clés du développement rural.

Madame la Vice-Présidente, je tiens également à souligner que le premier partenaire de coopération de Monaco est le Programme alimentaire mondial. Nous soutenons le PAM dans sa stratégie 2020-2030 pour l'alimentation scolaire et nous finançons notamment des programmes de cantines dans les écoles.

Monaco soutient aussi des travaux du Groupe d'experts du Comité mondial pour la sécurité alimentaire, que nous avons rejoint en 2005.

Nous nous réjouissons aussi de l'organisation du Sommet des Nations Unies sur les systèmes alimentaires. À cette occasion, Monaco a décidé de rejoindre la «Coalition pour le soutien à l'alimentation scolaire», initiée par la France et la Finlande, et qui sera lancée à Rome à l'occasion du pré Sommet sur les systèmes alimentaires.

Nous appelons donc la communauté internationale à réaffirmer ses engagements dans la lutte contre la faim et la malnutrition. Monaco a particulièrement à cœur la réalisation des objectifs fixés par le Sommet sur les systèmes alimentaires. Ces objectifs ne pourront toutefois être atteints qu'en renforçant notre approche globale et pluridisciplinaire.

Je vous remercie.

His Excellency Syed Fakhar IMAM (Pakistan)

The Honourable Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Mr Qu Dongyu, Distinguished Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a privilege and a pleasure to be invited to speak at the 42nd session of the FAO Conference on the agriculture food system transformation actions being made in Pakistan.

Agriculture is central to the economy and social fabric of Pakistan. The agriculture sector contributes 19.3 percent to the GDP, employs 35 percent of the country's labour force and contributes to the growth of other sectors of the economy. The healthy expansion of the agriculture sector stimulates domestic demand for improved food products, industrial goods and supplies raw materials to agro-based industries.

A more vibrant rural economy and increased food security will depend on the county's effort to stimulate the agricultural sector. Agricultural transformation will not only raise incomes for smallholder farmers, but it will also and more importantly promote expansion of the rural non-agricultural sector - with beneficial effects on rural poverty and social stability.

In the Pakistani context, most of the rural population is linked with the agriculture sector either as farmers, daily wage labourers or rural micro entrepreneurs. The link between agriculture productivity and rural poverty has an important relationship in the context of poverty alleviation in Pakistan.

Today, the world confronts a looming agricultural crisis. The global population will soon reach eight billion people. Six hundred million approximately suffer from hunger. Over 100 million children are stunted due to under nourishment. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to worsen the situation and push more people into extreme poverty.

In Pakistan, the Prevalence of Undernourishment in the total population is estimated at around 21 percent on the national level with important disparities at provincial level.

This high prevalence of undernourishment is more than a public health issue and is a serious barrier to Pakistan's economic development. It is estimated that undernutrition reduces Pakistan GDP by approximately three percent every year, approximately reducing GDP by USD 3.7 billion. Addressing malnutrition in a holistic manner is therefore essential for the economic and social development of the people of Pakistan.

In response to the recession triggered by the COVID-19 crisis, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Imran Khan, proposed a "Global Initiative on Debt Relief" last April. Also at the Special Session of the UN General Assembly, the Prime Minister proposed several measures for generation of early financing to enable developing countries' recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, including;

- Comprehensive debt relief and restructuring;
- The creation of 500 billion dollars in SDRs;
- Larger concessional financing; and
- Measures to halt and recover illicit financial flows from developing countries to haven destinations and to richer countries.

Pakistan plans to go even further in trying to end poverty and hunger. Some key initiatives in this regard are;

Investing in Green and Sustainable Agriculture Infrastructure – to shorten agriculture value chains. Financing infrastructure including roads, food storage, localized energy grids and markets, which will greatly improve food systems and will assist with increasing food and nutrition security in Pakistan.

Shifting from Low Value crops to High Value Crops – this will help improve the livelihoods of small farmers across the country. Our government plans to work on areas of credit, capacity building of farmers and improving the access and availability of high-value crops and fruits and vegetables ...clubbed with agriculture value chain investment, which will help increase farmer's incomes and empower the women in agricultural communities.

Use of Innovative Agricultural Technologies and Techniques – technology has the potential to offer a wide range of solutions to Pakistan's agricultural and food challenges. This calls for efficient utilization of production resources by adopting modern technologies, ensuring internet and broadband access in rural areas and improving digital literacy which will be vital for Pakistan to build more efficient domestic and international supply chains.

Competitive and Comparative Price Regimes – The current government plans to ensure fairer market prices for agricultural and food products in Pakistan. For a long time, the people of Pakistan have suffered from market manipulation techniques employed by middlemen, monopolists and hoarders. Smallholder farmers cannot be left to the mercy of the corporations, but at the same time, international agricultural trade must be rationalized. The huge agricultural subsidies provided by certain richer economies distort global markets and make it impossible for farmers in the developing countries to compete.

Improved Food Patterns – In Pakistan we must re-think our food consumption patterns and the food systems that support these patterns. We can eat better, and many of us would do well to eat less. We can produce food with greater respect for nature. We can stop the pollution of our lakes, rivers and oceans. We can produce more with less water, more respect for soil and without dangerous chemicals.

Knowledge Intensive Agriculture – In order to bring about agricultural transformation in Pakistan, the farmers need new knowledge about how to use improved methods and techniques for increasing yield

and value. Knowledge based agriculture is an even bigger requirement in the era of climate change where a harsher environment and extreme weather phenomena are changing our productive landscape, varieties and techniques.

Excellencies, in Pakistan, we have integrated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into our national development plan. The current government has accorded the highest priority to achieve SDG-1 – “No Poverty”; and SDG-2 – “Zero Hunger”.

Despite our financial difficulties, during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have provided a relief package of around USD eight billion dollars to the neediest members of our society. It included emergency cash assistance to the poorest families and other vulnerable groups, including women and children. We achieved this through our Ehsaas programme, which means compassion, fully utilizing digital technologies and databases. This was the largest poverty alleviation programme in Pakistan’s history.

Excellencies, looking forward, the Government of Pakistan sees FAO as a key resource and technical advisory partner for the transformation of Pakistan’s agriculture sector and food systems. We look forward to continuing to partner with FAO on strategic policy and legislation reform, the strengthening of our food control and agriculture production systems and the restoration of Pakistan’s landscapes.

I wish you all success in the important deliberations of the current session.

Thank you very much indeed.

Mr Friedrich WACKER (Germany)

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Germany aligns itself with the Statement made by Portugal on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. The topic chosen for today’s General Debate could not address a more pressing issue: “Agriculture Food Systems Transformation: From Strategy to Action”.

It is a positive sign for the international community and multilateral cooperation to see so many countries actively engaged. Germany would like to add its voice and encourage everyone to strengthen our joint efforts in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out by the Agenda 2030.

Especially during the current pandemic, we witnessed how important innovation is for agriculture and food systems to become sustainable and resilient.

Therefore, we reiterate to bring the slogan to ‘build back better’ into action to ensure SDG 2 by 2030.

Climate change, loss of biodiversity and fertile agricultural land, unsustainable use of natural resources, conflicts and migration threaten our agriculture and food systems.

We acknowledge the importance of water for our agri-food systems.

Also, in Germany our farmers have suffered from droughts in the last three years.

Sustainable water management is a key element to reach SDG 6. Many initiatives, specific field work and projects are already implementing the call for more action.

The 47th plenary session of the Committee on World Food Security adopted voluntary guidelines on food systems and nutrition.

We now have an internationally agreed global framework at our disposal, underlining a holistic approach along the entire value chain. These guidelines offer us a comprehensive approach to achieve healthy diets through sustainable food systems. Sustainable Food systems connect production, processing, distribution, preparation and consumption of food, while also considering the impact on people and the environment.

We need to mainstream biodiversity, climate adaptation and mitigation across agricultural sectors and integrate these aspects in all other food and agricultural policies in order to reach our common climate and biodiversity targets.

With the upcoming United Nations Food Systems Summit we are witnessing another major political event combining all the meticulous ground work done in the past. It will generate momentum for agriculture food systems transformation with the aim to create actionable outcomes.

In this regard, I would like to mention that last week Germany held its Three-Day-Kick off to its National Dialogue process. More than 400 participants discussed the future of National and International Food Systems. They underlined, that innovation turned into practice across all dimensions of sustainability - ecological, economic and social – are necessary to achieve sustainability.

Let us not forget agriculture's core task: to sustainably produce high quality food within the planetary boundaries. The interconnection between humans, animals and environment are captured by the One-Health Approach, which we also strongly advocate at International level.

Regarding the FAO Strategic Framework we believe a balanced approach to all three dimensions of sustainability is needed. Let us start acting, let us move from the general debate to specific action, and let us leave no one behind.

This ambitious transformation process needs all actors .to feed a growing world population and for a healthy planet.

Thank you for your attention.

M. Paul Valentin NGOBO (Congo)

Madame la Vice-Présidente, Excellences Mesdames et Messieurs les Ministres et Ambassadeurs, Monsieur le Directeur général de la FAO, c'est avec un réel plaisir que je m'exprime pour la première fois devant cette auguste assemblée de la Conférence de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture. À cet effet, je tiens, au nom de la délégation que je conduis, et en mon nom propre, à saluer l'ensemble des participants qui, malgré les conditions exceptionnelles, ont tenu à être présents à cette session qui se tient au moment où le monde fait face à la pandémie de COVID-19. Je tiens également à remercier le Directeur général de la FAO et ses équipes qui, en dépit de ce contexte difficile, ont réussi à respecter l'agenda de la FAO en organisant en mode virtuel les Conférences régionales, les réunions du Conseil et des Comités techniques ainsi que la présente session de la Conférence.

La République du Congo prend acte du thème de cette Conférence, qui met en exergue la transformation des systèmes agroalimentaires, de la stratégie à l'action. Le Rapport sur l'examen de la situation mondiale de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture prouve à suffisance la dégradation de la situation alimentaire dans le monde. Malgré les efforts accomplis, l'humanité fait de plus en plus face à des défis qui menacent sérieusement la réalisation de l'agenda 2030 des Nations Unies, dans son volet consacré à l'éradication de la pauvreté, de la faim et des inégalités sociales.

En effet, sur la base d'éléments factuels, la situation des systèmes agroalimentaires reste préoccupante dans le monde en général, même s'il y a des pays qui s'en sortent mieux que d'autres. Cette situation est amplifiée par les multiples crises que traverse l'humanité. Toutes ces crises nous apprennent que face au péril de l'alimentation, nous sommes dans un même bateau, soit nous sommes sauvés ensemble, soit nous coulons ensemble. À cet égard la solidarité doit être plus active au sein du multilatéralisme que nous prônons tous, car l'accès à une alimentation saine et nutritive est encore de nos jours un luxe pour certains et une ligne imaginaire à l'horizon difficilement atteignable. Pour d'autres encore, l'assurance d'un repas quotidien ressemble à un parcours du combattant.

La République du Congo accueille favorablement la proposition du Cadre stratégique, qui vise à renforcer l'efficacité, l'inclusivité, la résilience et la durabilité des systèmes agroalimentaires. C'est de notre avis une invitation à l'action responsable dans un élan d'ensemble.

Madame la Présidente et chers participants,

La question de la sécurité alimentaire en vue de la réalisation de l'objectif de développement durable numéro 2 dépasse le cadre strict de la production agricole et de l'aide alimentaire. Elle est devenue une problématique transversale et interdépendante, qui a plusieurs thématiques, liées notamment au

changement climatique, à la croissance démographique, à l'environnement socio-économique mondial, à la gestion durable des ressources naturelles, à la situation sanitaire, humaine, animale et environnementale, aux infrastructures de base, et j'en passe.

En somme, la sécurité alimentaire exige une approche holistique, proactive et inclusive qui dépasse le seul cadre des institutions dédiées à la production et à la fourniture des denrées alimentaires. Elle est aussi intimement liée à la transformation globale du mode de vie en milieu rural. C'est dans cette perspective que mon pays, qui cherche à rompre sa dépendance alimentaire vis-à-vis de l'extérieur, mise sur les dividendes démographiques, en impliquant les jeunes dans les chaînes de production alimentaire, au travers de programmes tels que les zones agricoles protégées et les incubateurs d'entreprises agricoles.

Notre expérience à petite échelle a montré que les technologies et les innovations sont la clé pour attirer les jeunes et pour produire mieux. Malheureusement, l'accès à ces innovations par un grand nombre de jeunes reste encore un luxe pour des pays comme les nôtres. C'est pourquoi pendant ces cinq prochaines années, le Congo va se lancer dans un développement soutenu de son agriculture au sens large. Ce développement sera basé sur une stratégie d'agglomération des structures de protection par incubation de PME (petites et moyennes entreprises) agricoles et la création de zones agricoles prioritaires à travers tout le pays. Le but est de mettre en place des chaînes de valeurs agricoles soutenues.

S'agissant de la durabilité des systèmes agroalimentaires, les initiatives visant à concilier la production durable des biens alimentaires et la préservation de la biodiversité des ressources naturelles mérite l'attention et le soutien de la communauté des nations, à travers les institutions spécialisées comme la FAO, mais également à travers des partenariats stratégiques.

C'est le cas du Fonds bleu pour le bassin du Congo. Cette initiative des pays, au cœur de l'Afrique tropicale, a en ligne de mire la préservation de la diversité biologique de cet écosystème, immensément riche, duquel des millions de populations tirent leurs moyens de subsistance.

Mais préserver l'environnement peut aussi avoir des effets pervers sur l'alimentation humaine. En effet, dans les zones protégées de mon pays et des pays d'Afrique centrale, les populations font face à l'exacerbation de la dévastation des cultures par les animaux protégés. Le conflit homme-faune est de nos jours l'une des équations que nous devons résoudre afin d'assurer la résilience des populations locales aux chocs alimentaires mondiaux.

Enfin, le Sommet des Nations Unies sur les systèmes alimentaires et la COP-26, qui se profilent à l'horizon, sont une opportunité pour adopter une approche inclusive, cohérente et structurée pour la durabilité des systèmes alimentaires.

Le rôle de chef de file de la FAO sur ces questions se doit d'être renforcé.

Je vous remercie.

Ms Eudora Hilda QUARTEY KORANTENG (Ghana)

FAO Director General, Members of the Governing Council, Colleague Ministers, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen, I extend warm greetings from the President and people of the Republic of Ghana. It is a personal delight and honour for me to participate in the 42nd FAO Conference, which has brought together my colleagues from other countries, development partners, experts and other stakeholders in Agriculture.

The theme for this year's Conference, "Food Systems Transformation: From Strategy to Action", given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global economy, speaks directly to the challenges caused by the pandemic. It also reflects the mood of the international community, especially countries like Ghana where the pandemic has constituted a major setback to our momentum of transforming agriculture, and is in effect a call to action.

The opportunity presented by this august platform to review sector performance, deliberate, share ideas, experiences and lessons from other countries inspires great hope. We are grateful to the FAO for contributing to the global effort at transforming agriculture over the years.

Ghana's experience in the process of transforming Agriculture has practical insight and has reinforced the need for greater investment in the sector, especially to guarantee food security at all times. In recognition of this, from inception, my government's development agenda has centred on revamping the agricultural sector to drive sustainable growth and structural transformation of Ghana's economy.

Practical commitment to this agenda, has found expression in massive investment in various sectors of agriculture, that is to say: food crops, tree crops, livestock, mechanisation and agricultural infrastructure development.

The vehicle for delivering investment in these strategic areas has been the government's flagship programme, Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ). The massive investment in these areas have paid off significantly. The manifestations include: increased productivity, with the doubling and tripling of staples such as maize, rice and soybeans, increase in the participation of farmers in the PFJ programme and enhanced modernisation of the agricultural sector.

Since 2017, when the government introduced the PFJ programme, Ghana has experienced food surpluses that have triggered exports mainly of staples such as maize and rice to neighbouring countries. The PFJ intervention has also contributed to significantly increase farmer incomes and employment.

In the quest to build a resilient food system, the Government of Ghana has also invested in the construction of 80 (1000) metric tons capacity warehouses, to promote food storage and the building of strategic reserves. The warehouses will help curb the recurring annual problem of post-harvest losses and guarantee farmer incomes, through greater accessibility to markets. Farmers have also received a major boost through the establishment of mechanisation service centres and the importation of hand-held equipment for use by small-holder farmers. This will help reduce the drudgery in farming. Government has also arranged to import milling machines to motivate rice farmers as part of the government agenda to achieve self-sufficiency in the production of rice by 2025. Through the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the Government of Ghana is also investing in the livestock sector. The provision of improved breeds to farmers and investment in infrastructure is expected to increase productivity and promote the competitiveness of the sector.

Ladies and Gentlemen, these interventions have firmly put Ghana on the path of transforming its agriculture, in spite of multiple and complex challenges, particularly the vulnerabilities of the country's food system, which were exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Policy makers now appreciate even more the need for greater investments and positive action in Ghana's food systems.

Government's response has been to roll out a 174 million dollar major intervention known as the COVID 19 Alleviation and Revitalization of Enterprises Support Programme (C.A.R.E.S). This intervention is to provide strategic support to agriculture and other priority sectors, to maximise returns to the economy from agriculture. Ultimately, it is expected to motivate private sector investment for the needed partnership with the government to build a robust and resilient food system.

To conclude, Ladies and Gentlemen, the forum presents an opportunity, in anticipation of the successful outcomes of the forthcoming Food Systems Summit, for global action to impact agriculture positively, to build the needed food systems and guarantee global food security at all times.

Thank you for your attention.

Mr Joseph KATEMA (Zambia)

Chairperson of the Conference, His Excellency, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Honourable Ministers, Ambassadors, Permanent Representatives, Heads of Delegations and Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am honoured to deliver this Statement on the Review on Food and Agriculture, Food System Transformation, from strategies to action. Allow me to tie this statement, with the thread that has in the near and recent past, enabled us to understand and fight hunger and poverty with renewed energy.

It is on farms, big and small, around the world that the interaction between people, planet, prosperity and peace can unfold in ways that will either take us to sustainable development or will make our task of zero hunger difficult. The world's population is expected to grow to almost 10 billion by 2050, with

two-thirds living in cities. This will, as a result, boost and change agricultural demand, with some estimating that the world will need to close a 70 percent food gap by 2050. With further income growth and urbanization in low and middle-income countries, a dietary transition will happen towards higher consumption of meat, fruits and vegetables, relative to that of cereals, requiring commensurate shifts in output and adding pressure on natural resources. Within the complexity of this challenge, we can unlock opportunities to advance sustainable development by transforming agri-food systems.

Again, this is a case in which the agri-food system is, at times, signaling to farmers to produce more when the challenge is elsewhere. The challenge is that local production is not taking place where it needs to happen in order to feed currently hungry people. The painful thing is that most of the people living in hunger or that are food insecure, are themselves engaged in agriculture, either farming or livestock. In many African countries, where there is high prevalence of hunger, up to 80 percent of poor Africans depend on agriculture for income. In Zambia, for instance, about 70 percent of the population depend on agriculture for their livelihoods.

To address recurrent inability to access food, we therefore, need risk management options that can help buffer farmers against production variability (for example, through weather-based insurance), as well as social protection mechanisms (for example, cash for work, food for work) or other cash-transfer mechanisms.

Zambia has huge resource endowment and potential for agriculture production for a wide range of commodities. The country has potential to feed itself and the entire Region. However, climate change, low productivity, low value addition, fragmented markets and the recent COVID-19 pandemic, among other things have constrained growth of the sector. To small-scale farmers' resilience to the effects of climate change, Government is promoting technologies such as climate smart agriculture, irrigation, diversification, and commercialization. These interventions are likely to increase production and productivity in order to make food available for the ever-growing population, which is estimated to reach about 39 million by the year 2050.

Further, Government has embarked on the improvement of agricultural markets both at local and international levels. In addition to the development of appropriate marketing infrastructure, Government has continued to create a favourable policy environment to enable the participation of all players in the market. With farmers more connected to markets, to information, and to knowledge, lives on the farm can make agriculture more attractive to youth, including young people with skills.

We believe that the transformation of agri-food systems can be a fundamental enabler for the achievement of the SDGs. Doing so cannot be seen as a technical challenge to be addressed within the agricultural sector, but rather as a complex undertaking that calls for integrated approaches considering economic, environmental, and social aspects.

It might be appropriate to end by saying, and I quote "Doing one thing at a time is never particularly good advice when it comes to economic and social policy." It is particularly misleading in tackling massive challenges like the prevalence of hunger in the modern world. But, for all of us to do many different things together so that we can transform agri-food systems to transform our world.

Chairperson, I thank you.

Sra. María Cecilia ARBOLEDA ECHEVERRÍA (Ecuador)

Muy buenos días a todos, ante todo, quiero transmitir el saludo caluroso del Gobierno de la República del Ecuador y, especialmente, el del señor Canciller y de la Ministra de Agricultura y Ganadería, recién establecida en este puesto, junto con su deseo de que el trabajo de esta Conferencia sea fructífero y nos permita dar pasos adelante en los propósitos que nos son comunes.

El Ecuador ha trabajado en la mejora continua de la productividad agropecuaria, basado en determinantes de crecimiento como la innovación y el talento humano, ambos aspectos ligados a la producción sostenible y a las acciones de mitigación y adaptación al cambio climático.

La diversificación en la producción y el apuntalamiento en eslabones débiles de las cadenas productivas ha sido un estandarte en las prácticas de desarrollo del Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería, al igual que la investigación en nuevas prácticas productivas y sostenibles por parte del

Instituto Nacional de Investigación Agropecuaria; al igual que la mejora de los estándares de calidad que han sido trabajados entre el sector público y el sector privado, proceso que ha sido liderado en el Ecuador por la agencia sanitaria del Ecuador, denominada “Agro Calidad”.

En este sentido, el Ecuador ha evidenciado los siguientes avances en la Transformación de los sistemas alimentarios agrícolas:

Garantizar el acceso a alimentos sanos y nutritivos para todos

La orientación estratégica del Plan Nacional Agropecuario hace hincapié en los compromisos del Ecuador respecto a los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS), especialmente en el fin de la pobreza, hambre cero, y en un sentido más amplio con la igualdad de género, agua limpia y saneamiento, energía asequible y no contaminante, trabajo decente y crecimiento económico, producción y consumo responsable, acción por el clima, entre otros.

En tal virtud, se ha impulsado la implementación de 258 circuitos alternativos de comercialización a nivel nacional, permitiendo comercializar directamente productos frescos y con valor agregado al consumidor. Asimismo, se ha fomentado la certificación en Buenas Prácticas Agropecuarias, como una de las estrategias insignia realizadas durante la gestión de los últimos años, promoviendo la producción de alimentos en su fase primaria, orientada a cuidar la salud humana, proteger el ambiente y mejorar las condiciones de los trabajadores y de sus familias. De igual forma, se estableció una normativa para la certificación de semillas y se ha socializado la importancia del uso responsable de plaguicidas químicos y biológicos.

Respecto de adoptar modalidades de consumo sostenibles, el Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería, en su rol de Autoridad Agraria Nacional, ha coordinado y regulado políticas públicas en relación con la garantía de la soberanía alimentaria. En este aspecto, hoy se analizan los productos que forman parte de la dieta de los ecuatorianos, su cadena de valor hasta llegar a manos del consumidor, promoviendo los circuitos cortos de comercialización, el consumo local y la reducción de pérdidas y desperdicios de alimentos. De igual manera, se enfatiza en el rol de la agricultura familiar y campesina, los precios de mercado, las potenciales amenazas en toda la cadena de producción y el estado de los factores.

Paralelamente, se han sistematizado ordenanzas diseñadas por los Gobiernos Autónomos Descentralizados a nivel provincial y municipal, que permiten la gestión de uso de espacio para la implementación de ferias y mercados locales, y el fomento al consumo responsable por medio de normativas locales que permiten el acceso de alimentos a la población.

Adicionalmente, se ha resaltado la producción de semilla de calidad de especies nativas y variedades mejoradas, alternativas tecnológicas post cosecha y valor agregado, y prácticas agronómicas agroecológicas. Asimismo, se ha brindado apoyo a los productores en el proceso de certificación en Buenas Prácticas Agrícolas, y cada año, el Proyecto Café y Cacao en conjunto con otros actores privados y organizaciones no gubernamentales (ONGS), al punto de organizar el “Día de cacao”, ferias de consumo, forma parte del desarrollo del catálogo digital de cacao y participación en eventos internacionales tales como: ICCO, Cacao y Chocolate Summit, entre otros.

