Federal Minister for Food and Agriculture of Germany
Mr Christian SCHMIDT

President,

Director-General Graziano da Silva,

Dear colleagues,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Securing food mainly contributes to securing peace in the world. This mix against the backdrop of the trouble spots of the world, the various disasters, the people who have to flee their countries is more of topical significance than ever.

The FAO is the most important strategic partner of the Federal Government and of our Ministry.

There are further examples of the food and fruitful cooperation with the FAO which are, for example: the Global Forum on Food and Agriculture and the Summit of Agricultural Ministers launched by my Ministry, which usually takes place at the margins of the Berlin DFFA Summit and to which I would already like to invite you, dear Colleagues and Ministers, in the coming year.

Mr Director-General Graziano da Silva, you have already participated sometimes in the Global Forum of the Berlin Agriculture Ministers, and I am very pleased, personally, that we were able to give you a mandate for the coming four years with a vast majority. We are looking forward to your presidency so that we can continue our good and rewarding cooperation.

What is the FAO? The FAO is a center of excellence for knowledge in the fields of food and agriculture and also in the field of forestry and fishery.

It is also the spiritual cradle of the universal right to food.

It sets up norms and standards, which are valid at global level and they are all to the basis for political advice to be given to its members. This is where its characteristic core competences lie and this is where all sorts of brilliance come to the fore.

FAO also has to take on board these missions in the future. I would like to take this opportunity here to especially express my thanks to the very competent staff of the FAO Organization in this very building and at all places all over the world. We are very aware of your brilliant work that you have undertaken and are still undertaking and we also would like to hear your contributions in the future.

We have got to bundle all the activities here in Rome at the main seat of the FAO, so it must not be weakened by any decentralization activities. So I think that in the fields of resilience of rural areas, FAO would have to concentrate on its core competencies.

The social protection field is also a core field, but I think that this is not of major priority when we take our own goals in mind. I think that we should rather give precedence to those stakeholders who

have a competitive advantage in this field. Cooperation between the FAO and those other stakeholders is the best way of strengthening the resilience of rural areas and yesterday I took part at side events of the G7 Summit Meeting which is being held in Germany at the moment. I had the opportunity to meet Mr. Ban Ki-moon and also other representatives of UN organizations and we also talked about this subject.

So therefore I think that a strategic, conceptual development is required that we would have to embark on in order to find political solutions.

I would like to take this opportunity to mention that roughly an hour ago, the G7 industrial Nations have agreed to make their contribution to fight hunger and to try and achieve the goal of having five hundred million people less suffering from hunger until the year 2030.

This would also be reflected in rural areas, on the climate change and sustainable agriculture, I think that we have put a very solid basis with the ICN2 Conference in Rome,

And I think that we would also strengthen our cooperation in this field in order to achieve our goal of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations which are going to be finalized this autumn and thus also provide a good basis for further cooperation in the future. I think that there are a lot of important missions for the FAO in the future, especially with respect to conceptual development and especially here in Rome.

Thank you very much.