



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States

38th session of the FAO Conference (Rome, 15-22 June 2013)

Item 9: Review of the State of Food and Agriculture

Mrs/Mr Chairperson,

1. I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

The acceding country to the EU (Croatia) and the candidate countries to the EU (Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey) align themselves with this statement.

2. We thank the FAO Secretariat for the document provided C 2013/2. The document provides relevant elements concerning the current level of undernourishment, the persistence of price volatility and the need for an increased and sustainable agricultural productivity.
3. We note that the report pleads for dramatic improvements in both the level and quality of investment in agriculture. As recognised by the Jacques Diouf Award for the EU Food Facility, this was "the first major donor programme to help break a trend of more than 40 years where agriculture and food security were low on the political agenda and in doing so, the European Union has contributed significantly to placing sustainable agricultural development and food security at the frontline of the global development agenda". We remain actively involved in policy discussions on agriculture and food and nutrition security, not only in FAO, but as well for example through the

Committee on World Food Security, the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the G-8/G-20.

4. Under the new EU Development Policy, there should be strengthened support for sectors with a strong multiplier effect for sustainable growth, notably sustainable agriculture and energy.
5. We agree with the SOFA report that “the role of small farmers and their families in increasing productivity sustainably is crucial”; developing appropriate agricultural policies with their full involvement in order to enable emerging domestic production sectors is critical; they need to own the process of change and – in Africa- we consider that the CAADP process is critical in scaling up investments, in particular at local/regional level. We would also like to underline the importance of always maintaining a gender perspective for greater impact as conclusively proved in the 2010-11 SOFA "Women in Agriculture - Closing the gender gap for development".
6. Given the growing demand for food, feed, fibre and fuel, increased production must be achieved in a sustainable, responsible and resource-efficient manner, building resilience in the global food system. This was also reiterated in Rio+20 Conference last year. The private sector has an important role to play in this challenge.
7. To increase sustainable agricultural productivity, developed and developing countries need to cooperate in addressing climate change and its effects on food security and agricultural development through adaptation and mitigation measures. Efforts must aim to intensify production, reduce land conversion and capture carbon. This will lead to increased crop returns, improved economic growth and enhanced food security, while contributing to climate change mitigation. We further agree with the SOFA report of the importance of reducing food losses and waste as a way to increase food supplies , and consequently improve food security. Measures to enhance the managing of food must therefore also be more effective in order to reduce losses. This could be done by improved harvest methods and storage facilities, better access to markets and a more efficient safeguarding along the food chain. We agree that agricultural

production and supply chains need to be improved and adapted to do more for nutrition.

8. We welcome the focus on malnutrition and food systems of addendum 1 of the report. Nutrition is a determining factor for the development of nations and it has a key role in ensuring physical and cognitive development of individuals and economic productivity.
9. Nutrition is at the core of the EU's development policy. The European Commission has pledged to support partner countries in reducing stunting in children under five by at least 7 million by 2025 and to reduce wasting in line with the World Health Assembly target. A policy framework to enhance maternal and child nutrition has recently been adopted. This policy highlights the role of agriculture in nutrition, where agricultural policies themselves should become more nutrition sensitive, and the need to take a multi-sectorial approach, including other sectors such as health, water and social protection. It also stresses the need to address undernutrition both from the humanitarian and longer-term perspective and to ensure that these efforts are mutually supportive and compatible.
10. Global initiatives have been effective in putting nutrition higher up in the international development agenda, as we have seen in the recent nutrition high level event in the margins of the G-8 on 8 June of this year. The EU and its Member States, together with other partners including the Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) movement are keen to ensure that all efforts to combat undernutrition take place within a robust accountability framework, where investments in nutrition can be properly tracked and their impact measured.

Thank you Mrs/Mr Chairperson.