Respecto a promover medios de vida equitativos, se ha trabajado en el fortalecimiento de las organizaciones, partiendo desde su evaluación, Diagnóstico Integral Organizativo como se denomina, hasta la implementación del plan de mejora, entre los cuales se consideran indicadores como: espacios de empleo para los asociados, servicios que brinda la organización, equidad de género y generacional, y calidad de vida de las familias, a fin de articular acciones y gestionar una atención transversal en las organizaciones del sector agropecuario.

Un punto principal en la gestión agropecuaria, se trata de la realización de la construcción en 2019 y 2020, e implementación en 2020 y 2021 de la Estrategia Nacional Agropecuaria referido a las Mujeres Rurales, con la que se busca visibilizar el trabajo de las mujeres rurales en la agricultura, a la vez que garantiza el pleno ejercicio de los derechos de las mujeres en un contexto de desarrollo rural sostenible.

Finalmente, respecto a crear resiliencia ante las vulnerabilidades, las conmociones y las tensiones, con este mundo en pandemia, de acuerdo con las políticas para la adaptación al cambio climático y la

construcción de sistemas agroalimentarios resilientes, se destacan: establecimiento de regulaciones, por vía administrativa y legal, de disposiciones que aseguren la protección de los ecosistemas frágiles, la conservación de cuencas y microcuencas hídricas, así como la protección de los suelos amenazados por diferentes formas de degradación. La promoción de Códigos de Buenas Prácticas, en conjunto con el sector privado a nivel de las cadenas agroalimentarias, estableciendo sistemas de certificación que den garantías respecto de su aplicación.

Finalmente es importante resaltar que el Ecuador pretende no dejar a ningún actor dentro del proceso ante el agro, con énfasis en medidas diferenciadas para la agricultura familiar y pequeña agricultura, dentro de la orientación estratégica general y de las políticas sectoriales transversales.

Ecuador toma nota de la estrategia de la FAO y respalda el enfoque múltiple, en particular el uso de la Iniciativa Mano de la Mano de la cual somos parte y en cuyo marco actualmente se implementan acciones para la priorización de los territorios que requieren mayores inversiones para acelerar la transformación agrícola y el desarrollo rural sostenible con el fin de erradicar la pobreza y el hambre.

Y finalmente expresar la congratulación del Gobierno Nacional por haber contado con la confianza de los países de la región, para ser sede de la próxima Conferencia Regional de FAO, evento en cual el Gobierno ecuatoriano pone todo el corazón en su organización, porque está consciente de que la agricultura es el centro de un proceso de un nuevo despertar en este mundo post-pandemia.

Muchas gracias.

Mr Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Thank you, Madam Chairperson and Good Morning Director-General. Argentina has the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The main challenge today is that, six years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a quarter of the world population still experiences food insecurity and the world is moving away from zero hunger.

As the vast majority of our group members can attest, shocks, such as armed conflicts, climate hazards and financial turmoil have become more intense and frequent, and the COVID-19 pandemic has been a shock multiplier, driving and deepening vulnerabilities, in particular among developing countries. Hence, crises have multiplied and grown, undermining many governments' ability to continue to progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

On this note, G77 and China Members mourn the loss of civilian lives as a result of the recent conflict that erupted between Israel and Palestinian in Gaza. We highlight the immediate need for humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian civilian population, particularly in Gaza and we join our voice in support of the UN Secretary-General call for the international community to work with the United Nations on developing an integrated, robust package of support for a swift, sustainable reconstruction and recovery. Towards this aim, we appeal to FAO to engage with Palestine in the framework of the "Hand-in-Hand Initiative" as a way to build capacities, rebuild food systems, boost technological transfer and create decent jobs.

Chairperson, not only do shocks or crises compound each other, but their fallout also unfolds more brutally given persistent structural vulnerabilities, such as limited access to education, health and other basic services, poor rural infrastructure and economic and gender inequalities that leave people, communities and nations and entire agri-food systems without social safety-nets, resilience to overcome shocks and coping capacity. Taken together, shocks, crises and structural vulnerabilities increasingly put food security and nutrition at risk.

For this reason, the G77 plus China calls once again for the greed of a few not to prevent efforts in meeting the needs of the many, and stresses the necessity for Members to take this into account when pushing their national or even regional interest-driven agendas in the United Nations multilateral fora.

In that line, we welcome the Director-General's vision for an improved FAO aiming to a better world, with no poverty, no hunger and malnutrition, and committed to face the challenges for all stakeholders in the supply chain to guarantee more and better production while preserving and protecting the environment and enhancing smallholder's incomes.

Chairperson, the Group of G77 plus China recognizes the need to draw paths for sustainable and resilient food systems to overcome long-term challenges. We stress the urgency of factoring in different local conditions, ecosystem services, cultures, histories, production systems, consumption patterns and traditions while designing transformations towards sustainable agri-food systems, as appropriate and in accordance to national contexts, priorities and capacities. Such transformations, when appropriate, demand adequate transitional mechanisms, including financial resources, technology transfer and capacity building. In this regard, we recall that the principles of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities, solidarity and cooperation should guide the implementation efforts.

On the issue of principles, G77 plus China would like to highlight that, in the framework of international negotiations on sustainable development, it is extremely valuable to respect and follow the principles and values shared by members, based upon agreements reached under different internationally relevant instruments and processes.

On that note, we express the need for these principles and values, widely recognized at the international level, to become operative and, to this end, the G77 plus China calls on the international community to fully support the recognition and implementation of these principles and values in global agreements and mechanisms, moving from a declarative position into action.

We also acknowledge the existence of a variety of science-based approaches, systems and tools to achieve sustainable agriculture and food systems and we call for further efforts to make technologies and innovations – those that are both productive and sustainable – available to all countries and stakeholders, hence reducing existing gaps and inequalities among and within countries.

In a nutshell, we need to produce more and better food while generating mechanisms that ensure physical, social, and economic access to it, and we highlight the contribution of sustainable livestock, agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture and forestry to food security, economic development, and biodiversity protection.

Furthermore, we recognize that there is no sustainable growth without economically viable agriculture that generates a stable and rewarding income and creates decent work and quality jobs and opportunities for family farmers and agricultural workers, their families, and the rural communities.

This means that while recognizing the interaction of agriculture with climate change and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, our actions must also consider the economic and social impacts of “transforming agri-food systems”, whilst ensuring a smooth and fair transition to sustainable models, leaving no one behind and in accordance to national contexts, priorities and capacities.

Chairperson, we emphasize the importance of ensuring a holistic approach to this issue, jointly considering environmental degradation, economic opportunities, and social impacts. To achieve this goal and ensure social inclusion and gender equity, critical actors such as rural youth, rural women, indigenous peoples, and local communities must play a key role as part of the decision-making processes and solutions. The social and economic development of all peoples and communities is the most powerful pathway to safeguarding the environment and sustainably use natural resources, thus fulfilling the 2030 Agenda.

We recognize that climate change is a challenge for all of humanity. All countries must cooperate to protect the environment, but considering the historical and current responsibilities and national capacities due to their level of development and socio-economic conditions, as recognized by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Countries with primary, historical, and present responsibility for environmental degradation should provide adequate economic and technological tools that allow developing countries to improve the sustainability of their production, focusing efforts on adaptation to guarantee the system's resilience and maintain the production necessary for food security.

The impacts of increased climate variability as well as more extreme and frequent weather events are jeopardizing agriculture, livelihoods and infrastructure, especially of small-scale farmers and mainly in developing countries. It is urgent to adapt agriculture and food systems to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience, in order to safeguard livelihoods, sustainable rural

development and human, animal and plant health, taking into account the fundamental priority of ending hunger and combatting all forms of malnutrition.

Chairperson, we emphasize the value of international cooperation as a tool to share experiences, to transfer knowledge and technology, and to create positive synergies for climate action and environmental sustainability, while boosting economic and social well-being.

South-South and Triangular cooperation actions must be strengthened and adapted to suit local needs, as massive drivers to implement and achieve food security and nutrition.

On international trade, it is essential to achieve a fairer, more transparent and predictable international trade system. The production and trade-distorting subsidies, as well as the non-tariff barriers and other measures that disrupt trade cannot be underestimated since they affect producers and consumers. We therefore call on the members of the WTO (World Trade Organization) to limit and reduce, from now on to 2030, at least half of the sum of the current domestic support levels causing a distortion in trade and production that are currently prevalent in agriculture worldwide. The contributions by different WTO members to these reductions must be in proportion to the scale of the current authorized levels of said members and to their potential impact on world markets. It is also essential to consider the different members' needs on sustainable development, in order to be able to achieve the objective worldwide by 2030.

As demonstrated by the COVID-19 pandemic open trade plays a key role in guaranteeing and supporting world food security and the fulfilment of SDGs. In view of this, we insist on the need to move decisively towards the agricultural reform process within the framework of the WTO, in order to make those food systems, which receive artificial and distortive support to be more sustainable.

Chairperson, with these comments, the Group of 77 plus China would like to insist on the necessity to tackle hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms as an overarching priority not only at FAO and the RBAs, but at the UN as a whole. We must do better, we must demand the UN family to work for common interests and priorities of the most vulnerable, through combatting hunger, poverty and inequalities. We need to move on from words to concrete actions on the ground for the sake of the most vulnerable people in the world and to leave no one behind.

Thank you Chair.

Mr Yaya Olaitan OLANIRAN (Nigeria)

Vice-Chairperson of the Conference, Director-General, Ministers, Members of the Delegations to this Conference, it gives me great honour to address the 42nd FAO Conference and show that Nigeria agrees and supports absolutely the thinking and the decision to have the item title of 'Food Systems Transformation: From Strategy to Action'.

Therefore, Nigeria is ready and prepared to do all that is needed in the country's local environment to fulfil this wonderful commitment so that the world will become a better place.

Yes, it is good to strategize, it is good to have deep thinking and all the necessary mental capacity involvement. However, until it is put into practice it is meaningless. The amount of intellectual capability of the world is such that we should not be where we are today. What is missing is what FAO has strategically flagged and that is: let us roll up our sleeves, let us get our hands dirty, let us get the machines working, let us have all this technology within the digital knowledge and the ability to synchronize the knowledge, the cultivars of old with modern technology and understanding.

If we move in this direction, undoubtedly, we will see the result glaringly in the eyes of children, women, and men, smiling, because their situation has changed. And the more we think about it, the more we can put into action the four "betters": better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better livelihood. When we refuse to respect any of these four, or abuse any one of them, or any combination of them, we get a COVID-19 pandemic. Nature will always fight back when it is being interfered with.

Nigeria believes that we need to work in sync with the world. We need to bring our commitments together. The countries that suffer most of the side effects of environmental and climate abuse are the

least producers of the cause. Therefore, we need to work together, providing resources where need be, providing education and knowledge where required, without ignoring the local situation will take us a long way.

Therefore, I see the need for FAO to play a major role, more than ever before. After the United Nations Food Systems Summit and after the United Nations Climate Change Conference, the outcomes will be right on you, dear Mr Director-General, and all of us and your staff working to put it into practice.

Let me make a reference to Nigeria. The Hand-in-Hand Initiative high-level discussion took place last week and to show the commitment of the Nigerian Government, there were four Ministers, the Chairperson of the Governors in Nigeria (there are 36 Governors of State), two State Governors, the Special Assistant of Mr President on SDGs and many other high-level Government officials, with the Rome-based Agencies membership in the country fully-represented. This shows the hard work that had been put in by the FAO Representative in Nigeria. It deserves to be commended.

The outcome shows the need of Nigeria, in line with the excellent presentation of our dear friend and brother, Mr Ferraro, with all the effort being put in place. The country workshop on the Food Summit is going on well, and Nigeria believes very strongly in the home grown School Feeding Programme, which automatically puts smallholder farmers in the position to be more productive and more profitable, and eating good and nutritious food.

Finally, Nigeria is also working tirelessly on food loss and waste, which would save a lot of resources and improve the environment.

We owe it a duty, Madam Vice-Chairperson, to see that our world can be a better world than when we met it.

Thank you.

Mr Zsolt BELÁNSZKY-DEMKÓ (Hungary)

Dear Director General, Excellencies, Distinguished colleagues, it is an honour for me to represent my country at the 42nd session of the FAO Conference. We do believe that the fulfilment of Agenda 2030 requires an integrated and comprehensive approach. After the positive trends in the past decades, in recent years hunger and extreme poverty is on the rise again, and this situation is further aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, more efficient tools are still needed to reach the Zero Hunger target.

The challenge is enormous since the world's population is projected to reach around 10 billion by 2050, resulting in a significant increase in global demand for food. Global climate change poses another challenge to farmers, as agricultural production is a more and more risky activity due to the unequal distribution of rainfall. Food production is one of the largest users of water, while our available water resources are limited, so it is important that we manage them sustainably.

As for our country, Hungary's location is favourable, located in the catchment area of the Danube river, where a large amount of natural surface water is available. In order to increase the safety of agricultural production and to make optimal water management we have recently taken several measures:

- We launched an irrigation development program to make optimal use of our surface waters.
- We put more emphasis on prevention, develop forecasting, water-saving irrigation management and drought damage prevention.
- We promote natural water retention measures, the change of land use and cultivated crops to local environmental conditions, as well as an increased reuse of treated waste waters.
- We increased our research activities on the road to sustainability too.

- We put special emphasis on improving the quality of soils, as good condition of soils improves the drought tolerance of production areas.

In addition, we focused on several other aspects of sustainability as well.

- We have achieved progress in reducing food waste, we established a new, more sustainable waste management system; we also made progress in catering sector by promoting use of local products.
- We have created many activities in education and in awareness raising, we made progress in promotion of healthy diets in schools and among elder generations.
- We strengthened the situation of the family farms by an Act, as family farmers are the backbone of sustainable agricultural production.

But, there are a lot left to do.

It is clear that the use of precision technology can achieve safe agricultural production and higher quality of products without environmental degradation.

In order to share best practices our country contributes to the global thematic dialogues, such as dialogue on Food Systems or on water.

We welcome the UN Secretary General's initiative to convene the Food Systems Summit to bring strong actions for the transformation of the food systems to make them healthier, more resilient and environmentally sustainable. In Hungary we started consultation through a national dialogue about the way toward sustainability to improve food production and consumption policies and practices to protect and to improve the health and well-being of individuals. We recognized that food systems are complex, and are strongly interlinked with natural resources, water, energy, with health aspects, and so on. In this spirit we keep the dialogue alive with the involvement of additional stakeholders and continue to encourage innovative approaches toward sustainability.

Reacting to the threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, we are pleased to inform you that Hungary has significantly increased its international development cooperation. As part of this, Hungary dedicated 16,1 million dollars to agricultural development in 2020, significantly contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Moreover, in the framework of development aid, Hungary provided mobile water purification systems on four continents to those in need. It is also a great pleasure to inform you that under the patronage of Mr János Áder, President of Hungary, the Planet Budapest 2021 Sustainability Expo and Summit will be held at the end of this year in Budapest. The objective of Planet Budapest 2021 is to contribute to sustainable development by offering widely applicable, innovative and pragmatic solutions to the challenges of sustainable development.

In the hope that we together can create a more sustainable climate resilient food system, I wish you all a successful Conference.

As another closing remark, let me remind you of the Hungarian candidate for the position of Independent Chairperson of the Council to be elected tomorrow; Mr Zoltán Kálmán, very humble person supported by the Hungarian Government, is very well known to us and very respected as well. I am sure he would fully represent each and every Member of FAO.

Mr Maestro TOMA (Samoa)

Madam Chair, we would like to convey our apologies. Samoa would prefer to submit our statement via written document instead of presenting it verbally. Furthermore, our head of delegation is not present at the moment, attending other meetings, but we will be sending on written documents in due course. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr Hani ESKANDAR (International Telecommunication Union) (Observer)

Thank you Ms Chairperson and good morning everyone. I have the honour to deliver the following statement on behalf of the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Mr

Houlin Zhao, who sends his regrets for not being able to join this Conference today as ITU's annual meeting of its Council Members is underway this week.

Mr Director General, Ministers and Delegates, Colleagues, agriculture has been a driver of progress throughout history. Today, it is facing a central challenge: how to ensure equitable access to food and livelihoods while preserving the environment and achieving sustainability.

Digital technologies can help address this challenge and ITU, as the UN specialised agency for information and communication technologies (ICTs), is committed to fostering and accelerating digital agricultural innovation.'

Together with FAO, ITU has helped governments develop and adapt strategies for digital agriculture, capacity building, knowledge dissemination and sharing of successful solutions and collaboration models.

We have been working on the ground in several countries to bring relevant digital solutions to communities in need, showing how ICTs can improve agricultural practices and raise living standards of smallholder farmers.

ITU's Smart Villages project in Niger is a good example of this, providing farmers with relevant market information and practical livestock management guidance, not to mention supporting remote education, healthcare and a wide range of other services related to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The question is whether farmers everywhere can benefit from ICTs, especially when many countries and regions of the world are home to millions of small-scale producers for whom even basic ICT services are still out of reach or too expensive.

ITU welcomes FAO's commitment to convert 1,000 villages across the world into digital village hubs, and we look forward to continued collaboration with FAO to contribute to agricultural development by addressing the rural-urban digital divide.

For this, we need to put the right ICT infrastructure and investment environment in place – not only to attract investors to under- and unserved areas, but also to encourage private and public actors to make the best use of limited investment resources.

We also need to innovate and ensure that no one is left behind by providing farmers with the right digital skillset, an area where ITU and FAO are collaborating to bring digital skills training to disadvantaged communities.

Ladies and Gentlemen, these '4 I's' – Infrastructure, Investment, Innovation and Inclusiveness – can help support FAO's new vision to optimize four betters: better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life.

Now is the time to accelerate the digital transformation of the agricultural sector and help end hunger.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated global hunger and malnourishment, caused loss of jobs and disrupted supply chains and markets.

With less than ten years left to achieve the SDGs, we all need to work together to give our farmers the tools and skills they need to turn the digital agricultural transformation into a development transformation for all.

Thank you for your attention.

Item 20. Draft Code of Conduct for Voting Procedures under Rule XII of the General Rules of the Organization

Point 20. Projet de code de conduite sur les procédures de vote (article XII du Règlement général de l'Organisation)

Tema 20. Proyecto de Código de conducta para los procedimientos de votación de conformidad con el artículo XII del Reglamento General de la Organización

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, let us conclude agenda Item 9.

Our next Agenda Item is Item 20, *Draft Code of Conduct for Voting Procedure under Rule XXII of the General Rules of the Organization*. I trust you all got the latest version in all languages.

I will just open the floor for any remarks, any comments of Members.

Mr Pedro Nuno DE ABREU E MELO BÁRTOLO (Portugal)

Firstly, if you allow me, I would like to thank you Chairperson for the smooth and inclusive way you have been conducting this generally. If you would allow me, we would like also to commend the Independent Chairperson of the Council, Mr Khalid Mehboob for his continued efforts in facilitating the informal consultations with all FAO Members, that led to a significant level of progress - although not yet sufficient for a consensus – but we believe it is not far enough to reach.

We remain fully committed to providing FAO with a meaningful Code of Conduct that will promote an even more open and transparent process for elections in alignment with the best practices and standards in the UN System, to the benefit of all FAO Members. Therefore, we fully support the future Independent Chairperson of the Council to continue consultations looking forward, reaching the consensus to be endorsed by Council on the Codes of Conduct for Voting.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much for your warm words, and I do share completely your compliments and appreciation for the Independent Chairperson of the Council. I think that he exhausted us with so many meetings, but eventually I think we got to a very great point, and I wish you, Independent Chairperson, great success and great luck in your new career.

I do encourage the next Chairperson that is going to be elected tomorrow, to continue consultation *vis-a-vis* the Code of Conduct.

Ms Alison STORSVE (United States of America)

The United States joins the European Union (EU) and I believe other Members, in acknowledging the depth of work, endurance, and the assiduous follow-up by the Independent Chairperson of the Council, for his facilitation of the consultation process on a Code of Conduct for FAO elections. It is essential that FAO put itself at the forefront of best practice in the UN System, and it has an opportunity with a meaningful Code of Conduct, to join other UN Agencies in this regard.

A robust Code of Conduct sets out common principles which shows FAO's commitment, and that of Members and candidates, to continually improving and strengthening procedures and transparency in elections – which are fundamental to UN democratic norms. We appreciate the collaboration and commitment of all Members and welcome the significant progress in consultation so far, with compromises being made on all sides to move forward in the best interests of the Organization.

We believe consensus is possible and we are nearly there, and so drawing on the strong sentiment Members have expressed in each session of negotiations and at the 166th Session of the Council, we would like to suggest like the EU, that the Conference recognize the work completed so far, facilitated by the Independent Chairperson Mr Khalid Mehboob, and call for continued consultations aimed at finalizing a Code of Conduct.

We believe this should be reviewed by the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, as originally planned, and approved by the Council – perhaps ideally by the Spring Council next year and then ultimately endorsed by the next Conference.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

I take it that the Conference appreciate the efforts of the Independent Chairperson of the Council in developing the draft Code of Conduct, and request that his successor continue the consultation on the Code, with a view to finalizing the draft text.

Ms Liz NASSKAU (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

The United Kingdom would like to join others in extending its thanks to the Independent Chairperson of the Council, Mr Khalid Mehboob, for the extensive consultation process.

We, like others, would like to underline that we think it is very important that FAO remains at the forefront of best practice across the UN System, always seeking to improve, strengthening procedures and transparency, responding to changing times, evolving needs and practices, also in the area of elections in light of the development of electronic devices and social media and so on.

We very much appreciate the collaboration of all Members in this consultation process, and welcome the significant progress that has been made, and as I said we note the compromise that is being made on all sides to take forward this discussion in the best interests of FAO. Again, huge progress made, we also think we are very nearly there. It is a pity we did not quite make it but we do recognize there are a couple of remaining outstanding points where we still need to continue discussion.

We look forward to continuing to do that with whoever the new Independent Chairperson of Council is, and we would like to suggest that the Conference does recognize the work so far done, and aims to finalize the Code of Conduct for Voting as soon as possible. Indeed, the Code of Conduct has almost in a sense extended beyond just the voting and is becoming almost like a Code of Conduct for elections at FAO, and we very much welcome the conclusion of that for review by the Council as soon as possible.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

Permettez-moi de vous féliciter pour votre excellente conduite des discussions. La France voudrait remercier le Président Indépendant du Conseil, pour avoir ouvert au débat cette question particulièrement importante. Le Président indépendant du Conseil et les États membres ont travaillé de nombreuses semaines pour parvenir à un document, certes non-juridiquement contraignant mais exigeant, qui s'appuie sur les standards les plus élevés en matière de démocratie onusienne.

C'est ce niveau élevé d'exigence que nous souhaitons pour la FAO et que notre Code de conduite doit refléter. Trois aspects sont particulièrement importants pour la France.

Premièrement, le secret du vote doit être protégé de toute attente y compris de la part de l'électeur lui-même. La France souligne la nécessité de mettre en place des isolements pour garantir la confidentialité du vote, tout en assurant la visibilité du votant. Afin d'éviter tout risque de corruption ou d'enregistrement du bulletin. C'est un point important pour nous mais le texte du projet de code ne le reflète pas.

Deuxièmement, la transparence du processus de dépouillement doit également être garantie, celui-ci doit être mené en public et sous le regard de l'ensemble des délégations. Comme c'est par exemple le cas à l'UNESCO ou à l'OMPI.

Troisièmement, nous attachons une importance particulière à l'impartialité et à la prévention des conflits d'intérêts. Cela signifie notamment que les pays présentant un candidat doivent s'abstenir de participer au Comité en charge d'organiser les conditions de l'élection. Si ces conditions essentielles ne sont pas clairement indiquées dans le Code de Conduite, ce texte porterait atteinte à la crédibilité et à la légitimité du système multilatéral que nous soutenons tous ici.

Pour toutes ces raisons, la France souhaite que les discussions sur le Code de Conduite qui constitue un cadre essentiel pour la transparence et la bonne gouvernance de la FAO et, au-delà pour la démocratie onusienne, se poursuivent aussi longtemps que nécessaire, et au-delà de cette 42e Conférence, et nous souhaitons que le rapport de nos discussions reflète ce besoin de poursuivre les discussions.

Mr Guang DEFU (China) (Original language Chinese)

China appreciates the work done by Mr Khalid Mehboob, and his work to ensure that we can achieve consensus. The professionalism of Mr Mehboob and his leadership has been an example.

China has some comments to make: We need firstly to be certain that the Code of Conduct for voting is voluntary, and is not legally binding. There is a need to respect and comply with the Basic Texts and not to make changes to them. Secondly, this Code of Conduct should not influence the sovereignty of

countries. Thirdly, it needs to be transparent, and there needs to be consensus on it. So we must not rush into things here. There is a need for each Region and all Members to be able to reach consensus.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Let me add my compliments to those of France and others, in commending and congratulating you to your excellent Chairpersonship, if I may say so. As regards the issue at stake, we would like to thank wholeheartedly the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) and Members, for the efforts deployed at the recent informal consultations on the draft Code of Conduct for Voting.

We welcome the considerable progress achieved so far, even though a number of issues still need to be discussed further. We are ready to work for a meaningful Code of Conduct for Voting, ensuring the full alignment of FAO with the best practices and standards in the UN system, and that to the benefit of all FAO Members.

We would like to recall a few important principles, such as the integrity and complete secrecy of the vote, as well as the absence of conflict of interests for nomination as officials of the Conference, and we would like to encourage the ICC to continue the informal consultations based on a broadened mandate after the 42nd FAO Conference Session.

At the same time, the Conference might consider delegating authority to the Council to adopt the Code of Conduct prior to the 43rd Session of the Conference.

Ms Ruth MALLETT (Australia)

Australia would like to express our sincere thanks to the Independent Chairperson of the Council for his facilitation of the consultation process on a Code of Conduct for FAO Elections. We also take this opportunity to welcome the commitment by Members to establish a meaningful Code of Conduct that upholds, and indeed strengthens, the integrity of the multilateral voting system. Like others, Australia appreciates the progress that has been made so far on the draft document and we would welcome recognition by the Conference of this effort.

Australia also encourages the Conference to agree to the continuation of the consultation process, with a view to finalizing the document for endorsement by the 43rd Session of the Conference.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

We appreciate the great efforts and leadership shown by the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC), and also appreciate the hard work of Members.

As all of the previous speakers said, this is a very important issue and also it is related to what might undermine the high standards of the legitimacy and also of the importance of a Specialized Agency of the UN, which is FAO – or that could bring FAO much higher standards as a model Organization in the UN System.

On the one hand we appreciate the progress made by the previous discussions by Members, that kind of brings us the [XX]. At the same time, we have to admit that there should be a much more effort to have the Code of Conduct that meets our necessities. Therefore, I very much echo the voices expressed by my previous colleagues, such as the United States of America, Canada, Australia and so on. So we tend to support the work and it should be continuous.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I would like to also echo the words of other preceding intervenors, for expressing great appreciation for the work of the Independent Chairperson of Council, and also all of the commitment and work of colleagues who participated actively in the discussions. I will be brief, I think that Japan and Australia expressed very well as well, where we stand here, and we feel that we have done a lot of progress and it is important to keep the momentum.

It has been clear that everyone is committed to having a Code of Conduct that ensures the integrity of the secrecy of the ballot, and we have made a lot of progress on finding the best way to achieve that, taking into account all the good practices that already exist in the UN System – and it is very important for FAO to join the ranks of the modern and agile and transparent and accountable

UN Organization. And we regret that the FAO Council had requested the ICC to continue such consultations with a view to having the draft finalized prior to the 42nd Session of the Conference.

That was not possible and we understand that we need to continue discussions to wrap up the gains that we have made and strengthen what still needs to be done, but we would really support calls to continue the discussions, based on the request from the Council, and also consider differing to Council – so that this Code which was not possible for this Conference, can be finalized as soon as possible.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

Firstly, we would like to thank the Independent Chairperson of the Council, Mr Khalid Mehboob, for the hard work and huge amount of effort he made, in order to achieve consensus on the draft Code of Conduct.

We note that under your able leadership, we managed to achieve significant progress and our delegation is ready to continue with work on the document for as long as is required. Elections are a serious issue, which should on the one hand, correspond to the high standards and modern requirements, particularly at a time of the use of new technologies. On the other hand, it should ensure the sovereign right of States.

The final thing is particularly important if we are talking about any kind of restrictions which countries may take upon themselves in connection with putting forward candidates for any particular post. In particular if the elections for this post require secret ballot voting. In this connection we would once again like to note that the Code of Conduct should be of a voluntary nature and should not be a legally binding document, and also it should not undermine the sovereign right of States.

Sr. Miguel GARCÍA WINDER (México)

Primero, quiero expresar un reconocimiento por la forma en que ha llevado esta sesión. Realmente es una muestra de prudencia y sabiduría lo que nos ha mantenido activamente funcionando. En segundo lugar, quisiéramos, como ya lo hemos expresado en el pasado, agradecer el trabajo del Presidente del Consejo Independiente. En estas pocas semanas que he tenido la oportunidad de estar al frente de nuestra representación, he podido apreciar su dedicación, transparencia y esfuerzo para ayudarnos a transitar en temas espinosos.

México reitera su compromiso de trabajar incansablemente para que todos los organismos multilaterales tengan éxito, que alcancen sus misiones y sus visiones. En este sentido, nosotros reiteramos en primer lugar nuestra soberanía y nuestro reconocimiento a la de cada una de las naciones. Y en este Código de Conducta, estamos comprometidos a preservar la democracia, la confidencialidad del voto, a lograr una transparencia en el proceso, a construir un proceso imparcial y, sobre todo, a eliminar cualquier posibilidad de corrupción y colusión en estos procesos.

Con esto, quisiéramos decir que apoyamos la decisión que se pueda dar para instruir al Consejo, o pedirle al Consejo, que sigamos trabajando en la elaboración de un Código de Conducta para las votaciones.

Y al hacerlo, yo sí quisiera enfatizar que la FAO se ha caracterizado, en muchas ocasiones, por ser una institución que se adelanta al futuro y, al construir este nuevo Código de Conducta, yo creo que tendremos la gran responsabilidad de pensar cómo podríamos llevar estas votaciones hacia el futuro, sin menoscabar el sistema de las Naciones Unidas. Pero debemos también pensar en posibles nuevas soluciones que permitan mayor democracia, mayor confidencialidad, mayor transparencia, mayor imparcialidad, menos corrupción y menos colusión.

El mundo del siglo XXI no es el mismo de lo del siglo XX, cuando esto fue creado: la pandemia del COVID-19 nos ha puesto a pensar que necesitamos nuevas alternativas. Entonces, México ve con muy buenos ojos este compromiso de trabajar en un Código de Conducta. Pero sí, nos invitamos a todos, incluyendo nosotros mismos, a pensar en nuevas formas para lograr que estas instituciones cumplan con sus metas.

Ms Jackline YONGA (Kenya)

Kenya makes this statement on behalf of the African Regional Group (ARG) and I want to thank you so much for giving us the opportunity. This has been an evolving item for quite a long time – all of us are quite aware – I also want to appreciate our Independent Chairperson of the Council for taking us through, and of course for educating the ARG, and having many engagements with ARG.

The ARG's principles for the Code of Conduct still remain very much the same, and I just want to re-state some of them. They agree on the sovereign rights of the Members. We should not be jeopardized as we are considering the Code of Conduct for Voting at this Conference. But we go by the Basic Texts which should not be amended as a consequence of approval of the Code, and the Code should be voluntary in nature.

The Group also recommends a balanced solution amongst Members, and proposes that the draft Code of Conduct be subjected to a negotiated process before being presented to the Governing Bodies for approval. The Africa Regional Group regrets that the process could not be conclusive to enable the Conference to make an informed decision.

We appreciate that the African Group was very much well-engaged, and we are committed to comply with the requirements of the Conference and the Council, should it decide to bring it back, and we hope and believe that a revised and a reviewed document of the Code of Conduct, with those principles that we have stated, we will be able to continue to work together to ensure that we have a voluntary Code of Conduct.

Mr Tim KRAENZLEIN (Switzerland)

Switzerland would like to thank the Independent Chairperson of the Council for his effort in bringing this process forward. We have seen substantial progress and we are convinced that we as Members are able to achieve a meaningful and practical Code of Conduct for Voting Procedures.

We therefore would like to support the continuation of the discussions and immediate implementation afterwards. Trust of all Members in the election process and its outcome are of utmost importance. Switzerland highlights the importance to ensure the integrity and transparency of the future election processes, and to comply as faithfully as possible with FAO's Basic Texts and the General Rules of the Organization.

Mr Donald Geoffrey SYME (New Zealand)

We would like to thank everyone for their comments on this important Agenda Item. Like others, we would like to acknowledge the hard work of the Independent Chairperson of the Council for his facilitation of lengthy consultations on a Code of Conduct for Voting, along with a substantial time commitment and collaboration of a range of Members. Although it is not ready for our meeting this week, there has been a lot of positive progress. We also agree with other statements that it is essential for FAO to consider and adopt best practice, based on experience from across the UN sDsystem.

Finally, we would support the suggestion for Conference to recognise this positive work completed so far, and call for further consultations with the aim of finalizing the Code for the next Conference.

Mr Caka Alverdi AWAL (Indonesia)

We reiterate our colleagues' appreciation to the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) for his tireless efforts in facilitating discussions on a Code of Conduct to improve Members' compliance in conducting elections and anticipate a more complex voting process in order to strengthen the rules within the Organization.

We support the finalization of the draft Code of Conduct and emphasize the necessity of the Conference's role to monitor implementation of the Code in order to avoid any allegations or suspicion that the implementation is not in line with the procedures within the Code. In this regard we also support that it is the Conference that should adopt the finalized Code of Conduct, and we also support the continued role of the ICC and the Council to deliberate on finding the consensus on the draft Code of Conduct.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

If I may conclude, first of all we all admire you Independent Chairperson of the Council, for your wonderful and very dedicated work, and we all agree that we will continue and we will ask the new Independent Chairperson to continue your excellent work. It is so decided.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

Item 21. Other Constitutional and Legal Matters

Point 21. Autres questions constitutionnelles et juridiques

Tema 21. Otros asuntos constitucionales y jurídicos

CHAIRPERSON

We now move to our next Agenda Item, which is 21, *Other Constitutional and Legal Matters*. Well I see no other Constitutional or Legal Matters.

Item 26. Proposal for conditions for the FAO Awards

Point 26. Proposition de conditions relatives aux prix décernés par la FAO

Tema 26. Propuesta relativa a las condiciones para los premios de la FAO

CHAIRPERSON

We will move to Agenda Item 26, *Proposal for the Condition of FAO Awards*. Please ensure you have document C 2021/LIM/14 before you. The introduction for this Item has been published on the website of the 42nd Session of the Conference.

I now open the floor, should any delegates wish to take the floor on this Item. Thank you, I take it that the Conference approved the establishment of a new set of FAO Awards.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

Item 22. Audited Accounts 2018 and 2019 (Draft Resolutions)

Point 22. Comptes vérifiés 2018 et 2019 (projets de résolution)

Tema 22. Cuentas comprobadas correspondientes a 2018 y 2019 (proyectos de resoluciones)

CHAIRPERSON

Our next Agenda Item is Agenda Item 22, *Audited Accounts 2018 and 2019, Draft Resolutions*. Please ensure you have the relevant documents before you. The introduction to this Item has been published on the website of the 42nd Session of the Conference.

Does any delegation wish to take the floor on this item?

M. Mohamed Cherif DIALLO (Guinée)

Permettez-moi tout d'abord de joindre ma voix à celle de mes préopinants pour vous adresser mes chaleureuses félicitations pour la façon remarquable dont vous dirigez nos travaux. La République de Guinée, le Niger, l'Éthiopie et la Zambie interviennent sur le point intitulé : "Comptes vérifiés de la FAO 2018-2019" au nom du Groupe Régional Afrique. Le Groupe Régional Afrique remercie le Secrétariat pour l'élaboration et la présentation de cette résolution à la 42ème Session de la Conférence.

Il félicite de même le Conseil qui au cours de sa 163ème session a examiné avec intérêt et approuvé les rapports des 176ème, 177ème et 178ème Sessions du Comité financier sur les comptes vérifiés de

la FAO, de 2018 et 2019. Le groupe note avec satisfaction la qualité des rapports détaillés sur la vérification des opérations financières de l'Organisation présentée par le Commissaire aux comptes.

Cependant, sous ces rapports, le Groupe Régional Afrique considère que les opérations financières de la FAO respectent toutes les procédures. Le groupe salue également l'esprit d'éthique et de transparence qui caractérise la gestion des fonds mobilisés pour répondre aux défis sans cesse croissants, liés à l'agriculture et à l'alimentation.

Le Groupe Régional Afrique recommande à la Conférence d'approuver les comptes vérifiés de la FAO pour 2018 et 2019 et les rapports du Commissaire aux comptes y afférant. Je vous remercie Madame la Présidente.

Mr Tim KRAENZLEIN (Switzerland)

I would like to make a statement on the FAO Awards.

Switzerland would like to thank the Secretariat for the preparation of document *C 2021/LIM/14* and welcomes the Independent Chairperson of the Council's consultation with Members towards finding consistent sustainable conditions for the award prizes. In recognition of the key role of agricultural innovation in accelerating the much needed transformation towards more sustainable food systems, the Federal Government of Switzerland launched the International Innovation Award for Sustainable Food and Agriculture, in November 2018.

It calls on individuals, private companies, or institutions across the regions to demonstrate the important role of their innovation in transforming food systems through sustainable food and agriculture in two categories – digitalization and youth. Following the new concept of our awards, a 2021 edition of International Innovation Award will be conferred during the World Food Forum in October 2021.

The Innovation Award is an important contribution to showcase successful innovation solutions in the field of digitalization, and strengthening the role of youth in food systems. Both aspects are crucial for the future of our food systems and we are therefore also pleased to see that they have been anchored in the new FAO strategic framework.

We took note on the proposal for conditions of the FAO Awards and look forward to the second edition of the Swiss FAO International Innovation Award for Sustainable Food and Agriculture, this autumn.

Ms Agner Rosari DEWI (Indonesia)

We acknowledge the importance of providing incentives as well as motivation for FAO's Partners to support activities aimed at achieving the Organization's objectives, particularly in the agriculture and food security sector. We note the proposal of FAO's Awards and highlight the importance to address a balanced focus in dealing with the grave impacts of pandemics, while also encouraging FAO's partners to continue with the work under the Organization's mandate by leveraging the FAO brand.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Can I take it that the Conference wishes to approve the Audit Accounts for 2018 and 2019?

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

Item 23. Scale of Contributions 2022-23 (Draft Resolutions)

Point 23. Barème des contributions 2022-2023

Tema 23. Escala de cuotas para 2022-2023

CHAIRPERSON

We now move to Agenda Item 23, *Scale of Contributions 2022/2023*. The relevant documents are *C 2021/INF/8* and *C 2021/LIM/6*. The leave to action for this Item has been published on the website of the 42nd Session of the Conference.

Would any delegates like to take the floor? I see none. Can I take that the Conference wishes to adopt the Resolution concerning the Scale of Contribution for 2022/23?

It was so decided
Il en est ainsi décidé
Asi se acuerda

Item 23 is closed.

Item 25. Other Administrative and Financial Matters
Point 25. Autres questions administratives et financières
Tema 25. Otros asuntos administrativos y financieros

CHAIRPERSON

I would like to move now to Item 25, *Other Administrative and Financial Matters*. There are no matters to cover under this Item, so we move on to the next Item.

Item 27. Date and Place of the 43rd Session of the Conference
Point 27. Date et lieu de la quarante-troisième session de la Conférence
Tema 27. Fecha y lugar del 43.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, the next Agenda Item is Item 27, *Date and Place of the 43rd Session of the Conference*, which requires the Conference to set dates for its next Session. The dates proposed are 1-7 July 2023. Does the Conference agree to the proposal to hold the 43rd Session of the FAO Conference 1-7 July 2023?

It was so decided
Il en est ainsi décidé
Asi se acuerda

Item 8. Appointment of Representatives of the FAO Conference to the Staff Pension Committee
Point 8. Nomination de représentants de la Conférence de la FAO au Comité des pensions du personnel
Tema 8. Nombramiento de representantes de la Conferencia de la FAO en el Comité de Pensiones del Personal

CHAIRPERSON

We move now to Item 8, *Appointment of Representative of the FAO Conference to the Staff Pension Committee*. The relevant documents is C 2021/10 and the introduction to this item has been published on the website of the 42nd Session of the Conference.

The Conference is required to consider the candidates, as outlined in the document and introduction to this item, and if it finds them acceptable, to proceed with the appointment of the persons named as Members and Alternate Members of FAO Staff Pensions Committee. Can I take it that the Conference has no objection to the list of candidates as outlined in document C 2021/10?

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

Est-ce qu'il serait possible, s'il vous plaît de redonner les dates et le lieu de la Conférence? C'est juillet à Rome, c'est ça Juillet 2023?

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Yes, July 1-7 July, 2023.

Let's complete Item 8. Ladies and gentlemen the Conference has traditionally paid tribute to Staff Members who passed away while in service since the preceding Session. I will read the names of the Staff Members who we shall honour with a minute of silence.

Since the last Session of the Conference, the following Staff Members died while in service:

Ms Oladunni Olagabee, Ms Angela Maria Perez, Mr Carlos Perez, Mr Adrian Kazzazz, Mr Alfonso Zola, Mr Zaz Hussein Gudai, Ms Kiyawa Bonetti, Ms Sally Ann Dickenson.

May we request the Conference to observe one minute of silence in tribute to those Staff Members who died since the last Session of Conference in 2019. Thank you.

Minute of silence

Minute de silence

Minuto de silencio

Item 28. Any Other Matters

Point 28. Questions diverses

Tema 28. Asuntos varios

CHAIRPERSON

Under the Item *Any Other Matters*, Delegates are also offered the opportunity to speak. All information documents, multilateral treaties deposit with the Director-General.

Sr. José Carlos RODRÍGUEZ RUIZ (Cuba)

Creo que son temas muy importantes los que estamos discutiendo en esta Conferencia. Pero también me parece que es importante, en aras de ampliar la discusión democrática de los mismos, que salgamos de la burbuja de la propia Conferencia. Y la recomendación que quiero hacer, sea a los equipos de comunicación de la FAO, sea a todos los representantes de todos los países, es que seamos capaces de articularnos mejor con los medios de comunicación.

He estado observando, con sorpresa, en estos tres días que llevamos de deliberaciones, que son escasas las referencias de los medios de comunicación, de las agencias de información internacionales, sobre lo que estamos discutiendo acá. Y a mí me parece que es muy importante, que más allá de los actores decisorios que estamos implicados directamente en la Conferencia, que seamos capaces de transferir conciencia internacional sobre estas problemáticas. Solo con la participación de todos en el mundo podremos resolver estos problemas.. Me ha sorprendido por ejemplo, que algunas de las cuentas oficiales, en redes sociales de la propia FAO, no están haciendo referencia a los importantísimos problemas que aquí se están planteando. Era solo para hacer más partícipes todos en la discusión con todas las personas en el mundo sobre estas problemáticas.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Any other Member States who would like to take the floor? Ladies and gentlemen, as agreed this morning, we shall now listen to a statement by a Representative of the FAO Staff Bodies, Ms Susan Murray, General Secretary of the Union of General Service Staff

Ms Susan MURRAY (General Secretary of the Union of General Service Staff)

Chairperson of the Conference, Mr Director-General, Mr Secretary-General of the Conference and the Council, Distinguished Delegates, Colleagues, ladies and gentlemen. We are grateful once again for being given the opportunity to address the Conference. It is an honour for us to speak before you on behalf of the FAO General Service and Professional Staff. This is the first time we will address the Conference since the current Director-General took office.

We are happy to report, as we have already done to the Council, that since then we have seen a significant improvement in staff management relations. We see a new recognition of the importance of

a motivated and satisfied work force that is treated with respect and dignity. We have also seen some initial steps in the right direction, as well as a few concrete improvements.

In terms of the latter, we would like to point to the improved maternity and paternity leave, and the appointment of the new ombudsman. In terms of steps in the right direction, we would like to highlight the preparation by the Director and the colleagues in the Human Resources division, of a comprehensive Human Resources (HR) strategic plan, which includes important priority areas such as recruitment and job growth policies, as well as flexible working arrangements.

We also note with satisfaction the efforts to follow up on the Employee Satisfaction Survey, led by the Deputy Director-General Ms Beth Bechdol. Following comprehensive consultations with employees throughout the Organization, a taskforce has developed a comprehensive action plan comprising four focus areas: professional development, ethical workplace, new ways of working, and communication. The action plan includes many proposed actions for moving forward.

Several of them in particular in the areas of professional development and ethical workplace, address issues that the staff representative bodies have highlighted for a long time. Some are also included in the HR Strategic Plan which we just mentioned. Through the HR Strategic Plan and the action plan developed following the Employee Satisfaction Survey, a path is being laid out to make FAO a better place to work, but in many ways we have only just started the journey along this new path, and many efforts still must come to fruition – and some important concrete improvements have not yet been implemented. We would like to comment on some of the key areas of significance for us.

Career development and the closer link to areas of recruitment and promotion have long been key concerns for our members. A priority for us is to ensure that recruitment and promotion is fair and transparent, and that realistic opportunities for career progression, are afforded to serving staff members. We expect that the new policies mentioned earlier will address our clearly-stated concerns, and look forward to engaging with management to bring these specific elements of new policies into sharper focus.

Among the lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic, is that an increased flexibility in terms of working arrangements, is perfectly compatible with productivity and may even be productivity-enhancing. We expect that new policies of more flexible working arrangements will benefit both staff and the Organization. While referring to the need for an ethical workplace, we have long called for internal justice and conflict resolution mechanisms in which staff can have confidence. This includes an authoritative ombudsman function, increased resources to the FAO and WFP Appeals Committee, effective policies to prevent and sanction all forms of harassment and abuse of authority, and the effective protection of whistle-blowers.

We welcome the appointment of the new ombudsman, which constitutes a major step forward, however we regret that the precise terms of reference of the ombudsman's functions have not yet been finalised with the involvement of staff representatives as recommended by the joint inspection unit of the United Nations system, in a review of the Organizational Ombudsman's Services across the UN system for 2015.

We are convinced that the ombudsman function must be given both the means and the authority necessary to make a real difference. We are happy to report that a review of the internal appeal mechanism is being undertaken by the legal office, and that the staff representative bodies of both FAO and WFP are engaged constructively with the legal office in the process.

The Appeals Committee is an important body, whose chairperson and two alternates are appointed by the Council. We want to strengthen the Appeals Committee and make it more effective and relevant, but we also want to ensure that it is taken seriously. The role of the Appeals Committee is to make recommendations to the Director-General on appeals against administrative decisions or disciplinary measures brought before it by staff. However, we believe that if staff is to have confidence in the process, the recommendations of the Appeals Committee must be accepted, rather than rejected by the Organization as a matter of course.

Before we conclude we would like to comment on the importance of support by the Organization to effective staff representation by elected staff representatives. We intend to make concrete proposals to

FAO management on how to facilitate staff representation in the future, to benefit we believe, both the staff and the organization. This includes FAO engagement with the Federation of International Civil Servants Association (FICSA), which represents 40 000 UN Staff Members worldwide, and of which the FAO staff representative bodies are members.

FICSA faces increasing difficulties in getting agreement for time release for staff from a number of UN organizations, to serve on its executive committee. Therefore, an ad hoc task force under the High Level Committee on Management, the HRCM, has prepared a proposal for a Cost Sharing Agreement, under which the cost for fulltime release of two elected FICSA officers, i.e. a President and the General Secretary, will be shared amongst the organizations who decided to adhere to the Agreement.

The arrangement would not involve an increase in cost to the UN system at large, merely a more reasonable way of sharing the cost amongst the UN organizations. We have encouraged FAO to join this Agreement to clearly show that it takes seriously the need to facilitate staff representation functions also at the Common System level. On the local level, the integration and proper staff representation of our general service field colleagues is a major concern and a priority issue for the staff representative bodies.

To conclude, we would like to reiterate our commitment as representative staff bodies of FAO, to continue working together with management, to build a culture of trust, respect and dignity amongst all colleagues and to make FAO a better workplace in the interests of staff, the Organization, Members and ultimately we believe, our beneficiaries across the world.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

First, I would like to thank all the staff, employees. They are really very supportive, understanding the challenge, what FAO faced, and what is the opportunity and hope for that, if we work together as a big family. I appreciate their understanding. Also during the pandemic, the Crisis Management Team (CMT) coordinated by Mr Laurent Thomas. Now we almost prevail this pandemic to be the new normal.

I really appreciate all your cooperation, understanding, respect of sciences, respect of rules, and respect of the recommendations from the host country, from the World Health Organization (WHO) and FAO, our own suggestions. Without your solidarity and support, we could not have so far such unprecedented results, which we did not expect.

I know that FAO can, we have a lot of complaints, you have a lot of requests on the Director-General, on the Management. But I told you on day one, I had a discussion and interaction with your Representative and I said we will look at it, and step by steps we will try to solve it with our limited capacity and conditions.

We could not hope everybody to be satisfied; that is the reality. Any big rich country could not even as I said publicly and now I repeat it again because all the Members' Ministers are here – FAO first is poor, secondly old and thirdly is large. That is the reality we face. Why you say 'poor'? It means we have no extra-money to look at something we want. Second, it is old, because there is a lot of mind-set, through to 78 years from 1943, and from 1945, we have 76 years! That is a lot of mind-set, a lot of silos created, established and nobody touched it.

I think without your support we could not deliver to the Members, to the society and to yourself. We are in a big family.

I really appreciate your cooperation and I will do my part, I always say that. For the UN vaccination, how much coordination, support from host country, and how much hard work was done behind the scene, day and night by Mr Thomas, by Mr Mario Lubetkin and by others, and by the Italian Government officials and the Special Commission. I just mention it here, in Italy, and all the other relevant host countries in North America, Latin America, Africa, Asia, Pacific Island and the Near East, all the regions of FAO.

Pandemic is a wakeup call for all of us. Solidarity, respect, science, humanity, is the only package of solution, to work together and to share our common future.

Thank you.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

I think we had a very active and fruitful morning. I just would like to remind the seven members of the General Committee, and the Vice-Chairperson that the 2nd Meeting of the General Committee will take place at 12:00 hours in the dedicated Zoom meeting rooms. We will reconvene in plenary this afternoon at 14:30 hours sharp.

The meeting rose at 11:43 hours

La séance est levée à 11 h 43

Se levanta la sesión a las 11.43

CONFERENCE CONFERENCE CONFERENCIA

<p>Forty-second Session Quarante et deuxième session 42.º período de sesiones</p>
<p>Virtual Meeting, 14-18 June 2021 Réunion Virtuelle, 14-18 juin 2021 Reunión Virtual, 14-18 de junio de 2021</p>
<p>SIXTH PLENARY MEETING SIXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEXTA SESIÓN PLENARIA</p>
<p>16 June 2021</p>

The Sixth Meeting was opened at 16:08 hours
Mr Edward Centeno,
Vice-Chairperson of the Conference, presiding

La sixième séance est ouverte à 16 h 08
sous la présidence de M. Edward Centeno,
Vice-Président de la Conférence

Se abre la sexta reunión a las 16.08
bajo la presidencia de la Sr. Edward Centeno,
Vicepresidente de la Conferencia

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Second Report of the General Committee
Deuxième rapport du Bureau
Segundo informe del Comité General

VICEPRESIDENTE

Señoras y Señores, estimados Miembros de este Plenario, les doy la bienvenida a esta Sexta Sesión de la Plenaria. Antes de iniciar con las presentaciones de los resultados del Comité, quiero darle la palabra al Señor Secretario General, quien nos hará unos anuncios importantes para la sesión de mañana.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I would like to provide some information to Members on the work ahead for the Conference. The Plenary Meeting, which is on now is going to consider shortly the Report of the Second Meeting of the General Committee, followed by Item 24 relating to payment by the European Union. The Plenary will then reconvene tomorrow morning at 8:30 hours to consider first the Report of the Third Meeting of the Credentials Committee, followed by the Report of the Third Meeting of the General Committee.

This will be followed by Item 7 relating to election of Council Members. Then, the adoption of the Report of Commission II by Commission II in Plenary Hall. This will then be followed by Item 19 relating to the budget vote which will be conducted by means of a roll call through the Zoom platform itself.

The Plenary will then reconvene on Friday at 11:00 hours for the Adoption of the Report of Commission I by Commission I itself in Plenary. This will then be followed by the Adoption by Plenary of the Reports of Commission I and II and, finally, the Plenary will adopt the Report of the 42nd Session of the Conference.

Separately, Commission I is now finishing its main debate, and then its Drafting Committee will follow. Commission II finished its main debate earlier today, and its Drafting Committee will meet later on today itself.

One last note relating to the election of the Independent Chairperson of the Council. I am pleased to inform Members that we are just in the process of sending an email to all voters based in Rome with details on the logistics and their time slots for the vote which will take place tomorrow at 15:00 hours, and a similar communication will be sent to Members who will be casting their votes in New York. Needless to say, I think I skipped that the Plenary will convene tomorrow at 15:00 hours for the election of the Independent Chairperson of the Council.

VICEPRESIDENTE

El Comité General se ha reunido hoy y ha preparado su segundo informe que contiene propuestas sobre los siguientes asuntos, tal como lo mencionaba el Señor Secretario General: elección de los Miembros del Consejo, pago por la Unión Europea para cubrir los gastos administrativos, los derechos del voto y el nombramiento del Presidente Independiente del Consejo.

El segundo Informe del Comité General figura en el documento *C 2021/LIM/18*.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

It is a question on the organizational issues that the Secretary-General has addressed. Mr Rakesh Muthoo, please bear with me, what does it mean, "Drafting Committee of Commission II later today". We have a Chairperson who is operating from Bangkok with a time difference of five hours. Can you specify a bit more clearly what 'later today' would mean for those joining that Drafting Committee?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

With your permission, Chair, may I answer that question?

VICEPRESIDENTE

Adelante, Señor Secretario.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Drafting Committee of Commission II will meet today at 17:30 hours Rome time.

VICEPRESIDENTE

A continuación, revisaré el Informe sección por sección y leeré el título de la primera sección.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Forgive me if I should know the answer but can I just check whether there will be a Drafting Committee that meets to review the Report of the Plenary and when the Committee might meet and when we will see a Draft Report.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

There is no Drafting Committee for the Plenary. This is not foreseen in the arrangements agreed by the Conference. But, of course, the report of the deliberations of the items by the Plenary will be part of the Report of the Conference, which will be adopted by the Conference which will have it in front of them on Friday morning.

VICEPRESIDENTE

Si no hay otra consulta, continuaremos desarrollando la Agenda del día de hoy. A continuación, vamos a revisar el Informe sección por sección y leeré el título de la primera sección de hoy.

Sección A de la elección de Miembros del Consejo. ¿Algún comentario? Si no hay ningún comentario, declaro aprobada la sección y pasamos a la siguiente. Veo que la Representación de Francia ha solicitado la palabra.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

Pardon pour cette intervention, mais tous les États n'ont pas reçu à ce stade, et n'ont pas sous les yeux le projet de rapport. Serait-il possible s'il vous plaît de le projeter à l'écran ? Je pense que ça faciliterait nos travaux, mais bien sûr, c'est à votre appréciation. Mais je pense que ça faciliterait beaucoup le travail des délégations.

Mr Ilya ANDREEV (Russian Federation)

We have the same problem as France. We just discovered that the Report was uploaded three minutes ago on the website, so probably it would be better to put on the screen the recommendations of the General Committee.

VICEPRESIDENTE

De acuerdo a lo solicitado estamos presentando entonces en pantalla lo solicitado por Rusia y Francia sobre los resultados de la reunión del Comité General.

En el caso de la elección de los Miembros del Consejo, quiero comunicarles que el Comité General, el informe está en pantalla, decidió en vista de que hay algunos Países que todavía en algunas regiones no han presentado propuestas para formar parte del Consejo, el Comité General propuso reunirse hoy a las 19.00 de Roma para continuar con este Tema como hora límite, para ver si es posible lograr que el Consejo sea conformado por todas las Regiones con sus respectivos Países.

Estamos en este momento en la sección B en pantalla. Pago de la Unión Europea para sufragar los gastos administrativos y de otro tipo derivados de su condición de Miembros de la Organización. Podemos ir párrafo por párrafo, está en pantalla, y eso nos permitirá tener mayor claridad e información sobre la propuesta.

Ahí tenemos hasta el párrafo 15, que es lo que corresponde a la sección B. Lo tienen en pantalla, pregunto si logran todos leerlo para poder continuar con la Agenda. Si no hay algún comentario, declaro aprobada la sección y pasaríamos a la siguiente.

En la sección D. La sección C se refiere al derecho al voto. Pongamos en pantalla por favor la sección C. Si no hay ningún comentario, declaramos aprobada la sección y pasaríamos a la siguiente: nombramiento del Presidente Independiente del Consejo.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

In fact, I was a bit confused on which sections of the Report we were looking at but my comment relates to Section D on the Appointment to the Independent Chairperson of Council, and I did want to ask whether there will be a Plenary to hear from the candidates before and, indeed, from the successful candidate after the election. It would be really good to understand what the plans are for that, particularly important in these times of virtual working.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

There is nothing formally foreseen but there is an established practice that the floor is given for a few words to both the outgoing and the incoming Independent Chairperson of the Council immediately after the election.

VICEPRESIDENTE

Continuamos con la sección D que es el nombramiento del Presidente Independiente del Consejo.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I just wanted to ask a query about the language in brackets in subparagraph (c) where it says, “while in Rome and”, and I just wanted to understand a little bit more about how the Independent Chairperson of Council is eligible to receive that very generous Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) and when that does apply and when that does not apply. It will be very helpful to understand that.

Mr José Luis COELHO SILVA (Portugal)

Just to echo what the Distinguished Representative from the United Kingdom just said. It would be nice to see what we have now in brackets, especially considering the contents of the Resolution 2/2009 regarding the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC). It is clear there that it is supposed that the ICC stays a certain amount of time in Rome.

VICEPRESIDENTE

Le pido al Secretario General, por favor, intervenga en este momento.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

The reason why that text in subparagraph (c) is in brackets is that the applicability of the Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) payment while in Rome depends on certain conditions, for instance, if the incumbent Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) is not resident in Rome. DSA is normally payable in a given city, only when the person concerned is not resident in that particular location. Which is why the text is in brackets and will be finalised after the outcome of the election.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

Peut-il également nous confirmer que ces parenthèses, ces *brackets* seront supprimés en fonction du résultat de l'élection, et que nous n'adopterons pas un texte qui sera *bracketé*, et donc que le rapport qui sera soumis vendredi à la Conférence sera sans *brackets*.

VICEPRESIDENTE

Le cedo la palabra al Señor Secretario General.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I confirm the confirmation sought by the Ambassador of France. Indeed, there will be no brackets in the final version.

Item 24. Payment by the European Union to Cover Administrative and other Expenses Arising out of its Membership in the Organization

Point 24. Paiement par l'Union européenne des dépenses administratives et autres découlant de son statut de Membre de l'Organisation

Tema 24. Pago de la Unión Europea para sufragar los gastos administrativos y de otro tipo derivados de su condición de Miembro de la Organización

VICEPRESIDENTE

Si no hay más comentarios respecto del informe, considero que la Conferencia lo aprueba en su totalidad. El segundo Informe del Comité General queda aprobado.

Pasaríamos entonces al Tema 24 que se refiere al pago de la Unión Europea para sufragar los gastos administrativos y de otro tipo derivado de su condición de Miembro de la Organización. Continuamos entonces ahora con el Tema 24, pago de la Unión Europea para sufragar gastos administrativos y de otro tipo derivado de su condición de Miembro de la Organización. Puesto que el segundo Informe del Comité General, que hemos aprobado, se ha ocupado de esta cuestión podríamos, entonces, concluir este tema. Con esto concluimos la Sexta Sesión Plenaria.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

I am not against concluding the subject, but I would like to seize the opportunity for a quick remark if you allow. It is just to underline that, of course, the European Union (EU) has a longstanding commitment to the work of FAO. In late 2021 it will be 30 years ago that the European Union has joined FAO as a full Member and hence the European Union and FAO will celebrate 30 years of partnership.

This partnership has matured well with time and yields lasting results. Working together, the European Union and FAO can spearhead global efforts towards a green recovery that sees us surely build back better. To paraphrase Robert Schumann, “the world will change only with concrete actions and solidarity”. Therefore, our administrative membership fee represents only a small share of our contribution to the Organization. I wish to recall that the EU has been the biggest single provider of voluntary contributions to the Organization, at least in the past two years, 2019 and 2020, with EUR 288 million or USD 330 million and EUR 106 million or USD 122 million respectively.

The European Union also supports FAO through collaborations with the joint research centre of the European Commission (EC) which provides science and knowledge services and works closely with experts from FAO and universities. We recently held a regular EU/FAO Strategic Dialogue that focused on the following topics: Food Systems and One Health; Climate Change, Biodiversity and Natural Resources; Food Crises, Food Security and Resilient Livelihoods; Sustainable Agri-Food value chain investments and policies; Food System transformation through digitalization. These areas provide support to FAO’s future Strategic Framework.

As an example of our longstanding cooperation, to conclude, I would like to highlight the Global Network against Food Crises. This network draws the world’s attention to the devastating effects of climate change, conflicts and socioeconomic crises on food security. It is a key initiative for better coordination, prevention and proactive interventions in areas facing recurrent food crises. The network’s global report on food crises has rightfully become the Global Science-based reference informing decisions during food crises.

VICEPRESIDENTE

Estaríamos concluyendo esta Sesión Plenaria y compartir que el mundo efectivamente cambiará con acciones concretas y con solidaridad. Compartimos ese punto de vista.

El pleno, se reanudará mañana por la mañana a las 8.30 de Roma en punto.

The meeting rose at 16:35 hours

La séance est levée à 16 h 35

Se levanta la sesión a las 16.35

CONFERENCE CONFERENCE CONFERENCIA

Forty-second Session Quarante et deuxième session 42.º período de sesiones
Virtual Meeting, 14-18 June 2021 Réunion Virtuelle, 14-18 juin 2021 Reunión Virtual, 14-18 de junio de 2021
SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING SEPTIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SÉPTIMA SESIÓN PLENARIA
17 June 2021

The Seventh Meeting was opened at 08:57 hours
Mr Gabriel Mbaïrobe,
Vice-Chairperson of the Conference, presiding

La septième séance est ouverte à 08 h 57
sous la présidence de M. Gabriel Mbaïrobe,
Vice-Président de la Conférence

Se abre la séptima reunión a las 08.57
bajo la presidencia de la Sr. Gabriel Mbaïrobe,
Vicepresidente de la Conferencia

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Third Report of the Credentials Committee
Troisième rapport de la Commission de vérification des pouvoirs
Tercero informe del Comité de Credenciales

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, I call the Seventh Plenary meeting to order. The first item is the Adoption of the Third Report of the Credentials Committee. I give the floor to the Chairperson of the Credentials Committee.

Ms Daniela ROTONDARO (Chairperson of the Credentials Committee)

I would like to read out the Report of the Third Session of the Credentials Committee which was just convened this morning.

The Credentials Committee of the 42nd Session of the Conference held four meetings on 9, 14, 15 and 17 June to examine the credentials received.

The Credentials Committee elected Daniela Rotondaro from San Marino as Chairperson, and her Excellency, Mónica Robelo Raffone from Nicaragua, as Vice-Chairperson. The Credentials Committee noted Rule 3 of the General Rules of the Organization on delegations and credentials, as well as the practice and criteria followed by the Organization with respect to the acceptance of credentials in accordance with the prevailing practice in the United Nations System on the matter, in line with the General Assembly Resolution 396.

The Credentials Committee also noted that the Council, at its 148th Session held in December 2013, endorsed a proposal to further streamline the overall process of acceptance of credentials, including through increased reliance on credentials issued by Permanent Representatives accredited to the Organization, taking into account the reduction in the duration of the Sessions of the Conference, as well as the recent practice of other organizations of the United Nations system.

183 Member Nations and one Member Organization, the European Union, have submitted valid credentials of their delegations as shown in Annex to this report. The Credentials Committee recommended to the Conference that the credentials of the delegations listed in the annex to this Third Report be accepted and that those delegations be authorized to participate fully in the Conference session. The list reflects the situation as of 17 June 2021.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Ambassador Rotondaro. Are there any comments on the report? I do not see any. If there are no comments, I declare the Report adopted.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

Thank you to the Chairperson and Members of the Credentials Committee for the work carried out.

Third Report of the General Committee
Troisième rapport du Bureau
Tercero informe del Comité General

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

We move to the next Item, *Adoption of the Report of the Third Meeting of the General Committee*.

We will now proceed to the adoption of the Report of the Third Meeting of the General Committee which may be found in document C 2021/LIM/21. The Third Report contains the valid nominations received from election to the Council. Are there any comments?

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

I have asked for the floor this morning to make a statement and I would like to ask that it be included.

The United States affirms the important role of the FAO Council in advancing the work of FAO to improve global food security. As the Organization's second highest Governing Body, the FAO Council plays a vital role in advancing the mission of the FAO to improve global food security.

We believe those standing for membership on the Council must share a clear and consistent commitment to respecting human rights and the international rules-based order they must also allow and facilitate access of life-saving, humanitarian assistance to their citizens to achieve a world free from hunger and extreme poverty.

The United States is deeply concerned that certain states nominated to serve on the Council do not share these values and are the subject of credible allegations of human rights violations and abuses, disregard for international commercial aviation safety, and violations of international humanitarian law against their own people.

For these reasons we disassociate from consensus on the adoption of this General Committee's Third Report solely with regard to the nominations of Belarus and Ethiopia to the Council and we ask that that be noted in the report. The United States calls on all FAO Council Candidate Member Nations to respect these principles as fundamental to building sustainable, inclusive, and resilient food systems serving all those we represent around the world.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We have listened with great attention to this statement by the distinguished representative of the United States regarding the election of new members of the Council. We feel that the FAO plays an important role in resolving global problems surrounding food security and all Member States make a considerable contribution to the work of this Organization and the development of recommendations that foster food security in all areas of our very large world.

Thus, we are categorically against using the platform of the FAO to resolve political issues, political disagreements, particularly those which are related to internal politics of specific Member States. These should be resolved in other *fora*. Thus, once again, we would like to make our position clear, which is that the work of the FAO must be not politicized, it must focus on achieving the common goals of combating hunger and ensuring food security around the world. We would ask our statement to be reflected in the report of the Conference.

Mr Addisu Melkamu KEDEBE (Ethiopia)

TExcellencies, Ambassadors, distinguished delegates, I want to clear up some important points, the point that the delegate of the United States of America raised, especially with regard to [XX].

First and foremost, FAO is not a political platform, where political situations or domestic issues will be intervened with this platform.

Secondly, thank you very much Russia, clearly reiterated the fact that the situation in Tigray region is exclusively a domestic issue where we should take a [XX] if this is absolutely related with food security or a deliberate act of Ethiopians to impose the allegation raised by the delegate of the United States. I have to say something regarding the issues in Tigray.

Firstly, as soon as the Government of Ethiopia finalized the law enforcement progression, the Government of Ethiopia provided the humanitarian supplies for more than 70 percent of people who were in need. However, gradually, incorporation with international partners, above all especially the World Food Programme, [XX], Food for Hunger, [XX] were collaborated and worked in cooperation with the Government.

Secondly, for the upcoming rainy season, under the federal ministerial committee, the Ministry for Agriculture in collaboration with Tigray provisional administration, the Bureau of Agriculture, national resources, operating units, development with local and international partners working to restore organizational parts of agriculture, and also start their [XX].

Under the guidance of management, a team of experts assigned, deployed to support the region, [XX]. Above all, fertilizers, seeds and other agriculture inputs are distributed through the Tigray region.

Therefore, there is no other way that any State can accuse or allege Ethiopia as a deliberate act of violating the humanitarian law.

Finally, there is the part that I want to reiterate, there is extreme disinformation campaign, so media, and other means that attempt to undermine the Government of Ethiopia, which really does not reflect the reality on the ground.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Ambassador. I give the floor to the Secretary. Any comments?

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

It is noted.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

We can move forward to Item 7, *Election of Council Members*. We shall now proceed with item 7 of the Agenda, *Election of Council Members*. You have before you document C 2021/11 Rev.1 which includes a chart of countries nominated by region and by electoral period.

I would like to recall paragraph 10 of Rule XII of the General Rules of the Organization which allows for the election of Council Members by clear general consent when the number of candidates is not more than the number of vacancies to be filled.

As you can see from the chart of countries, this is the case. I therefore suggest we carry out the election by clear general consent. Are there any comments?

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

As mentioned during the Adoption of the General Committee's Third Report, the United States here would like to disassociate from consensus on the general consent appointments to the Council solely with regard to Ethiopia and Belarus.

Mr Addisu Melkamu KEDEBE (Ethiopia)

I want to reiterate the fact that political issues are not addressed at this platform. We have to be clear about this. This platform is food and agriculture, where we can discuss issues of food and agriculture. We cannot politicize this platform with internal or domestic issues. Tigrayis, again and again I will reiterate the fact that this is domestic issues of Ethiopia. It is beyond the [XX].

There is the combination of fake news, disinformation and the other distortions that are at play. Support of our people of Tigray entails accurate data, driven information and not allowing [XX] as the Government remains firm and centred in reality and rebuilding lives and livelihoods in Tigray.

Above all, the Government of Ethiopia is at the forefront of supporting the livelihood and food of Tigray. Even with FAO, the Government of Ethiopia is closely working with providing the agriculture inputs. I want to use this occasion to have, on behalf of my government, the cooperation and the collaboration that [XX] Food and Agriculture Organization and World Food Programme has provided both humanitarian as well as agricultural input.

Therefore, I reiterate that we cannot politicize this platform. This platform is the way that we maintain cultural policies, we sustain the agri-foods. That is what I want to say.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

If there are no other comments, we will move forward.

I will begin with the Africa Region. For the period from the end of the 42nd Session of the Conference to June 2024 we have three seats to be filled.

Before moving forward, can we adopt the Report of the General Committee before proceeding to the vote?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Thank you, sir. In fact, I think now that the Report of the General Committee has been adopted, you may wish to proceed to item 7, the *Election of the Council Members*, which I understand you were starting by going region by region. So, please proceed, sir.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Please allow me to go back once again to the report. I think this contains a mistake because Germany is only mentioned as a Member of the Council as of 2023. However, this is not in accordance with our application. We should be reflected as members as of 2022. Please correct that and please confirm this correction.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Germany.

I think that we can move forward with item 7, *Election of the Members of the Council*. We begin by the Africa Region.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Excuse me, Mr Chair, if I come back, but I would like to ask for a confirmation.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Indeed, I confirm that the correction that the delegate from Germany has requested, is already enacted and will become a record of the Conference.

Item 7. Election of Council Members

Point 7. Élection des membres du Conseil

Tema 7. Elección de miembros del Consejo

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Secretary-General, we take note the correction can be done and then we move forward for Item 7.

For Africa Region for the period from the end of the 42nd Session of the Conference to June 2024, we have five seats to fill and the nominations are Angola, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Kenya, and Mauritania. If there are no comments, we can adopt the nominations. Thank you.

For the second period, from 1 July 2022 to the end of the 44th Session of the Conference, it has been done. And then we have from the period of the end of the 42nd Session of the Conference to 30 June 2022. There is one seat to be filled and I notice that there is no candidate. There is no candidate.

We have the period from the end of the 42nd Session of the Conference to the end of the 43rd Session of the Conference. There is one seat to be filled and the candidate is Cameroon. Any comments?

If there is no comment, may I assume that the Conference approve the proposed candidates of Africa?

No hands, so I suppose that the candidates of Africa are approved. Thank you. It is so decided.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

We now move on to the Asia Region. From the period from the 42nd Session of the Conference to 30 June 2024 there are six seats to be filled and the candidates are: Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, and Republic of Korea. Any comments, any observations? No observations. Ladies and gentlemen, may I assume that the Conference approve the proposed candidates for Asia? It is so decided.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

We now move on to Europe. For the period from the end of the 42nd Session of the Conference to 30 June 2024 there are three seats to be filled and the candidates are Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Spain.

In addition, the Conference is requested to note that Spain and United Kingdom applied jointly to one Council seat as follows: Spain will occupy the seat from the end of the 42nd Session of the Conference to 30 June 2022 and then the United Kingdom will replace Spain for the remainder of the term of office from 1 July 2022 until the end of the mandate, 30 June 2024.

Mme Marie-Lise STOLL (Luxembourg)

Merci Monsieur le Ministre, j'aimerais juste vérifier que le Luxembourg prendra la relève de la Principauté de Monaco à partir de la fin de cette Conférence pour une période de deux années. J'aimerais bien vérifier si c'est bien reflété dans les documents. Merci Monsieur le Président.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Yes, I confirm that that is accurate and will be reflected accordingly in the Report.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, we take note of this. No comment, so that is so decided. Thank you.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

Now for the period from the end of the 42nd Session of the Conference to the end of the 43rd Session of the Conference there are three seats to be filled and there are three candidates: France, Luxembourg and Russian Federation. Any comments? Okay, no comments. Ladies and gentlemen, may I assume that the Conference approve the proposed candidates for Europe entirely? Thank you.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

We now move on to Latin America and Caribbean. For the period from the end of the 42nd Session of the Conference to the end of June 2024 there are three seats to be filled and the candidates are: Chile, Nicaragua and Peru. Any comments? Any objection?

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I really apologize to have to come back again. Dear Chair, I think you forgot to mention Israel and Germany starting from June 2022 until the end of the 44th Session of the Conference. Could you please include Israel and Germany and correct that? Thank you, and my apologies, again.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Yes, I confirm that was the recommendation of the General Committee and that is an accurate reflection.

Ms Liron MAOZ (Israel)

I would also want to echo what the Ambassador from Germany just said, and to also mention Slovenia, that are with us and Germany in the same term.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Quiero hacerle una consulta, que la verdad no sé cuál sería la respuesta. Pero tomando nota que el Grupo regional africano todavía le falta designar a un representante para ocupar un lugar en el Consejo, de pedir la posibilidad de esperar hasta el día de mañana y mantener esa posición para que el grupo africano pueda terminar de resolver y proponer un representante de África para esa posición y

no dejar ese lugar vacío. Lo hago como representante, como Presidente del G77+China. Estoy consultando si eso es posible, Señor Vicepresidente.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, thank you, thank you Chairperson. I give the floor to the Secretary.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Indeed, the Conference being supreme, the Conference, if it so decides, may allow for nominations still to be submitted and considered through the General Committee back into the plenary for approval before the end of the Conference. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Okay, I take note. I think that the General Committee will find an issue for this problem before the end of the Conference.

Ms Snezana DOLENC (Slovenia)

Just to echo what our colleagues from Israel and Germany said, that Slovenia is also in the term of the Council Member from 1 July 2022 to the end of June 2024. Thank you and over to you.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I confirm that is accurate as in the documentation. It is a matter of record for the Conference, yes sir.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, we take note. We move forward to the period from the end of the 42nd Session of the Conference to the end of the 43rd Session of the Conference. There are three seats for Latin...

I think that we are finished with Europe. Ladies and Gentlemen, may I assume that the Conference approve the proposed candidates for Europe? Thank you, it is approved. It is so decided.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

We now move on to Latin America and Caribbean we have said first. The second term, for the period from 1 July 2022 to the end of the 44th Session of the Conference. There are five seats to be filled and the candidates are: Argentina, Bahamas, Brazil, Mexico, and Costa Rica.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Pido disculpas, Señor Vicepresidente, con su indulgencia para dos temas. Entonces, después de la explicación de la Secretaría General, hago el requerimiento formal de que África pueda tener tiempo hasta mañana para poder presentar su candidato. Y, en segundo lugar, entiendo que hay dos candidatos de América Latina y el Caribe, que son Chile y Nicaragua, que ya fueron aprobados también en su integración en el Consejo, si no me equivoco. Eso fue también aprobado.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Before giving the floor to the Secretary-General, I confirm that Chile, Nicaragua and Peru have been nominated for the period from the end of the 42nd Session of the Conference to 30 June 2024.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I think you already confirmed it sir, I have no further comment. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

I think you have approved the candidates of Argentina, Bahamas, Brazil, Mexico, and Costa Rica from the period from 1 July 2022 to the end of the 44th Session of the Conference.

We now move to the period from the end of the 42nd Session of the Conference to the end of the 43rd Session of the Conference, there is one seat to be filled and the candidate is Guatemala.

Sr. Jose Teófilo ESONO ASANGONO (Guinea Ecuatorial)

Una observación, sobre la región de África, en el período de sesiones de la Conferencia del 30 de junio hasta 2024, no se mencionó Congo, Guinea Ecuatorial y Etiopía. Muchas gracias.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

I confirm that from the end of the 42nd Session of the Conference to 30 June 2024 we have approved three candidates: Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Ethiopia.

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

I would like to request, is it possible to put the text of the report on screen? I think that might help alleviate any confusion. Thank you, Chair.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

We can in a minute, but it would only be in one language at the time, so if you are okay with that Chair, we can put it up in one language. The chart is up, sir, and we will scroll down as you read the different regions. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

May I assume the Conference approve the proposed candidates for Latin America and the Caribbean now that you are sharing the screen?

Okay, so there is no comment, it is so decided for Latin America and Caribbean Region.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

We now move to the Near East Region for the period of the end of the 42nd Session of the Conference to 30 June 2024. There is one seat to be filled and the candidate is Kuwait. I do not see any hands raised.

Okay, so we confirm for Kuwait.

We move forward to the period of 1 July 2022 to the end of the 44th Session of the Conference. There are two seats to be filled and the candidates are Iraq and Qatar. Any comments, any questions?

Okay, no requests, so it is approved.

We move on to the period from the end of the 42nd Session to 30 June 2022. There is one seat to be filled, and the candidate is Sudan.

Okay, there are no requests. Ladies and gentlemen, may I assume that the Conference approves the proposed candidates for the Near East Region?

Okay, if there is no request, it is so decided.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

We move on to North America Region. For North America, for the period 1 July 2022 to the end of the 44th Session of the Conference there are two seats to be filled and the candidates are Canada and United States of America. Are there any requests?

No requests. Ladies and gentlemen, may I assume that the Conference approve the proposed candidates for North America? It is so decided.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Asi se acuerda

Mr Donald Geoffrey SYME (New Zealand)

I did not see anyone from the Southwest Pacific Region and was just wondering if I had missed it in the report? It should be Australia.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Secretary-General, any comments?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Yes, indeed. The reason there are no names appearing from Southwest Pacific Region is that no seats are falling vacant at this Conference, and there will be seats at the next Conference. That is the reason why, hence there are no names in the table.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Secretary-General. May I congratulate the countries which have just been elected to Membership of the Council and take the opportunity to remind you that the 167th Session of the Council will reconvene on Tuesday 29 June 2021. Thank you and congratulations.

Now we move to the Adoption to the Report of Commission II.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Excuse me, sir, the reports are still in the process of finalization as the Drafting Committee has worked through the night, and they are being translated, so with your indulgence, if I may suggest a recess to 10:00 for 15 minutes and then pick up with item 19. Then we might be able to come back to the adoption of the two reports. If you may consider that, please Chair.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

We will have a little break and we will resume by 10:00 hours.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Yes, sir, we are ready to go.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Okay. Are we sure that the reports are ready?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Sir, the reports are not ready. What I would suggest is you might wish to start with item 19, the vote for the draft resolution on Budgetary Appropriations for 2022-23, and after that we can come back to the adoption of the reports of Commissions I and II, which are being circulated right now in the various languages. Thank you, sir.

VICE-PRÉSIDENT

Mesdames et Messieurs nous allons reprendre avec le point 19, *Adoption du Projet de Résolution sur l'ouverture des crédits budgétaires 2022-2023*. Ce point est complété par les documents C 2021/23, C 2021/23 Note d'Information, C 2021/23 Annexe Web10, C 2021/LIM/4 et C 2021/II/REP/19.

Ce point concerne l'adoption des résolutions sur l'ouverture des crédits budgétaires 2022-2023 et procéder au vote sur résolution, qui figure dans le document C2021/DRAFT REPORT. Je tiens à rappeler que la Conférence est statutairement tenue d'approuver ce projet de résolution par voie de scrutin. Tel a été décidé le lundi, en adoptant le premier rapport de son bureau, la Conférence prendra la décision sur la base d'un vote par appel nominal qui aura lieu sur Zoom. Nous commençons par le quorum.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Before we move to the quorum, might I just highlight that there are two requests for the floor, from Spain and Portugal.

Sr. Gonzalo EIRIZ GERVAS (España)

Lamentamos tener que pedir la palabra. Simplemente queríamos comentar que en el documento anterior, *C 2021/LIM/21* hay una llamada a un pie de página en la que se debería explicar cómo comparten el asiento del Consejo entre el Reino Unido y España. Pero el pie de página no existe y entonces queríamos pedirle al Secretariado si podían confirmarnos que eso se incluirá en el texto final.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Thank you, sir. I confirm that the request will be enacted.

Mr José Luis COELHO SILVA (Portugal)

Just a question on the agenda for the day today and for the Conference. We notice from the Journal of the Conference and from the information you just gave us, Sir, that the adoption of the reports of the Commission I and Commission II is now scheduled for today, but from the original timetable of the Conference, it is scheduled for tomorrow.

I think that, from our side at least, we are prepared to follow what we have in the original timetable. Further explanations or clarification would be useful from our side in order to better prepare for these two final days of the Conference. Thank you for your indulgence.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Indeed, there are two separate instances of adoption of the reports of both Commission I and II, firstly by the Commissions themselves, and then by the Plenary of the Conference; and currently, as per the Journal, both these instances are scheduled for this morning.

Naturally, the original timetable, which is an evolving entity, did have the adoption by the Commissions of their Commission Reports separate from the adoption of the reports by the Plenary, which was due to take place on Friday, tomorrow morning, but those two instances can still be split, if that is what the Conference prefers. Thank you.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Quería solamente decir que si bien es cierto lo que dice mi querido amigo de Portugal sobre el tema, es práctica en todo este tipo de Conferencias que cuando se puede avanzar o adelantar el trabajo, es absolutamente una cuestión de buena práctica también.

Me parece que en definitiva tenemos semanas muy complicadas, las que se vienen con el tema de la reunión del Programa Mundial de Alimentos, la precumbre, tenemos mucha agenda y sobre todo para las delegaciones más chicas, con menor cantidad de Miembros, es muy difícil poder cumplir con todas estas tareas.

Entonces la verdad que cuanto antes podamos concluir con las tareas, yo creo que es una cuestión de buena práctica, obviamente si eso no afecta ninguna cuestión hipersensible a ningún Miembro o a ningún grupo de miembros. Gracias, Señor Presidente.

Mr José Luis COELHO SILVA (Portugal)

We just asked for information for the sake of clarification. I understood and I am very thankful for the information given to us by the Secretary-General. I thank you, Rakesh, for the information.

In any case, I would like to recall what happened at the last Conference session, when we had exactly the same issue, about the anticipation of the decision of PWB and then we had a problem with the preparedness of the delegations for doing the job and I remember very well the arguments that are put on the table at that time.

In any case, I fully agree, we are also a small delegation, as my dearest friend and colleague from Argentina just said, and if you can go to a discussion that is more effective, of course, it is better than spending a lot of time.

What we want to seek is better information as we have some difficulties to follow this evolving agenda, which is sometimes very difficult to manage, especially, as my dearest friend from Argentina said, for a small delegation. We are expecting one thing, we are preparing ourselves for that, and suddenly we need to change and to adapt. Of course, we will adapt in any case.

Thank you for your information and thank you for your indulgence.

Ms Liz NASSKAU (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I absolutely agree that obviously it would be good to adopt the report as soon as possible. But I did just wonder whether there might be the opportunity for us to have a little time to review the report, because as the Secretary-General noted, the reports have only just become available.

So if it would be possible for us to have a short break to give us the opportunity to read through the reports that are being submitted to us prior to our endorsing them, then that would be very helpful. Thank you.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I just would like to echo what my British colleague just said. We are also a small mission and exactly for this reason we need a bit of time to review the report. So, a break would be very welcome and much appreciated.

Mr Abdul Malik MELVIN CASTELINO (Malaysia)

I just wanted to echo the call by Germany and the UK and, of course, my friends from Argentina and Portugal. We do need time for us to review the document because we all agree that we all come with a small delegation. So, a recess would be very much welcome, Chair.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

In light of the comments from Members from the Conference, might I suggest, Chair, that you proceed now with Item 19 and then the Plenary could adjourn and reconvene at 14:30 hours for Adoption of the Reports of Commission I and II, which are now being posted in all languages and circulated to all Members, and then continue at 15:00 hours with the appointment of the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC). So, I would suggest that after Item 19 now the Plenary adjourns and reconvenes at 14:30 hours for Adoption of the two Reports of the Commissions. Thank you, sir.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Solo para señalar que al menos nuestra Delegación, sería imposible estar para la opción de los reportes a las 14.30 y además ir a votar a la FAO a las 15.20. Entonces necesitamos tiempo para poder desplazarnos hasta el edificio de la FAO.

No podemos adoptar los reportes de las comisiones y además ir a votar.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Well, then there appears to be only option that would seem to satisfy the Members; and might I suggest, Chair, the Conference might consider adopting the Reports, both by the Commissions and the Plenary, tomorrow in its morning Session. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Any comments? Any objections? What is your position? Okay, if there is no comment, it is decided that the adoption of the reports for Commission I and II will be done tomorrow.

Now we move to item 19.

Suite en français

Je tiens à rappeler que la Conférence est statutairement tenue d'approuver ce projet de résolution par voie de scrutin. Je passe la parole au Secrétaire pour vérifier le quorum, et nous indiquer qu'elle est la manière à adopter.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

The requirement for quorum is 98 and we have 128 members, so quorum is achieved.

Quorum confirmed

Quorum vérifié

Quorum confirmado**VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

Thank you. I give you the floor for the next step.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Chair, I would ask you to give the floor to the Assistant Secretary-General who will take us through the election process now.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL

I will call out the names of the Member Nations in alphabetical order. When I call your name, please unmute yourself and ensure that your video is turned on. Then you should state the name of the delegation and declare either “yes”, if you wish to vote in favour of the proposal; “no”, if you wish to vote against it; “abstention” if you wish to abstain from the vote.

At the conclusion of the first call, the names of Member Nations with delegates or representatives who failed to answer shall be called again. I will now start to call the names.

Vote

Vote

Votación

Mr Said HUSSEIN IID (Somalia)

Yes, what about Somalia? We have not been called to vote.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Chairperson, if I may, the Assistant Secretary-General is carrying out the roll call now. For all those Members who have been missed, for whatever reason, they will be called again in a second roll call at the end of this roll call. So, if I see the other hands that are up, if that is your concern, please do not be concerned. We will go back again through every single Member that has not been able to reply for whatever reason. I can assure you of that. So, after this roll call continues, when it comes to an end, there will be a second roll call of all Members who were missed, who were not able to cast their vote. Assistant Secretary-General, please continue with the current roll call.

Vote

Vote

Votación

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Chairperson, we have now done three roll calls and we have a total of 123 votes cast. We can undertake another roll call, if you so wish but before that I see that there are two requests for the floor that you may wish to entertain. So, Chair, I await your guidance on whether to give the floor to the Members who have requested it and then we can undertake a fourth roll call.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Yes, Secretary, you can hand the floor to those who asked for it.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I understand there was Afghanistan and Somalia, and I presume that will be Afghanistan first.

Mr Rahman Nazar BELIM (Afghanistan)

Thank you, Chair. Thank you very much for giving me time. As you know, Afghanistan has not been called for voting here. We want to know if there is any problem.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Chair, I can confirm that Afghanistan's vote has been received in order and has been recorded.

I understand there was Somalia next, sir.

Mr Said Hussein LID (Somalia)

Thank you, Chair. Somalia was not called for voting for the three rounds which has been conducted so far. So, I want to know why Somalia was not being called to vote. Thank you very much.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Chair, if I may, I would like to recall that the Members that are on the roll call for voting are those that have their voting rights intact; and that is all Members who are not in arrears. And those that are in arrears are those countries whose voting rights have been considered by the General Committee and restored by the Conference. I think there is also Djibouti and Uganda next, sir.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Secretary. It is clear for everyone.

M. Abdou Ali IDRIS (Djibouti)

Thank you, Mr President. Nous avons été appelés durant le premier appel, pour le premier vote. Mais deuxième et troisième vote, nous n'avons pas été appelé.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I confirm that Djibouti's vote was cast and received and is in order.

Mr Wakaabu SIRAGI (Uganda)

Thank you, Chair. We wanted to seek confirmation. The Ambassador of the Republic of Uganda cast our vote when our name was called but also in the reading of the names we heard the name of Uganda read again. We just want to confirm that our vote was registered under the second call. Possibly with this third it was a mistake. Thank you, Chair.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Sir, I am happy to confirm that Uganda's vote was cast and well received and registered.

Mme Mariam ALI MOUSSA (Chad)

Merci, je voudrais savoir si le vote du Chad a été bien pris en compte?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Yes, sir, I am happy to confirm that both votes for Mauritania and Chad have been well received and registered.

Mr Abdul Malik MELVIN CASTELINO (Malaysia)

Sorry to interject, but I just saw Ethiopia, he was raising hands on the screen. I am not sure if he wanted to speak or not, but over to you Chair. Thank you.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I can confirm we have well received the vote of Ethiopia as well Sir. Thank you.

M. Aly COULIBALY (Mali)

Excusez-moi, c'est juste la même question par rapport au Mali. Je veux en avoir la certitude. Parce que la première fois, je n'ai pas entendu.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I am pleased to confirm we have the vote of Mali, well received and well registered.

M. Abdelhalim GUESMI (Tunisia)

Bonjour, je voudrais juste m'assurer si le vote de la Tunisie a été enregistré.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I confirm that Tunisia's vote is well received and registered.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

I do not see any other hands. Can we move forward, Secretary?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Sir, this is the first time in a digital FAO Conference that we are having a roll call on a Zoom platform. For the sake of scruple, might I suggest that we undertake a further, fourth roll call for those countries from which we have not received a vote for so far?

Vote

Vote

Votación

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Chairperson, now that we have had the fourth roll call the Elections Officer is verifying the vote and the tally so you may read the results. We will convey the information to you as per the established communication channel in the next five minutes so you may read the results.

Mr Said HUSSEIN IID (Somalia)

Regarding the Secretary-General's comment that Somalia is in arrears, Somalia is not alone among the countries in arrears. I was there in some of these in arrears last year, but the thing is that the request for the waiver deadline was yesterday, which we missed, so I will request the decision to be reconsidered and Somalia to have the voting rights restored since we are not the only country in arrears, and we have not requested for waiver for reinstatement of the voting rights.

So since we are not the only country in arrears and we were in a difficult situation and Somalia always used to have a special consideration from FAO, and we are trying to obey those areas, which we already started, I hope that our request to the Conference for the decision on Somalia to be included in the voting rights can be accepted.

Sr Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Presidente, en mi carácter de Presidente del G77+China, y en honor a la cuestión de tratar de favorecer la inclusividad y en un contexto tan difícil, tan crítico, creo que después de haber escuchado al delegado de Somalia, parece ser razonable tratar de que la Secretaría General evalúe la manera en la cual poder facilitar de acuerdo a los procedimientos, la posibilidad que Somalia pueda recuperar el derecho al voto.

Es una petición que tiene que ver también con un contexto que es muy clara la situación crítica de todos, no solo de Somalia sino de todos nuestros países. Algunos hacen sus esfuerzos lo máximo que pueden, entonces creo que yo simplemente quiero respaldar lo peticionado por Somalia recientemente.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Thank you Sir. Indeed, the Conference has clearly the authority to restore the voting rights of Members which automatically lost their rights as a result of the status of their current assessments and arrears. The normal procedure for that is a review by the General Committee and then consideration by the Conference as a whole, of the recommendations that might emanate from that General Committee. Having said that, the Conference may decide accordingly right now, to convene a General Committee Meeting again, to look at countries that have lost their voting rights, but this is a matter entirely for the Conference. Thank you Sir.

Sr Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Creo que luego de haber escuchado a la Secretaría General, yo le quiero pedir a todos mis colegas, sobre la base de lo que significa una organización que tiene como eje central la problemática del hambre y la inseguridad alimentaria, poder tener la generosidad de poder reconocer la petición hecha por el delegado de Somalia y que todos podamos conceder y acordar por consenso, concederle el

derecho de voto al país que ha pedido específicamente en esta Conferencia recuperar su derecho de voto justificándolo en las razones explicadas por su delegado.

Gracias, Presidente y gracias a mis queridos y mis queridas colegas por, espero, comprender esta petición.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, any comments?

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

Thank you Chair, and thank you to the Secretariat for outlining the procedure that needs to be followed for the restoration of voting rights.

The United States agrees completely with the principle of inclusivity, but also we support upholding the Rule of Law with this Organization, and it would not be fair to consider one member's application in this Conference Plenary Session without going through the proper procedure.

So we would ask that this matter, in line with the procedures outlined by the Secretariat, be referred to the General Committee so the General Committee can meet and consider. Thank you Chair.

Mr Abdul Malik MELVIN CASTELINO (Malaysia)

I would just like to second the proposal by Argentina on the basis of inclusivity. Of course, to take into account what is happening on the ground at the moment, a lot of countries are facing issues. At the same time I also would concur with the reasons given by the Secretary-General as well as my colleague from the US, that we need to go through the proper process and procedures.

In this case we would of course welcome the General Committee to have another meeting to look at the rights of those members – not only Somalia, but those others who may not have the right to vote at this Conference. Thank you Chair.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

Australia, as a member of the General Committee stands ready to meet as soon as possible so that we can consider this matter through the correct procedure. Thank you Chair.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Sir, indeed I can confirm the General Committee could meet at 12:00. In that case we would hold this Item 19 in abeyance until the General Committee has had time to consider any further requests for restoration of voting rights, and then come and conclude this item after the General Committee report is reviewed by the Conference.

Sr Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Simplemente para agradecer la sensibilidad de Australia. Realmente como siempre, nos sorprende positivamente. Muchas gracias, Australia, creo que el Comité General puede reunirse cinco minutos o el tiempo de manera excepcional o extraordinaria como para poder cumplir con el procedimiento y al mismo tiempo garantizar el principio de inclusividad.

Gracias, Presidente. Gracias, Australia.

Ms Jackline YONGA (Kenya)

I just want to add my voice and also thank Somalia for bring up that, and I want to thank US and Australia for accepting to agree to adhere to the principle of inclusivity in this case.

It is not anybody's wish to be in the situation the countries like Somalia and others have, so it is good to embrace all those whose votes can be restored through the process as indicated. So I want to thank Argentina and those who spoke before me, for bringing up this very significant and important principle of inclusivity. I thank you Chair.

Mr Said HUSSEIN IID (Somalia)

I want to express my thankfulness to Argentina, Kenya, Australia and all Member States, and also the Secretary-General for their endorsement of the principle of inclusivity. Take into account that Somalia's also considered one of the largest operation areas for FAO, it is the fourth largest programme in the world, so Somalia is very confident and we hope we will occupy our rightful place in this august Organization.

Right after independence Somalia has been a Member of FAO and we have had a huge collaboration with FAO over many years. Especially now we are facing the locust operation, one of the largest locust operations is going on in Somalia, with active cooperation between FAO and Somalia. So very soon we will solve this issue.

I will repeat my request to this Conference, that Somalia be reinstated its voting rights and we will correct this situation very soon. Thank you very much and I thank all Member States for giving solidarity with us, and I thank the Chair and Secretary-General.

M. Abdou Ali IDRIS (Djibouti)

Compte tenu je pense d'une part au temps imparti à cette Conférence, et d'autre part eu égard à la situation en Somalie, je pense que nous pourrions suspendre cinq minutes la séance, et donner l'occasion au bureau de se réunir. Afin de donner à la Somalie son droit de vote parce que compte tenu justement de la situation qui prévaut, je pense qu'il est indispensable de réintégrer la Somalie et de lui redonner son vote. Donc, nous laissons le Bureau se réunir le plus tôt possible afin que nous puissions leur donner le droit de vote. Merci.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

So I understand that the Conference would like the General Committee to meet. As I said before the General Committee under your Chairpersonship can convene at 12:00 hours and then once it has completed its work, you could reconvene the Plenary session.

Ms Jennifer HARRIGH (United States of America)

I requested the floor on a procedural matter. Of course we expect the General Committee to meet at 12:00 hours, but given that we are all here in this Plenary meeting now, I wanted to ask the Secretariat to very clearly explain regarding the in-person voting this afternoon – whether Members who intend to vote must be logged into the Plenary meeting, both those voters here and Rome, and those voters in New York, while they are casting their in-person votes. I raise this now Chair before you call the close of this particular plenary session, just in case there are Members who may not be with us later on. So if I could ask for a clarification and specification of what Members who will cast in-person votes in New York and Rome must do regarding logging in to the Zoom platform. Thank you Chair.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I can confirm that it is not a requirement for the Members to be at once logged into the Zoom platform of the plenary and cast their vote at the same time. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

After the meeting of the General Committee we will resume our Plenary meeting for Item 19.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

That is correct Sir. The idea would be that the General Committee meet at 12:00 hours and as soon as it is done with its work, then the Plenary can reconvene and carry on with Item 19.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I was not sure whether I acoustically correctly understood what the Secretary-General said. Could you please just repeat, did I understand correctly that you said that it is not a requirement to be logged on while the voting is going on? Thank you for clarifying this once again.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I confirm once again that it is not a requirement for Members to be connected and logged on into the plenary meeting through the virtual platform at the same time as casting their vote.

Mr Abdul Malik MELVIN CASTELINO (Malaysia)

I just wanted to raise the point regarding in-person voting at FAO later. I just received a call regarding the change of time, so I would like to advise that besides the call that is being done on an automated voice message, perhaps an email could also be sent to those delegates who were supposed to vote. In my case the timing has changed if I am not mistaken, if I heard the automated voice correctly. In order for us to ensure that the voting run

Mr Ilya ANDREEV (Russian Federation)

I just want to confirm what our colleague from Malaysia said. We also received an automatic call from the FAO Secretariat about the in-person voting, and the time was changed by ten minutes. So we would be pleased to get some clarifications from the Secretariat on this.

Mr José Luis COELHO SILVA (Portugal)

I also have a question on the procedure of the in-person vote for the post of the ICC. Just to ask if it is possible to clarify, in case of having a second round for voting, when will it be scheduled – for today or for tomorrow?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

If I may clear the second question from Portugal first: I confirm that if there is going to be a second ballot, that will take place today itself. We are ready for that, and Members will be recalled both in Rome and New York for the second ballot.

In terms of timings in the slots there, I can confirm that the timings that were given to the Members as they were communicated to them yesterday, are unchanged. I am sorry if there was some confusion on the voice messages of today - that is just a precaution requesting Members to be here 10 minutes before their allocated time slots. The time slots themselves remain unchanged. There is no change to the time slots for voting. I hope that clarifies. Thank you sir.

M. Fidèle SAMBASSI KHAKESSA (Democratic Republic of Congo)

Monsieur le Président, bonjour, et comme nous prenons la parole pour la première fois, nous vous félicitons pour votre élection à la tête de nos travaux.

La République démocratique du Congo intervient dans le cas où nous ne sommes pas éligibles face à la situation qui prévaut et aux changements de gouvernements chez nous. Je crois que nous sommes privés du droit de vote. Nous demandons au Bureau d'examiner notre cas, pour que nous puissions être rétablis dans nos droits afin que le Gouvernement puisse arranger, mettre en place la situation.

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

One more procedural question. We understand from the Secretariat that Members will be notified if it is necessary to return for a second round of balloting. This is separate from the issue of course of the results of the first round, and my question is how will the results of that first round be communicated to members so they may arrange to receive proper voting instructions from Capital?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

As per statute and established practice the results of the first ballot will be read out by the Chairperson to the Conference. Thank you.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

Le Secrétaire Général peut-il confirmer, s'il vous plaît, l'heure à laquelle nous devons nous réunir pour l'annonce des résultats ? Ça faciliterait l'organisation des agendas.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Once again, I presume we are talking about the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) election later on this afternoon. The results will be announced once the vote has been completed, and that is the established practice. Thank you.

VICE-PRESIDENT

Nous allons nous retirer pour la réunion du Bureau étant entendu qu'après la réunion du Bureau, la plénière va continuer sur le point 19.

The meeting rose at 11:59 hours

La séance est levée à 11 h 59

Se levanta la sesión a las 11.59

CONFERENCE CONFERENCE CONFERENCIA

<p>Forty-second Session Quarante et deuxième session 42.º período de sesiones</p>
<p>Virtual Meeting, 14-18 June 2021 Réunion Virtuelle, 14-18 juin 2021 Reunión Virtual, 14-18 de junio de 2021</p>
<p>EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING HUITIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE OCTAVA SESIÓN PLENARIA</p>
<p>17 June 2021</p>

The Eighth Meeting was opened at 13:13 hours
Mr Gabriel Mbaïrobe,
Vice-Chairperson of the Conference, presiding

La huitième séance est ouverte à 13 h 13
sous la présidence de M. Gabriel Mbaïrobe,
Vice-Président de la Conférence

Se abre la octava reunión a las 13.13
bajo la presidencia de la Sr. Gabriel Mbaïrobe,
Vicepresidente de la Conferencia

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to: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

Les parties signalées par [XX], pour des raisons techniques, étaient inaudibles. Veuillez communiquer
toute correction à: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

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las correcciones a: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

Fourth Report of the General Committee
Quatrième rapport du Bureau
Cuarto informe del Comité General

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to this Plenary Session. I give the floor to the Secretary-General.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

As agreed by the Plenary when it closed earlier, there has been a meeting of the General Committee and there is a Report for consideration by the Plenary. This will then be followed by resumption of Item 19 on the vote for the *Draft Resolution for Budgetary Appropriations for 2022/23*.

Chairperson, if you like, I can share my screen with the Report of the General Committee that you just chaired and you could put that to the Members.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Okay, thank you, Secretary-General, you can share the screen. Can you please read it for the Members?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Certainly, Sir. I shall now read the Report of the Fourth Meeting of the General Committee for adoption by the Plenary.

Section A, Right to Vote.

At its first (14 June 2021) and second (16 June 2021) meetings, the General Committee recommended that voting rights should be restored to 11 Member Nations that requested special consideration under Article III.4 of the Constitution: Antigua and Barbuda, Chad, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Islamic Republic of Iran, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Tuvalu, the Bolivian Republic of Venezuela and Yemen. Since then, the following changes have taken place.

Three Member nations, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, and Somalia have now requested special consideration under Article III.4 of the Constitution. The General Committee recommends that voting rights should be restored to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Somalia.

The General Committee recommends that the Conference requests the conduct of a comprehensive review on the process for reinstating voting rights for Member Nations in arrears for consideration by the relevant Governing Bodies, including the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), supported by a process of informal consultation led by the Independent Chairperson of the Council with Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups.

Section B, Election of Council Members.

The Committee recommended that the Conference endorse the nomination of Burundi for the Africa Regional Group for the term of office from the end of the 42nd Session of the Conference to 30th June 2022.

Ms Jackline YONGA (Kenya)

I want to thank the Secretariat and the General Committee for accepting to include Burundi in the Council Membership. I want to apologize very much for the delay in submission, it was a technicality we could not have avoided, so mine is to thank the Committee as they adapt. Thank you so much, Secretary-General, for understanding.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Permítame en nombre del Grupo de los 77 más China agradecer al Comité General y a todos sus Miembros por haber considerado el planteo que hemos hecho en el plenario y que tres Miembros de países en desarrollo, con dificultades, puedan haber recuperado el derecho de voto para esta Conferencia.

Es muy importante en momentos tan difíciles ser sensibles y felicito a Burundi por ser Miembro del Consejo.

Mr Abdul Malik (Malaysia)

I would just like to thank again for your indulgence in this and also to thank the General Committee as well as the members of General Committee for agreeing to have the meeting and coming out with this very positive recommendation, of course we welcome it. At the same time also a special thanks to the Chairperson of G77 & China, Ambassador Carlos Bernardo Cerniak for bringing this to our attention. Thank you, Chairperson, and we support this endorsement.

His Excellency Said HUSSEIN IID (Somalia)

I would like to thank the General Committee members for their decision to restore the voting rights to Somalia. Somalia will be very grateful to this meeting and we will uphold our obligations as soon as possible. Thank you very much, the Secretary-General, the Chairperson, and the Members of this plenary.

M. Fidèle SAMBASSI KHAKESSA (Democratic Republic of Congo)

Je tiens à remercier le Bureau pour nous avoir, en dernière minute, en dernière instance nous accordé notre droit de vote. Je remercie aussi le Secrétariat et pour cette confiance qu'on nous témoigne, pour que nous puissions retrouver comme tout le monde nos droits, et nous allons tout mettre en œuvre pour que notre gouvernement, notre pays puisse satisfaire ou un petit peu redonner sa confiance aussi et payer les cotisations. Encore une fois, Monsieur le Président, merci infiniment, et Membres pour la confiance que vous nous avez accordée.

Mme Espérance NDAYIZEYE (Burundi)

Je voudrais exprimer mes remerciements à l'endroit du Comité pour l'acceptation de la candidature du Burundi, et au Groupe Afrique qui a bien voulu présenter la candidature. Le Burundi a hâte de travailler avec les autres membres du Conseil pour le bon avancement de l'agenda de la FAO.

Mme Mariam ALI MOUSSA (Chad)

J'ai reçu le Comité qui a soumis la demande du Tchad pour restaurer son droit de vote dans le premier groupe, ce qui nous a permis de voter et le Tchad avait présenté sa candidature pour être membre du Conseil au titre de l'année prochaine, mais ça n'a pas été retenu. Nous ne comprenons pas encore, nous n'avons pas eu encore les explications, parce qu'on avait payé, même si tard. Hier, nous avons envoyé la preuve du paiement du minimum demandé, et la candidature du Tchad n'a pas été retenue, bien que document a été envoyé. Donc, au niveau régional, qu'au niveau de la plénière, nous n'avons pas encore officiellement été de la raison pourquoi la candidature du Tchad n'a pas été retenue bien que le paiement ait été effectué.

Mr A. Haruna-Rashid KROMAH (Liberia)

Liberia likes to join Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo and the rest of us that have been considered by the General Committee to congratulate the Committee and to extend our deepest appreciation for allowing us to be part of this historic moment to form part of the decision-making of electing the Independent Chairperson of the Council.

For us, we see it as being in the UN spirit of leaving no one behind. Like others, we also want to make a commitment that we will ensure that our government makes the commitment to ensure that our arrears are cleared within the shortest period of time.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

At this stage, we would need for you to formally receive the acquiescence of the Plenary to the Report of the Fourth Meeting of the General Committee. Thereafter, we can move to Item 19.

Item 19. Adoption of the Draft Resolution on Budgetary Appropriations 2022-23 (Vote)

Point 19. Adoption du projet de résolution sur l'ouverture de crédits budgétaires 2022-2023 (vote)

Tema 19. Aprobación del proyecto de resolución sobre las consignaciones presupuestarias para 2022-23 (votación)**VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

We move forward to Item 19, I give back the floor to the Secretary.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

What we would like to do now is resume Item 19. What we are going to do is a fifth roll call of all Members who have not cast their vote, including now the three Members whose voting rights have been restored by the Conference. The Assistant Secretary-General will now read this fifth roll call.

Vote

Vote

Votación

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Sir, we are now going to tally up the votes and transmit them so you may read them. Thank you.

VICE-PRÉSIDENT

Je vais maintenant lire les résultats. Veuillez noter que la feuille des résultats sera insérée dans le compte rendu in extenso de la réunion. Nous avons 133 votes pour, 0 vote contre, 0 abstention.

Le nombre de total de suffrages exprimés est de 133 votes.

Est-ce qu'il y a des délégués qui souhaiteraient prendre la parole?

Continues in English

If there are no comments, no requests, I assume that the Resolution is adopted.

I give the floor to the Secretary to confirm the hour of the next Plenary Session.

منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Organisation des
Nations Unies pour
l'alimentation et
l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная
организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la
Agricultura

17/06/2021

Vote on: Item 19: (part of) Adoption of the Draft Resolution on Budgetary Appropriations 2022-23
Vote sur: Point 19: (partiel) Adoption du projet de résolution sur l'ouverture de crédits budgétaires 2022-2023
Votación para: Tema 19: (en parte) Aprobación del proyecto de resolución sobre las consignaciones presupuestarias para 2022-23

RESULT SHEET/RESULTATS/RESULTADOS

Roll call vote/Vote par appel nominal/Votación Nominal

Number of votes cast/ Nombre de suffrages exprimés/ Número de votos emitidos	133 (at least 98)
Majority required/ Majorité requise/ Mayoría requerida	89
Votes for/ Votes pour/ Votos en favor	133
Votes against/ Votes contre/ Votos en contra	0
Abstentions/ Abstenciones	0

Votes for:
Votes pour:
Votos en favor:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Votes against:
Votes contre:
Votos en contra:

Abstentions:
Abstenciones:

No Reply:
Aucune réponse:
Ninguna respuesta:

Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Cook Islands, Dominica, Eritrea, Estonia, Eswatini, Fiji, Gambia, Georgia, Grenada, Kiribati, Lebanon, Malawi, Maldives, Mongolia, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, United Arab Emirates, Vanuatu

ADOPTED/ ADOPTÉE/ ACEPTADA

Elections Officer/ Fonctionnaire électoral/ El oficial de elecciones

Rule XII.3(b) GRO: Subject to the provisions of Article XX, paragraph 1 of the Constitution, when a two-thirds majority of the votes cast is required by the Constitution or these Rules for a decision to be taken by the Conference, the total number of affirmative and negative votes cast shall be more than one half of the Member Nations of the Organization. If these conditions are not fulfilled, the proposal shall be considered as rejected.

Article XII.3(b) RGO: Sous réserve des dispositions du paragraphe 1 de l'article XX de l'Acte constitutif, lorsqu'en vertu dudit acte ou du présent règlement une décision doit être prise par la Conférence à la majorité des deux tiers, le nombre total des suffrages exprimés, pour ou contre, doit être supérieur à la moitié du nombre des États Membres de l'Organisation. Si ces conditions ne sont pas remplies, la proposition est considérée comme rejetée.

Artículo XII.3(b) RGO: Con sujeción a las disposiciones del párrafo 1 del Artículo XX de la Constitución, cuando esta o el presente Reglamento exijan para una decisión de la Conferencia una mayoría de dos tercios de los votos emitidos, el total de votos a favor o en contra deberá sumar más de la mitad de los Estados Miembros de la Organización. Si no se cumplen estas condiciones, la propuesta se considerará rechazada.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Thank you, Chairperson. The plenary will reconvene at 15:00 hours and will take up Item 6, *Appointment of the Independent Chairperson of the Council*.

VICE-PRÉSIDENT

La plénière reprend à 15 heures avec le point 6 qui est à l'ordre du jour, c'est-à-dire l'élection du Président indépendant du Conseil.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Tenemos básicamente la misma consulta que hicimos antes. Al menos nuestra Delegación no va a poder estar conectada a las 15.00 de la tarde porque vamos a estar camino a la sede de la FAO, entonces, quería saber si necesitan quorum para poder abrir la sesión. Gracias.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Thank you, Chairperson. I would like to offer two comments. One is indeed there is always a requirement for a quorum for the Plenary to be undertaken. And secondly there is no obligation for Members to be connected by Zoom in the Plenary Session while casting their votes. Thank you.

M. Fidèle SAMBASSI KHAKESSA (Democratic Republic of Congo)

Excusez-moi de reprendre encore une fois la parole. J'aimerais savoir, puisque nous avons été rétablis pour le droit de vote, à quelle heure nous pouvons aller voter ? Parce qu'il y a une heure, un calendrier qui avait été établi pour aller voter au niveau personnel à la FAO.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Thank you, Sir. Indeed, for the three Members whose voting rights have just been restored by the Conference, we will be in touch directly and bilaterally for their time slots for voting under item 6, whether that be in Rome or in New York. Thank you.

VICE-PRÉSIDENT

Merci Monsieur le Secrétaire Général. Je ne vois plus d'autres voix. Nous nous retrouvons à 15 heures pour la plénière qui considère le point 6, à savoir l'élection du Président indépendant du Conseil. Merci.

The meeting is suspended from 13:43 to 15:02

La séance est suspendue de 13 h 43 à 15 h 02

Se suspende la sesión de las 13.43 a las 15.02

Item 6. Appointment of the Independent Chairperson of the Council**Point 6. Nomination du Président indépendant du Conseil****Tema 6. Nombramiento del Presidente Independiente del Consejo****VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen and welcome to the Eighth Plenary session of the Conference. We now move on to Item 6, the *Appointment of the Independent Chairperson of the Council*.

Under Article V, paragraph 2 of the Constitution, the Conference appoints the Independent Chairperson of the Council. We have three candidates for the post, as mentioned in document C 2021/9, namely Mr Mario Arvelo Caamaño from Dominican Republic, Mr Zoltán Kálmán from Hungary and Mr Hans Hoogeveen from the Netherlands.

We will now proceed with the vote by secret ballot for the election of the Independent Chairperson of the Council. As decided on Monday, the secret ballot election will take place through an in-person vote by appointment in FAO Headquarters and in the United Nations office in New York. I shall now call on the election officer to give further details regarding the voting procedure and to ascertain the number of delegates present. Election officer, you have the floor.

ELECTION OFFICER

Thank you very much, Chair. Under Rule XII, paragraph 11 of the General Rules of the Organization, in any election for one elective place other than that of the Director-General, if the candidate fails on the first ballot to obtain a majority of the votes cast, successive ballots shall be taken until a candidate obtains such a majority.

In an election for one elective place in which there are more than two candidates, the candidate having received the lowest number of votes at each ballot shall be eliminated.

In accordance with Rule XII, paragraph 2(a), the quorum required for this election is the majority of the Member Nations of the Organization. This means that at least 98 Member Nations must be represented at this time.

As the Chairperson has mentioned, the Conference decided on Monday that the secret ballot election for the appointment of the Independent Chairperson of the Council at this 42nd Session of the Conference will take place through the alternative voting procedure of physical in-person voting by appointment taking place in the FAO Headquarters and in the United Nations office in New York.

I will now outline the procedure for this alternative voting arrangement for the election of the ICC through an in-person secret ballot by appointment in Rome and New York. Voting delegates should make their way to the FAO Headquarters or United Nations office building in accordance with your voting location. You will have received your allotted time slot via email and through the Members' Gateway and Members have been asked to arrive ten minutes before this time slot in order to ensure efficient in-person voting processes in both locations.

In the event of a second ballot, voting delegates will be contacted through various means, including the Zoom meeting of the Conference, a notification through the mobile app of the Conference and a message to their mobile phones, if a telephone number has been provided.

We will now establish quorum in line with Rule XII.2 (a) and we will do so in this Zoom meeting. We will do this now.

I am advised that there are 117 Members currently in the Zoom meeting, which means that we have more than the 98 required for the quorum and we can proceed to the vote by secret ballot for the appointment of the Independent Chairperson of the Council.

Delegates will arrive in groups of 15 with their allotted time slot of ten minutes in Rome. They will proceed to the voting area in order of entry where they will collect the ballot paper. Each voter will enter a booth where he or she will have to express his or her preference by marking with a cross the name of the selected candidate. When exiting the booth, the voter will fold the ballot paper and deposit it in the box at the exit of the voting area. Delegates are required to vote for one candidate only.

On the basis of Rule XII, paragraph 4 (b) (iii) of the General Rules of the Organization, ballot papers deposited in the ballot box as blank ballots shall be recorded as abstentions. It should also be noted that in accordance with the same rule, ballot papers shall carry no other notation or mark, other than those required for the purpose of indicating the vote. Under the same rule, should any delegate invalidate his or her ballot paper, he or she may request a new blank ballot paper from the elections office before leaving the voting area. The invalidated ballot paper shall remain in the custody of the Elections Officer.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

May I remind Members that in accordance with paragraph 14 of Rule XII of the General Rules of the Organization, once voting has commenced, no delegate or representative may interrupt the voting, except to raise a point of order in connection with the vote.

Also in accordance with Rule XII, the Chairperson of the Conference appoints two tellers from the delegates or representatives or their alternates. May I now ask the delegates of Australia and Indonesia to proceed to the voting area in Rome and New York?

The vote is open. The meeting will not continue until all delegates have voted and the voting areas are broadcast on the Zoom platform.

Vote

Vote

Votación

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Voting has been completed in both locations.

In accordance with the Rule XII.10 (g), the tellers and the scrutineers appointed by the candidates will now proceed to the counting rooms in Rome and New York.

The tellers, with the assistance of the officers in charge of elections, will proceed to count the votes.

We will temporarily suspend this meeting while the votes are being counted.

The meeting is suspended from 17:04 to 19:04

La séance est suspendue de 17 h 04 à 19 h 04

Se suspende la sesión de las 17.04 a las 19.04

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, we will now continue with Item 6, *Appointment of the Independent Chairperson of the Council*. I will now read the result of the ballot, which is the overall result of the votes cast by delegations in Rome and New York.

Ballot papers deposited: 176;

Abstention: 1;

Defective Ballot: 0.

The number of votes cast is 175.

With this, a majority of 88 was needed.

The results are as follows:

Mr Zoltán Kálmán, Hungary, with 46 votes.

Mr Mario Arvelo Caamaño, Dominican Republic, with 53 votes.

Mr Hans Hoogeveen, Netherlands, with 76 votes.

Currently Mr Zoltán Kálmán of Hungary is eliminated.

We will now proceed with a second ballot with two candidates, Mr Mario Arvelo Caamaño from Dominican Republic, and Hans Hoogeveen, Netherlands. I give the floor to the Election Officer to explain how we will proceed.

REPORT OF BALLOT RÉSULTAT DU SCRUTIN RESULTADO DE LA VOTACIÓN	1	NOMINATION OF THE INDEPENDENT CHAIRPERSON OF THE COUNCIL DESIGNATION DU PRÉSIDENT INDÉPENDANT DU CONSEIL DESIGNACIÓN DEL PRESIDENTE INDEPENDIENTE DEL CONSEJO 2021-2023
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1. Ballot papers deposited Bulletins déposés Papeletas depositadas		176
2. Abstentions Abstentions Abstenciones		1
3. Defective ballots Bulletins nuls Papeletas defectuosas		0

4. Votes cast Suffrages exprimés Votos emitidos	175
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5. Majority Majorité Mayoría	88
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Elected – Élus – Elegidos	Not elected – Pas élus – No elegidos	Eliminated – Éliminé – Eliminado
	Mr Mario Arvelo Caamaño (Dominican Republic) 53 Mr Hans Hoogeveen (Netherlands) 76	Mr Zoltán Kálmán (Hungary) 46

Tellers/Scrutateurs/Escurtadores

Mr Benjamin Craig (Australia)
 Signature *B. Craig*
 Firma

Mr Caka Alverdi Awal (Indonesia)
 Signature *Alverdi*
 Firma

Date
 Fecha 17/06/2021

Mr Ilja Betlem, CSG
Ilja Betlem

Elections Officer
 Fonctionnaire électoral
 El oficial de elecciones

ELECTION OFFICER

The second round will be conducted in the same manner as the first round. Voting delegates will now start to receive a message with the allotted time slots for their Member for the second ballot. The first slot will start at 19:30 Rome Time and 13:30 New York time. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Unless one of the two remaining candidates wishes to withdraw, we will proceed to the second round of balloting. No reaction?

Let us proceed to the second round of voting. May I ask the tellers to proceed to the voting area. I give the floor to the Election Officer.

ELECTION OFFICER

I do not have further comments to add. Just to underline that the first voting slot will be in the same order as the previous voting slots, and the first voting slot will start at 19:30 hours.

We will follow the same groupings of 15 voters per ten minutes, this has worked well in the first round and we will follow the same for the second ballot. Updated voting slots are being sent as we speak. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

We will allow some time for the first group of delegates to reach the location where the vote is taking place. Secretary-General, I think that the meeting will be suspended.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

That is correct, sir, the meeting is now suspended until the vote is conducted, and for the counting, and then it will resume under your chairpersonship once the second round of votes has been counted.

The meeting is suspended from 19:10 to 19:35

La séance est suspendue de 19 h 10 à 19 h 35

Se suspende la sesión de las 19.10 a las 19.35

Vote

Vote

Votación

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I would like to provide you with some updated information under Item 6. Voting has now been completed for the second round ballot, both in Rome and in New York. Chairperson, you may wish to direct the tellers and the other interested parties to the counting room.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Secretary-General. Now voting has been completed in both locations. In accordance with Rule XII the tellers and the scrutineers appointed by the candidates will now proceed to the counting rooms in Rome and New York. The tellers, with the assistance of the officers in charge of election, will proceed to count the votes in both locations. We will temporarily suspend the meeting while the vote is being counted. Thank you.

Secretary-General, any other comments?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Your instruction is well noted and the Session, as per your guidance, is now suspended. Thank you.

Ms Agnes Rosari DEWI (Indonesia)

Thank you, Mr Chair. I would just like clarification from the Secretariat whether we will reconvene again tonight and what is the plan for tomorrow? Thank you.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Thank you, Chairperson. Tonight the Plenary will reconvene for the Chairperson to read the results of the second ballot of voting and to complete Item 6. Then the Plenary will adjourn and reconvene tomorrow at 14.30 to adopt the Reports of Commission I and Commission II, as well as the Report of the Conference. Thank you.

The meeting is suspended from 21:40 to 22:53

La séance est suspendue de 21 h 40 à 22 h 53

Se suspende la sesión de las 21.40 a las 22.53

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

We will now continue with item 6, Appointment of the Independent Chairperson of the Council. I would now read the results of the ballot, which is the overall result of the votes cast by delegates in Rome and New York.

Ballot papers deposited: 169.

Abstentions: 3.

Defective ballots: 0.

The number of votes cast is: 166. With this, a majority of 84 is needed.

The results are as follows:

Mr Mario Arvelo Caamaño (Dominican Republic): 62 votes.

Mr Hans Hoogeveen (Netherlands): 104 votes.

I would like to congratulate Mr Hans Hoogeveen for his election.

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, does any delegate wish to take the floor?

REPORT OF BALLOT RÉSULTAT DU SCRUTIN RESULTADO DE LA VOTACIÓN	2	NOMINATION OF THE INDEPENDENT CHAIRPERSON OF THE COUNCIL DESIGNATION DU PRÉSIDENT INDÉPENDANT DU CONSEIL DESIGNACIÓN DEL PRESIDENTE INDEPENDIENTE DEL CONSEJO 2021-2023
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1. Ballot papers deposited Bulletins déposés Papeletas depositadas	169
2. Abstentions Abstentions Abstenciones	3
3. Defective ballots Bulletins nuls Papeletas defectuosas	0

4. Votes cast Suffrages exprimés Votos emitidos	166
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5. Majority Majorité Mayoría	84
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Elected – Élus – Elegidos		Not elected – Pas élus – No elegidos		Eliminated – Eliminés – Eliminado	
Mr Hans Hoogeveen (Netherlands)	104	Mr Mario Arvelo Caamaño (Dominican Republic)	62		

Tellers/Scrutateurs/Escurtadores

Mr Benjamin Craig (Australia)

Signature

Firma

Mr Caka Alverdi Awal (Indonesia)

Signature

Firma

Date

Fecha

17/06/2021

Mr Ilija Betlem, CSG

Elections Officer

Fonctionnaire électoral

El oficial de elecciones

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Esta elección era muy importante porque reemplazar a Khalid Mehboob no es una tarea fácil. Los tres candidatos Hans, Zoltán y Mario eran realmente muy buenos y, en primer lugar, quisiera reconocer la dignidad que han tenido Mario Arvelo y Zoltán Kálmán en esta competencia electoral, que fue transparente y que respetó las buenas prácticas. Y, de paso para el final, a mi estimado Hans Hoogeveen, el experimentado Hans, realmente es el que demostró haber logrado el mayor nivel de consenso dentro de la membresía y, por lo tanto, lo menos que podemos hacer es congratularnos de su liderazgo.

Esperamos seriamente que pueda construir desde la vara alta, que nos deja Khalid Mehboob, un Consejo de la FAO, una Organización en representación de todos los Miembros de manera absolutamente más eficaz y una FAO más fuerte, una FAO mejor.

Querido Hans, vas a poder contar absolutamente con Argentina y también con el G77+China en pleno, porque todos queremos los mismos objetivos y estamos seguros que con tu experiencia, seguramente el consejo de la FAO será liderado de una manera que será positiva para todos los Miembros. Permíteme de manera virtual hacer un aplauso por tu triunfo.

His Excellency Bommakanti RAJENDER (India)

India is honoured to make this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We appreciate the role of the outgoing Independent Chairperson of the Council, Mr Khalid Mehboob, for his able leadership over the last four years and we wish him all the success in his future endeavours.

We congratulate the newly elected Independent Chairperson of the Council, Mr Hans Hoogeveen of the Netherlands, and we hope under his leadership the Council will conduct its business in a transparent and inclusive way. We look forward to working with the newly elected ICC in future and wish him all the success in the new role.

Sr. Mario ARVELO CAAMAÑO (República Dominicana)

Quiero unirme a las palabras que acaban de expresar los embajadores de Argentina y el Señor Rajender de India, quien habló en nombre del grupo asiático. En primer lugar, para por supuesto agradecer el gran sacrificio que ha hecho durante cuatro años nuestro Presidente independiente del Consejo, Khalid Mehboob, quien concluye así, entiendo que el día de mañana al final de la Conferencia, su gestión como Presidente independiente del Consejo.

El ejemplo del Señor Mehboob a la cabeza del Consejo es lo que me inspiró a correr por la posición. Quiero decirle a usted Presidente, y por su intermedio a toda la Membresía de la Organización aquí en esta Conferencia, lo que dije en ocasión de las reuniones que tuvimos con los diferentes Grupos Regionales a lo largo de esta campaña. Dije y repito aquí, que el Consejo de la FAO estará en buenas manos, cualquiera sea el Candidato beneficiado con el voto mayoritario de los Miembros.

Así que, reconociendo la gran tarea, la gran carrera desplegada por Zoltán Kálmán, nuestro querido colega de Hungría, y felicitando de manera muy especial a nuestro querido, viejo amigo y colega también, Hans Hoogeveen, de Países Bajos, quien ha sido favorecido por el voto mayoritario de los Miembros y quien tendrá, como han dicho el Embajador de Argentina y el Señor Rajender, la responsabilidad de calzarse los zapatos de Khalid Mehboob en la dirección de los debates del Consejo de la Organización.

Va a él, todo el apoyo mío personal, el apoyo de República Dominicana y pido también a todos aquellos que votaron por la Candidatura nuestra, en la primera y segunda ronda que vuelquen hacia Hans todo su apoyo. Porque la FAO necesita, la FAO requiere de unidad. La FAO es una Organización a la cual pertenecemos todos y todos estamos comprometidos con fortalecerla día a día.

De manera, Hans, que vaya a para ti mi abrazo fraterno. Espero que los inconvenientes de la pandemia no postergue mucho el poder darte ese abrazo físicamente, nosotros somos vecinos, tenemos nuestras oficinas apenas a unos metros. Así que, vamos a tomarnos ese café celebratorio muy pronto. Felicidades de nuevo, gracias Presidente.

Ms Margaret TWOMEY (Australia)

As the representative for the Southwest Pacific on the Council, Australia extends our sincere congratulations to Mr Hans Hoogeveen for his appointment as Independent Chairperson of the Council. Australia has had the pleasure of witnessing Mr Hoogeveen's hard work and dedication, as well as his highly crafted chairing skills in the past. We very much look forward to the opportunity of working together in the future.

Australia would also like to recognize Mr Mehboob for his outstanding effort as Chair of Council over recent years. In particular, we applaud the incredible stamina and patience he has demonstrated throughout some exceptionally long meetings during the ongoing pandemic. We extend our sincere thanks to him and wish him all the best for a well-earned retirement.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to congratulate Ambassador Hoogeveen on this election as Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council.

Dear Hans, all the best for the coming years. You can count on our support and I would also like to thank the other two candidates for their great campaign, their candidacy and their preparedness to stand for election.

Last, but not least, of course, many thanks to the outgoing ICC, my dear friend Khalid Mehboob, who was steering FAO through a very difficult year. Dear Khalid, thank you very much for that. Thank you for your dedication and all the best for your future endeavours. We are in good hands now with the new ICC and we are looking forward to working with you closely.

Mr Zoltán KÁLMÁN (Hungary)

Dear Excellencies, distinguished colleagues and friends. Let me start by congratulating Ambassador Hoogeveen on his election. I am confident that he will be a very good ICC, serving the interests of all member states and making FAO Council more efficient and effective.

I wish to thank Mario Arvelo for his kind words and for the transparent campaign we had together.

I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to you all for your encouragement and support. I am proud and humbled for your trust and confidence, for being considered for this position. I also thank my Government and my colleagues for their support provided to my campaign.

Before concluding, I wish to pay tribute to the outgoing ICC, Khalid Mehboob, for his tireless efforts, his wisdom and patience and I wish him all the best in his future life. I wish the new ICC, the Director-General and the staff of FAO and to all of you, FAO members, much success in your joint efforts to reach our shared goals, eliminate poverty and achieve zero hunger.

Mr Yousef JUHAIL (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

Firstly, I would like to congratulate each and every one of us. It has been a great day. We have been able to return to our Organization and see our colleagues face to face. We would also like to congratulate the newly elected Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC). He takes on this position during a challenging time.

Dear Hans, you will be a wonderful captain, leading this Council. Khalid Mehboob has done a wonderful job during his tenure. We are extremely grateful to Mr Mehboob for all of the work he has done during what must be said is one of, if not the most difficult period to have ever led the FAO Council.

We congratulate once again Mr Hoogeveen and we wish every success to him and we also wish every success to the other two candidates as well. From the Near East Group, we would like to say that we would like to be able to vote three times in order to be able to support all three of these wonderful candidates. That would have been wonderful, but unfortunately we can only elect one person and so we have elected our dear colleague, Hans.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

Permettez-moi de féliciter très chaleureusement Monsieur Hans Hoogeveen, nouvellement élu en tant que Président indépendant du Conseil. Je voudrais également saluer chaleureusement les deux autres candidats, Monsieur Zoltán Kálmán, et Monsieur Mario Arvelo, et naturellement, le Président indépendant du Conseil, Monsieur Khalid Mehboob, pour tous leurs efforts.

Le Président indépendant du Conseil joue un rôle essentiel à la FAO, nous le savons tous, et nous nous réjouissons que Hans Hoogeveen, un très grand connaisseur de l'organisation, remplisse cette fonction. Votre engagement auprès des états membres de la FAO sera très précieux pour continuer d'assurer le respect des règles fondamentales de la FAO, travailler à l'inclusivité de tous les membres, faciliter la recherche du consensus entre les membres et les échanges avec le Secrétariat.

La France se réjouit que votre élection ait aussi été l'occasion pour nous, comme l'a dit mon distingué collègue précédent, de nous retrouver en personne. C'est important pour garantir la bonne participation de tous les états membres et la bonnes fluidités de nos travaux.

Monsieur le Président, nos travaux dans les prochains mois seront denses, nous en sommes tous conscients. La FAO devra retrouver un fonction proche de la normalité, le contexte sanitaire à bouleversé nos méthodes de travail, mais il est désormais temps de revenir à une normalité. Nous nous réjouissons d'entamer cette nouvelle étape avec vous, et nous vous assurons de notre soutiens et du soutien de la France.

Enfin, je souhaiterais remercier le Secrétariat, et naturellement le Secrétaire général, pour toute l'organisation de ces élections, et je n'oublie pas bien sûr les collègues à New York, qui ont participé. Merci beaucoup. Et j'ai été ravie de rencontrer certains d'entre vous en personnes à la FAO et j'espère en rencontrer d'avantages tous les jours désormais.

Merci beaucoup et encore félicitations à Hans Hoogeveen.

Mr Mohammed Ahmed (Saudi Arabia) (Original Language Arabic)

It is a pleasure and honour for me to congratulate His Excellency Hans Hoogeveen. We wish him every success as he takes the reins as the Independent Chairperson of the Council. You have our full support, Mr Hoogeveen.

We would also like to thank the other candidates. We have no doubt that the other two candidates were also highly qualified candidates and, as my colleague from Kuwait said, we could easily have elected any one of these three excellent candidates.

We would like to also thank the outgoing ICC, Mr Mehboob. We have learned a lot from him over the years. A very big thanks to the outgoing ICC.

We would also like to thank the Secretariat for the wonderful job it has done in organizing this election. Thank you, once again, Chair, and we wish every success to the incoming ICC, Mr Hoogeveen.

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

I am speaking tonight on behalf of the North America Regional Group. First, we would like to extend our warm congratulations to Ambassador Hoogeveen. Hans, congratulations, and we very much look forward to your leadership and we look forward to partnership with you as we work collectively to strengthen this Organization. Congratulations.

We also want to extend our congratulations to Ambassador Arvelo and Ambassador Kálmán. Thank you for the time and the energy you put into your campaigns and for the many years of service you have given to the FAO.

Mr Mehboob, our Chair, I also want to express, on behalf of the North America Region, our thanks to you for your hard work over five plus decades for the FAO and especially for your most recent time as our Independent Chair of Council. Your dedication and energy and patience has inspired all of us, especially as you have led our Council through some of the most trying times in recent memories. I do not think I will ever forget the night, I think it was sometime around 1.00 a.m., when you said you had

the energy to keep going, though most of us were very tired and we just admire that. I wish you all the best for a happy and healthy retirement period.

I want to second some of the comments that were made earlier. It was wonderful to see so many of you today in person when I went to cast my vote. I really think things were organized in a very safe manner and I very much look forward to being able to convene in meetings in person at the FAO headquarters as soon as we can. I think that these connections that we have with one another really would benefit from seeing each other in person.

Finally, I just want to say thank you to the Secretariat for your efforts to organize the election process. Thank you to our elections officer and of course thanks to the FAO liaison office in New York.

Mr Kevin KHNG (Singapore)

On behalf of the Government of Singapore, we would first like to congratulate Mr Hans Hoogeveen on his appointment as the Independent Chairperson of the Council. Mr Hoogeveen, with your great vision, strong leadership, vast experience and focus on innovation and technology, we are confident that you will be able to guide the Council well in the coming years.

Finally, allow us to put on record our thanks to Mr Khalid Mehboob for his significant contribution during his tenure as the ICC.

Mme Espérance NDAYIZEYE (Burundi)

Je voudrais d'abord féliciter le nouveau Président du Conseil, Ambassadeur Hoogeveen, et lui souhaiter pleins succès. Je voudrais lui rassurer aussi le soutien du Burundi pour l'aide à conduire les destinées de nos états au sein de la FAO. Je voudrais aussi rendre hommage aux deux autres candidats qui ont fait preuve de sagesse, de courage et de dynamisme lors de leurs campagnes. Enfin, je voudrais saluer le travail qui a été abattu par le Président sortant du Conseil de la FAO, et lui souhaiter plein succès pour ses nouvelles fonctions.

Ms Marija MILIVOJEVIC (Sweden)

I wanted to thank all three candidates for making themselves available to us. The Members of FAO had the pleasure of being able to choose between three very able persons and any one of you would have made an excellent ICC. On behalf of the Nordic Countries, I want to thank you and I also want to particularly congratulate Hans Hoogeveen. We very much look forward to working with you in the coming years. We have a lot to do and we look forward to continuing the work of FAO.

We also want to take the opportunity to thank the outgoing ICC. He has done a tremendous job, particularly under the very difficult circumstances during the last year, with this virtual setting and new rules and procedures that we have all had to get accustomed to.

Thank you, very much, and congratulations to Hans again.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

The United Kingdom would like to join others in congratulating Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen on his election. We would also like to join others in thanking all of the candidates for the election and the Secretariat for a very efficient process. Thank you, really very much appreciated.

I would like to save my final comment for ICC Khalid Mehboob and to thank him for all his work, just as others have said, and particularly through the most trying of periods during the COVID pandemic. We really wish him the best for his future and, as others have said, we look forward to convening or being part of future Council meetings in person.

Ms Baoying ZHU (China) (Original language Chinese)

On behalf of the Chinese Government and on behalf of the Ambassador, I would like to congratulate Mr Hans Hoogeveen for his election as the ICC. I believe under your able leadership and great sense of coordination our work will be done in a successful manner and face all the challenges that we face, especially given the pandemic. We would like to commit to you our full support.

At the same time, we would like to thank the other two candidates. They are both very competent. We should also thank Mr Mehboob. We would like to thank him for his contribution to the work of FAO over the years and we wish him all the best in his future endeavour.

I would also like to thank the Secretariat for their great work in organizing this almost perfect election.

Mr José Alexandre FERNANDES RODRIGUES (Portugal)

I am speaking on behalf of Portugal. As you know, we are in the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Let us congratulate Mr Hans Hoogeveen. Hans, thank you, we want to congratulate you for being elected the Independent Chair of the Council. It will be an honour and a great pleasure to continue to serve the Organization with your wisdom and leadership. We are ready to continue to work with you and with all of the members, looking for consensus, which is one of the major assets of this Organization.

We had three excellent candidates for this election. One word for Mario and Zoltán. We are very thankful and very grateful for your readiness to serve the Organization. We are also continuing to count with your wisdom in the future.

Mr Chair, allow us to use this opportunity to thank the Secretariat for the outstanding work they are doing in this new, very challenging situation and of course we want to thank all the other people who are making this Conference possible. I think, from our side, it is an outstanding job. Thank you, very much.

We thank the Chair of the Conference and through you the other Vice- Chairs of the Conference, the Director-General, the Secretary-General of the Conference and all the people who are working to make this possible.

Finally, a special word to Mr Khalid Mehboob, the Independent Chair, is filling his job. Many thanks, sir, for all your job. A great job in this challenging situation. We are very grateful for that.

Again congratulations, Hans, looking forward to working with you and congratulations to all members. You are the Independent Chair of all of us.

Ms Jackline YONGA (Kenya)

On behalf of the Africa Regional Group, I want to take the opportunity first to recognize that we had three wonderful candidates who had very strong CVs, but only one can win the game. I take the opportunity to congratulate Hans Hoogeveen for having marked the winner. We promise to work with the new ICC. He has a wealth of experience. He has a good, strong CV and we promise to continue to support him, as we have supported the previous ICC.

To the Secretary-General, we also want to appreciate your role in organizing the elections. It was excellent. We found it very smooth. We are glad to have seen each other face to face. During the Council we did not manage to see ourselves, so it was a very good opportunity for us to interact. Now, even at this late hour, you can see all of us looking at little bit brighter because we had the opportunity to see FAO once again.

To the entire FAO management, it was a fantastic way of ending the day, especially with a smooth running of two elections. It is not an easy thing for anybody who has done an election anywhere. We appreciated the smooth transition within which we did the first and the second rounds.

To Mr Mehboob, Your Excellency, your resilience, your wealth of experience is admirable by all of us. I did not know you started working in FAO before some of us started their careers. It is fantastic to have learned from your wisdom and we believe even the incoming ICC will also have learned quite a lot of that patience when you have difficult times to moderate in a fantastic way. We want to remember you as you continue into your next retirement endeavours. We wish you the very best and continue the wisdom and we believe we will still have time to tap into your wisdom.

I take the opportunity to thank you all, very much, and wish you all the best for the remaining time tomorrow.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Thailand)

I woke up in the middle of the night from Bangkok and I also would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen from the Netherlands for being elected as the new ICC of the Organization. Thailand would like to express our appreciation and we would like to inform you that we are ready to work with you for a better organization and for better food security and nutrition for all.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our friends, Ambassador Mario Arvelo from the Dominican Republic and Ambassador Zoltán Kálmán from Hungary. We know that this year is very special for the Organization because we have had three highly qualified candidates running the campaign for the ICC. I am sure that you will continue providing your support, your knowledge and wisdom to the work of the Organization in the future.

I wish to express our respect and also sincere gratitude to Mr Khalid Mehboob, our outgoing ICC, for his leadership and his wisdom during his Chairmanship. We have learned a lot from him and I think he has done a lot for us.

Last, but not least, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretariat and the Secretary-General of the Conference for your great support to the work of all of us here and really thank you because I know that it is not easy during these difficult times of COVID-19, but you did a great job.

Sra. Maria Carolina CARRANZA NÚÑEZ (Perú)

El Perú desea expresar las mas sinceras felicitaciones al Embajador Hans Hoogeveen por ser elegido como Presidente independiente del Consejo. Desde ya cuenta todo nuestro apoyo, así mismo queremos agradecer a los otros dos Candidatos que han emprendido una campaña esforzada, transparente, democrática y les agradecemos a ellos por su participación, al Embajador Zoltán Kálmán y al Embajador Mario Arvelo. De igual forma queremos resaltar todo el esfuerzo extraordinario y el reconocimiento, el trabajo del Presidente del Consejo Saliente el Doctor Khalid Mehboob, a él todo nuestro reconocimiento.

Y, finalmente, quisiéramos agradecer a la Secretaría por tan excelente organización de la votación el día de hoy en condiciones extraordinarias. Sin duda, ahora me gustaría dar estas palabras como presidencia del grupo de Países de América Latina y el Caribe. Estoy segura que se unen a esta breve declaración de saludo y felicitación y éxito para el nuevo Presidente independiente del Consejo.

His Excellency Said HUSSEIN IID (Somalia)

I would like to congratulate Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen for his appointment as the new ICC Chair. I wish him great success in his new duties. Please be assured that you have our support and the support of the entire members of the Council. I hope, and I am sure, that this new position will benefit from your rich experience, your talent and your wisdom.

I would like also to appreciate the other candidates for their professional conduct and their nice speech they have given. I am sure that FAO will benefit from their experience and they will continue to perform their other duties.

I would also like to thank and bid farewell to the outgoing ICC Mr Mehboob for his long list of achievements and his long contribution to FAO and also to humanity.

Finally, I would like to thank the Secretary-General, the entire Secretariat of FAO for their very professional and outstanding work they have done and for conducting the elections in a peaceful and transparent manner. I wish them very success in whatever endeavour they do.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

First of all, allow me to thank you, Chair, for your patience and your wisdom in chairing the session for the whole day today. My thanks to you.

I would like to congratulate Hans for his winning of the ICC elections. You have our support and of course you have our dedication to your next term of service.

To the other two candidates, I would like to thank you for your service and for your dedication and I am sure that you will continue to serve FAO in different forms.

I also would like to thank the Secretary-General, the Director-General, and all the staff, who have done a tremendous job today in terms of organizing very smooth and efficient elections.

Finally, to my dear friend Khalid, who is leaving us, I must thank you from the bottom of my heart for your patience, for your perseverance and of course for conducting us through a very difficult time over the past year. You have been excellent and we will miss you and I hope we will continue to meet you and have a cup of coffee the next time we meet.

Finally, I would like to again echo the call by Ambassador Cherniak of the Group of 77 and China. Chairman, it is time for us all to come together, regardless of positions today, because I think the election has spoken and now we shall give our full support to Hans in terms of carrying out his duties for the betterment of FAO.

Mr Wakaabu SIRAGI (Uganda)

I would like, first of all, to thank you, Mr Chairman, for ably steering this meeting and taking us through this very important exercise and for staying up late.

I would like to congratulate Mr Hooegeven and the Netherlands, the country that sponsored him. We have seen Mr Hooegeven in action. We have no doubt in our mind that he will do a very good job for this Organization. We should be proud tonight to have a candidate of Mr Hooegeven's calibre. Congratulations, Mr Hooegeven. Congratulations, Netherlands.

We would like to thank the other candidates from Hungary and Dominican Republic. They were very good candidates and any of them could have done the job. We thank them for having offered themselves for leadership and they have once again demonstrated that this is an Organization that is credible globally and would attract leadership whenever it requires leadership.

We thank the Secretariat for organizing a seamless exercise and for the opportunity of physical voting. We were able to meet and see each other face to face. It was a good opportunity and the precautionary measures put in place to guard against the spread of Coronavirus were fantastic. We congratulate the Secretariat for the seamless organization.

Last, but not least, we would like to thank the outgoing Independent Chairperson of the Council, Mr Mehboob. He has done a wonderful job. We heard him say emotional words and we cannot wait to hear him speak once more tonight. His demeanour, his ability to steer meetings and at times in very tricky circumstances have been demonstrated and have found manifestation in well negotiated outcomes in FAO. We thank him.

Ms Eudora Hilda QUARTEY KORANTENG (Ghana)

Thank you, Mr Chair, for your work in steering this Conference so ably. I take the floor to appreciate all three candidates for a great campaign for the position of ICC, all three being eminently qualified for the position [XX] FAO is based. [XX] capabilities will enable him to take up this mantle in furtherance of FAO's mandate for its global reach and he is assured of our support at all times.

Our congratulations and best wishes go to the outgoing ICC, Mr Mehboob, whose great work has been so well recognized.

I will conclude by thanking and recognizing the FAO family, the Director-General, the Secretary-General and all the staff for a great Conference and great work in getting these elections so well organized. Congratulations and thank you all.

Ms Liron MAOZ (Israel)

I am representing Israel and I am representing the ERG. We are the Chair of the ERG and as the Chair of the ERG we would like to congratulate our dear colleague, His Excellency Hans Hooegeven, for being elected as the new ICC. From our close collaboration, we are confident he would lead FAO to a great achievement.

We also would like to thank ICC Khalid Mehboob for all his hard work in the last few years leading FAO.

INDEPENDENT CHAIRPERSON OF THE COUNCIL

I also wish to extend my warm and sincere congratulations to my friend Hans on his election as ICC. I worked with Hans when he was chairing the Programme Committee and I am sure that with his knowledge and experience of FAO he will provide excellent leadership to the Council and will also be an excellent bridge between members and Management to bring all viewpoints together to achieve consensus decision making. Mr Chair, as we all know, consensus decision making is the strength of the Organization.

I also want to thank Zoltán and Mario, two people I have known for many years as well, who were also excellent candidates. I was very happy to hear their positive views following the election.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Secretariat, particular the Secretary-General and his team, for organizing this election in a very efficient manner.

Finally, Mr Chairperson, I wish to thank members for their kind words addressed to me. I thank everybody for their support over the four years I was the ICC and it was that support which enabled us to achieve some successes together.

INDEPENDENT CHAIRPERSON OF THE COUNCIL ELECT

Thank you, very much, Mr Vice-Chairman. First of all, I would like to thank you for your leadership, guiding us through this election process today. I am overwhelmed and quite emotional by the election today and by the trust and support given by the members to me for this important job of Independent Chair of the FAO Council.

I would like to thank my dear friends and highly qualified two colleagues, Mario Arvelo and Zoltán Kálmán. They are high qualified and the three of us were and are ready to stand up for the Organization, to make the Organization better, to support the membership in the challenge we are facing.

I think, after the elections, it is important now to unite, to work shoulder to shoulder for the Organization. I want to be your inclusive, your innovative Independent Chairperson and especially I want to work closely with you, with the Director-General and with all partners worldwide to make sure that we are going to achieve our ultimate goal of a world without hunger. For that we have to work shoulder to shoulder.

We have to overcome our differences. We have to make the Council the most important, effective body, not only of FAO, but of the United Nations. We can only do that together. Listening to you, listening to the support you are giving me, I have full trust that we can do that together.

I will not speak long because it is already late, but I also would very much like to thank the Secretary-General and his team for their able guidance and work being done today and the last couple of months for this Conference and for these elections. When I came twice in the building today, it was a feeling of coming home again, coming home in the building where we have to come together again, not via a screen, but working together to make sure that we work together to raise the profile of FAO, to make sure that we work shoulder to shoulder, to come closer to our ultimate dream, a world without hunger, leaving nobody behind.

Of course I applaud Khalid. I have worked for so many years, I have worked for the last four years as Chair of the Programme Committee, but I've known Khalid for 27 years and he is not only a more than excellent Chair of the Council, but he gave his working life to FAO. Who can say that he gives his working life, his career to the delegation of FAO and trying to get a world without hunger? It is very difficult to step in for the Council, but I will do it with all my energy, with all my passion, with all my dedication to serve the membership, to serve the Director-General and his staff, but certainly to serve everybody who needs it the most so that we can really get more action on the ground.

Thank you so much.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Thank you, sir. Now we have come to the end of today's proceedings with this item 6 in the plenary. The Plenary will reconvene tomorrow, Friday 18 June, at 14:30 Rome time to adopt the Reports of the Commissions I and II and the Report of the 42nd Session of the Conference. Thank you, sir.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Secretary-General. Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, this brings us to the end of our work for this morning. As the Secretary-General said, the plenary session will reconvene tomorrow at 14:30. The Eighth Plenary Meeting is adjourned.

Sra. Tamara VILLANUEVA (Chile)

Quisiera saber, ¿qué va a pasar, vamos a tener sesiones de la Comisiones I y II en la mañana y a qué hora partirían? Dado lo tarde que es, preferiría saber qué nos espera temprano.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

The only meeting left in the Conference now is the meeting of the Plenary tomorrow at 14:30 hours. There the Commissions will adopt their own reports in the Plenary meeting; and then Plenary will adopt those Commission Reports as well, and then the Plenary will adopt the Report of the Conference. Starting at 14:30 hours tomorrow.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Secretary-General. The Plenary Session is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 23:53 hours

La séance est levée à 23 h 53

Se levanta la sesión a las 23.53

CONFERENCE CONFERENCE CONFERENCIA

<p>Forty-second Session Quarante et deuxième session 42.º período de sesiones</p>
<p>Virtual Meeting, 14-18 June 2021 Réunion Virtuelle, 14-18 juin 2021 Reunión Virtual, 14-18 de junio de 2021</p>
<p>NINTH PLENARY MEETING NEUVIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE NONA SESIÓN PLENARIA</p>
<p>18 June 2021</p>

The Ninth Meeting was opened at 14:39 hours
Mr Gabriel Mbaïrobe,
Vice-Chairperson of the Conference, presiding

La neuvième séance est ouverte à 14 h 39
sous la présidence de M. Gabriel Mbaïrobe,
Vice-Président de la Conférence

Se abre la nona reunión a las 14.39
bajo la presidencia de la Sr. Gabriel Mbaïrobe,
Vicepresidente de la Conferencia

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las correcciones a: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

**ADOPTION OF THE REPORT
ADOPTION DU RAPPORT
APROBACIÓN DEL INFORME**

VICE-PRÉSIDENT

Je déclare ouverte la neuvième séance plénière. Il s'agit de la dernière séance plénière de la 42e session de la Conférence de la FAO.

**ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF COMMISSION I
ADOPTION DU RAPPORT DE LA COMMISSION I
APROBACIÓN DEL INFORME DE LA COMISIÓN I**

VICE-PRÉSIDENT

Nous allons débiter cet après-midi avec au premier point l'adoption de son rapport par la Commission I. Je voudrais pour cela donner la parole à la Présidente de la Commission I, Madame l'Ambassadrice Eudora Hilda Quartey Koranteng.

Ms Eudora Hilda QUARTEY KORANTENG (Chairperson of Commission I)

Dear colleagues, good morning, good afternoon and good evening to you all. It is a pleasure for me to convene this session as Commission I for the adoption of our Report.

I would like to thank you all again for entrusting me with the responsibility of chairing this Commission. I would also like to thank you all for your constructive interventions and productive discussions. At this stage, I would now like to invite the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee of Commission I, Mr Don Syme from New Zealand, to present the Report.

Mr Donald Geoffrey SYME (Chairperson of the Drafting Committee of Commission I)

Dear colleagues, good afternoon from Rome. I am pleased, as Chairperson of the Drafting Committee of Commission I, to present our Report for your consideration.

First of all, I would like to thank and congratulate Her Excellency, Ambassador Eudora Hilda Quartey Koranteng. Her leadership and smooth conduction of the Sessions greatly facilitated the work of the Drafting Committee, along with the very positive and flexible approach of the Members during the Session.

I would also like to thank our Drafting Committee Members in Commission I. Their constructive and collaborative spirit helped make this the shortest Drafting Committee Session I have ever chaired and participated in, so thank you very much. Finally, my appreciation to the Secretary and her team, and to the interpreters for their assistance and availability during the meeting.

With this, Madame Chairperson, and dear colleagues, I would like to invite you to adopt the Report that you have in front of you *en bloc*.

Ms Eudora Hilda QUARTEY KORANTENG (Chairperson of Commission I)

Thank you, Mr Don Syme, for your kind words and presentation. I would like to invite the Commission, that is Commission I, to adopt the Report *en bloc*.

I see no hands up asking for the floor for any interventions or comments. I would, therefore, thank you all. The Report is adopted.

***Adopted
Adopté
Aprobado***

I would like to thank you all very much for your interventions, for the spirit of cooperation and, of course, my big thanks go to the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee of this

Commission. With that, I would like to close the deliberations of Commission I. Once again, thank you all very much.

**ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF COMMISSION II
ADOPTION DU RAPPORT DE LA COMMISSION II
APROBACIÓN DEL INFORME DE LA COMISIÓN II**

VICE-PRÉSIDENT

Merci Madame pour le travail accompli. Nous allons passer à l'adoption du rapport de la Commission II. Je cède la Présidence au Président de la Commission II, Monsieur Benito Santiago Jiménez Sauma, pour que la Commission II puisse adopter son rapport.

Mr Benito Santiago JIMÉNEZ SAUMA (Chairperson of Commission II)

Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon to all of you, and I am pleased to open the meeting of Commission II. I will give the floor to Mr Thanawat Tiensin, the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, to report on his proceedings and on the preparation of the Report of Commission II that is before us today.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Chairperson of the Drafting Committee of Commission II)

Good evening from Bangkok. Thank you, again, for allowing me to present the outcome of the Drafting Committee of Commission II at this Commission for your consideration. First of all, I would like to thank Mr Chairperson, Mr Benito Santiago Jiménez Sauma, for your leadership and also you brought us to a great discussion, a successful and productive discussion during the meeting.

I would like to express my appreciation to the Drafting Committee which comprised Australia, Brazil, Chile, China, Egypt, France, Portugal, Russian Federation, United States of America, Zambia and also Thailand, as the Chairperson.

The Drafting Committee was convened on Wednesday, 16 June, starting at 17:30 hours and we managed to finalize the draft Report at 21:30 hours, which actually I think is not too late, more or less.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to all the Members of the Commission. Without your fruitful and productive discussions, we will not be able to present the draft Report to the Commission today. May I take this opportunity to propose to the Commission to adopt the Report *en bloc*.

Mr Benito Santiago JIMÉNEZ SAUMA (Chairperson of Commission II)

Thank you, Mr Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, for your Report. I recommend to adopt the Report of Commission II *en bloc*.

I see no requests from the floor. Thank you very much, the Report is adopted.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

Thank you very much, to all of you for your substantive participation in Commission II. We reached an agreement thanks to the flexibility of all of you. There were important discussions, but our unity prevailed. I thank you again and with this I close the meeting of Commission II and thank you for your participation.

VICE-PRÉSIDENT

Nous allons maintenant procéder à l'adoption du rapport des Commissions en séance plénière. Veuillez-vous assurer d'avoir les documents suivants devant vous : C 2021/I/REP, Commission I et C 2021/II/REP, Commission II. J'aimerais maintenant demander aux participants de la plénière s'ils souhaitent adopter ces deux rapports *en bloc* ?

Mr José Luis COELHO SILVA (Portugal)

With your indulgence, we understood that the revised version of the Report was just delivered by the delegates' portal. As you know, we are representing here the European Union and its 27 Member States. We did not have the proper time for looking at the final version of the Report. Therefore, with your indulgence, we would like to ask for a small amount of time for joining the meeting for 15 minutes, if you can go along with our request to see the last version of the Report and then come back to you. Thank you, sir, for your indulgence and for considering our request.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Secretary – General.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Perhaps as a way of clarification, the Conference in its Plenary Session is now looking to adopt the Reports of Commission I and Commission II. These Reports were circulated on Wednesday. That is the point that is in front of the Plenary now.

Mr José Luis COELHO SILVA (Portugal)

Secretary-General, thank you very much. Mr Rakesh Muthoo, my dear friend, I was too fast. Thank you, you are absolutely right, I am sorry for interrupting the Session. Yes, we are going to adopt the Reports of Commissions I and II. In that case, I do not need the extra time, of course. We have the Report since Wednesday, as the Secretariat just said, but my question still remains for the whole Report of the Conference.

VICE-PRÉSIDENT

Merci, il en est ainsi décidé, la Conférence a adopté les rapports de la Commission I et de la Commission II.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

**ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF PLENARY
ADOPTION DU RAPPORT DE LA PLENIERE
APROBACIÓN DEL INFORME DE LA PLENARIA**

VICE-PRÉSIDENT

Nous passons maintenant à l'adoption du rapport de la 42e session de la Conférence, qui figure dans le document portant la note C 2021/REP (*For Adoption*). La Conférence souhaite-elle adopter ce rapport en bloc ?

Mr Dmitry YARMOLYUK (Belarus)

Distinguished Mr Chairperson, I would like not to comment on the Report now, but rather to use my right to reply following yesterday's debate on Agenda Item 7, which I was not able to do yesterday. Do I have your permission to proceed?

VICE-PRÉSIDENT

Monsieur le Secrétaire Général que dit la procédure.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Chairperson, I confirm. The Delegate has a right to reply.

Mr Dmitry YARMOLYUK (Belarus)

I will be brief. I thank you for giving me the floor to exercise my right to reply following the discussion on Agenda Item 7.

I repeat, I unfortunately was not able to do so yesterday during the debate itself. However, I would like to start now by expressing my gratitude to the Membership for investing their confidence with Belarus as the new Council Member as of the end of this Conference. This is the first of a kind experience for my country, and I am sure that it will be up to the task and carry out its functions diligently and in good faith, in the best interests of FAO and its Agenda.

It was with regret, however, that I had to listen to the comments of one of the Nations yesterday that sought to influence the debate with far-fetched arguments and allegations *vis-à-vis* my country. Allegations that this Organization has neither the mandate, nor the time to address. I am certain that there is no place for such attempts in this hall, and they cannot be accepted.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of the Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

The United Kingdom would like to take this opportunity to make a statement on the vital role that the FAO Council plays in advancing the mission of FAO to improve global food security.

Council Members must share a clear and consistent commitment to respecting human rights. They must also allow and facilitate the access of life-saving humanitarian assistance to their citizens to achieve a world free from hunger and extreme poverty.

Like the United States, the United Kingdom is deeply concerned that certain States appointed to serve on the Council do not share these values and are the subject of incredible allegations of human rights violations and abuses, disregard for international commercial aviation safety and violations of international humanitarian law against their own people.

The United Kingdom calls on all FAO Council Members to respect these principles as fundamental to building sustainable, inclusive and resilient food systems and serving all those we represent around the world.

The United Kingdom would like our disassociation from the consensus on the election of Belarus to FAO Council to be recorded in the Report of FAO Conference.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

My delegation, during this Session, has already had the opportunity to call upon the Member Nations to respect the sovereign rights of each State to be able to deal with its own internal policies and politics. Once again, we call Member Nations of the FAO not to politicize the work of this Organization. The issues of human rights, just as other sovereign rights of states, must be resolved within the appropriate bodies.

Mr José Luis COELHO SILVA (Portugal)

I am just seeking clarification from the Secretariat. We understood that some glitches and some minor amendments were sent to the Secretariat regarding the Report and we probably misunderstood that a revised version would be delivered. I understood not because you, Mr Chairperson, are asking us to adopt the Report, the one we have in front of us. Of course, that one was delivered in due time, thank you to the Secretariat for that. However, if the Secretariat can be so kind and clarify how to deal with this, we will be very grateful.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Portugal. I hand the floor to the Secretary-General.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Indeed, any editorial or technical fixes that have been highlighted will be adjusted before the final Report is published. If Portugal or other Members have any such specific, or otherwise substantive comments for amendment, we would be very happy to hear them now so that, again, we can make those adjustments before the final Report is published.

Sr. Don Porfirio PESTANA DE BARROS (Venezuela, República Bolivariana de)

Quisiera hacer una pequeña observación con respecto a los informes del Comité de Credenciales, donde aparece en nota al pie de página la exigencia de Canadá desvinculándose de la aprobación del

informe. Quisiéramos que, en caso de que ellos insistan en no aceptar el gobierno del presidente Nicolás Maduro, se refieran de una manera neutral y respetuosa y no con el término “régimen de Maduro” que denota una falta de respeto hacia el gobierno.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

Je voudrais juste avoir une clarification de la part du Secrétaire général. Je comprends que des ajustements de rédaction seront apportés au rapport et qu'avant de l'adopter, le Secrétariat enverra à tous les Membres la version légèrement révisée pour que nous puissions naturellement nous prononcer sur la version définitive du rapport. Puis-je avoir une confirmation du Secrétaire général à ce sujet ?

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Secretary-General, you have the floor.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Indeed, in the adoption of the Report in Conference - this is not a Drafting Committee - the practice is for any adjustments to be taken on board and incorporated in the final Report before it is published. However, naturally, if Members would like changes to be made, for the Conference to be suspended, for those documents to be translated and circulated and then come back again, that certainly can be done as well.

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

I would like to request that perhaps it could be a more efficient process if the Secretary-General might be able to just read those light revisions or adjustments to us now so that we might have the opportunity to just hear them and then adopt the Report.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of the Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I am just a bit confused because at one point I was able to read the Report. I had it on my screen, and I closed it to look at something else, and I tried to open it again and it disappeared from the website. Now I do not have a copy of it at all. So, it would just be really useful to have something to look at.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Secretary-General.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

With regard to the suggestion from the United States, we have specifically some adjustments that have been brought to our attention which will be made to the Report prior to publication.

The first is paragraph 12 in the current version, which will be deleted as this refers to a redundant draft paragraph from the First Report of the General Committee, which was subsequently not adopted by the Conference.

In paragraph 20 there will be a footnote added relating to an intervention by a Member disassociating itself from the credentialing of one of the member country.

There will be an addition after paragraph 25 of the text of paragraph 3 of the Fourth Report of the General Committee, which related to the request by the Conference for a comprehensive review of the process for reinstating voting rights. And the text there will actually be paragraph 3 of document *C 2021/LIM/22*.

There will also be an addition, an extension, to footnote 15 referring to paragraph 31 on the back of the intervention from the United Kingdom just now.

These are the adjustments that are going to be made. If I may, Chairperson, if there are further adjustments that Members would like made, we will take them on board and ensure that those are incorporated.

Finally, with regard to the United Kingdom's comment on the website, I just checked it myself. It seems to be fine for me, so I do not know if the Report has reappeared at your end, Ambassador.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of the Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Thank you very much to the Secretary-General for his clarification. I confirm I have just received an email with a link to the Report in English and in other languages.

Mr José Luis COELHO SILVA (Portugal)

Just to thank the Secretariat very much. This is what we were expecting, it is all-clear for us now. Thank you very much. Very good work.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

I do not see any other hands. We can adopt the Plenary Report.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

Suite en français

Vous avez adopté le rapport de la 42e session de la Conférence de la FAO, ce qui met un terme à nos travaux de fond.

Ces rapports sont le fruit d'un travail acharné, effectué pendant les réunions de la Commission I, de la Commission II et des séances plénières de cette session de la Conférence.

Par conséquent, j'aimerais remercier Madame l'Ambassadrice Eudora Hilda Quartey Koranteng, Présidente de la Commission I et toute l'équipe du Bureau de la Commission pour leurs travaux. Je remercie également Monsieur Donald Syme, de la Nouvelle-Zélande, qui a présidé le Comité de rédaction de la Commission I, ainsi que tous les membres de ce Comité.

Je remercie Monsieur Benito Santiago Jiménez Sauma, d'avoir assumé la Présidence de la Commission II. J'exprime également ma gratitude à Monsieur Thanawat Tiensin, de la Thaïlande, qui a présidé le Comité de rédaction de la Commission II, ainsi qu'à tous les membres du Comité.

Je propose que nous les applaudissions pour cette précieuse contribution au succès de cette session.

Je souhaiterais remercier toutes les délégations qui ont participé à la 42e session de la Conférence, pour leur contribution active et leur esprit de coopération, qui ont permis d'aboutir à un tel succès, en particulier au vu de la situation extraordinairement difficile à laquelle nous sommes confrontés actuellement.

La volonté des Membres de contribuer aux activités de cette Organisation, leur motivation et leur respect mutuel ont permis de franchir d'importantes étapes. Bien que cette session de la Conférence se soit tenue en ligne, nous avons pu effectuer une importante quantité de travail ces cinq derniers jours, et cela n'a été possible que grâce à votre engagement et à votre coopération. Je voudrais souligner le fait que nous soyons parvenus à adopter ce nouveau Cadre stratégique 2020-2031 de la FAO, qui contribuera au Programme 2030 et à la concrétisation des objectifs de développement durable en facilitant la transformation des systèmes agroalimentaires dans l'optique des quatre améliorations pendant la prochaine décennie.

En outre, nous avons approuvé le Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025 et le Programme de travail et budget 2022-2023 de la FAO. Le fait que le montant du budget ait été convenu par le Conseil en sa 166e session en avril cette année, a rendu moins ardues les travaux menés par la Commission II pendant la session de la Conférence, et a donc facilité l'adoption de la résolution sur le budget en séance plénière par consensus.

Comme vous le savez, le consensus est la caractéristique principale de la coopération et de la solidarité internationale. Par ailleurs, la Conférence a élu M. Hans Hoogeveen, Président indépendant du Conseil, et je souhaiterais lui adresser tous mes vœux de réussite dans cette mission. Je tiens également à exprimer toute ma gratitude au Président indépendant du Conseil sortant, M. Khalid Mehboob, pour la manière remarquable dont il a assuré ses fonctions, sa sagesse et les efforts qu'il a

déployés dans le cadre de sa mission ces quatre dernières années. Nous vous souhaitons le plus grand succès dans vos futures activités, Monsieur Mehboob, nous pouvons applaudir.

Je souhaite adresser un mot de remerciement particulier au Président de la Conférence et à mes deux collègues Vice-Présidents, qui ont assuré la présidence des séances plénières et des réunions du Bureau tout au long de la semaine, ce qui a permis le bon déroulement de la Conférence.

Je souhaiterais également remercier les membres du Bureau qui ont fait preuve de diligence lors de l'examen des questions sensibles, et ont proposé des solutions viables à la Conférence. Je souhaiterais également remercier le Président et les membres du Comité de vérification des pouvoirs pour leur précieuse contribution.

En outre, je souhaiterais féliciter le Directeur général, à qui la Conférence a exprimé la confiance qu'elle portait en sa vision pour l'Organisation, deux ans après l'avoir élu à ces fonctions. Je lui souhaite tous mes vœux de réussite dans la réalisation du mandat que les Membres lui ont confié.

Avant de déclarer la clôture de la 42e session de la Conférence de la FAO, je voudrais savoir si quelque délégation souhaite prendre la parole. Je souhaiterais à présent donner la parole au Directeur général qui va prononcer son allocution de clôture.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Thank you, Vice-Chairperson of the Conference, my dear friend from Cameroon, and all the Distinguished Delegates, dear colleagues, we have reached the end of this historic Session of the Conference. I want to thank all the Delegations for their valuable contribution and active engagement.

My appreciation also goes to our esteemed Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons for their hard work this week.

This was the first Conference we had in virtual modality, a true remarkable achievement by itself. This interactive and inclusive Conference showed strong support for the Strategic Framework for the next decade and for the Medium Term Plan and for the Programme of Work and Budget of the next two years.

Your support for our vision and our effort of translating the concept into action is highly appreciated. It is a big task that we humbly accept.

I was also pleased about the positive interaction feedback we received for this year's McDougall lecture. And also all the ministerial round tables and all the statements from the Capitals. Our thanks goes to Mr Bill Gates for the interesting and insightful lecture and to the panelists of the high-level round table for their valuable inputs and discussion.

The election of the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) was another clear sign of FAO's strong capability to adapt and evolve. Conducting such an important election simultaneously in two continents is another first for FAO, and I suppose also for other UN systems. We made a first in history again and, also, it is a good result of the performance and all the service provided by my colleagues.

You can see they are warm-hearted and smiling. I still see the Secretary-General smiling after a long week.

That is the new FAO service, with deliverable tangible results and a high quality of service, and inclusivity, with six UN languages.

I saw all the photos taken yesterday while you had the first round of the election. All the Ambassadors were so vivid to come in FAO buildings, to cast your holy vote and everything was running smoothly. Therefore, I thank all the involved key players that respected the rules and each other.

I congratulate Mr Hans Hoogeveen for his election and look forward to constructive and efficient collaboration in the coming years. Our gratitude and respect goes to the outgoing ICC, Mr Khalid Mehboob. I am so pleased that he accepted my offer to have a Chinese name - Mu Kaili. He is deserved of that highly respected Chinese name.

I also wish to thank the Staff Body Representatives for their positive interventions and also some very good constructive suggestions.

Let us work together to improve FAO, improve FAO for a nice place to work in and it should be an agile, efficient, effective FAO to offer the services to the Members.

We will continue our constructive dialogue, informal and formal, in mutual respect and trust.

The adoption of the Reports of the Conference *en bloc* just now, is a strong signal for the unanimous support and solidarity in the new FAO received from its Members. Without your trust and support, we could not move ahead.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to thank all those who worked for long hours preparing the services for this Conference to ensure its smooth running and success, from the Secretary-General of the Conference and his team, to the interpreters, translators, technicians, and those who work behind the scenes, the security and the medical people. Even if they were not used, it is good. We prepared it, but it is good that they were not used, not like the Secretariat, always to be used in the last minute.

I also thank all FAO employees for their dedication and hard work. I know some countries' Members, they get technical assistance from FAO Representative Office in different continents.

Since I took office two years ago, I got so much support, understanding and also deliverable working, implemented by our employees. Without your hard work and loyalty, we could not have a new FAO happening. Each one from her or his position contributed to the new dynamic, agile and energetic new FAO.

You see today one big family on one noble mission.

Dear friends, in closing, I wish you a restful and safe summer break.

I thank you all once more for your attendance, for your active participation and for your commitment and more, for your respected rules of governance, professional approach and consensus, compromise and what we say in Chinese, [和而不同], meaning “agree with disagree” in English.

Again, thanks to all the Chairpersons, Vice-Chairpersons, Assistants, Secretary and the Drafting Committee, you are really on front, to work day and night, coordinate every small part to make a successful whole performance.

Thank you.

VICE-PRÉSIDENT

Puis-je rappeler aux délégations que la 167^e session du Conseil de la FAO aura lieu le mardi 29 juin prochain, sous la présidence du Président indépendant du Conseil de la FAO, M. Hans Hoogeveen, et je lui souhaite le meilleur dans l'exercice de ses fonctions.

Je déclare à présent close la 42^e session de la Conférence de la FAO. Merci et au revoir.

The meeting rose at 15:22 hours

La séance est levée à 15 h 22

Se levanta la sesión a las 15.22