

50th Session of the Committee on World Food Security

October 10 Rome,

Republic of Italy

Talking points

Topic for discussion at the Ministerial Segment: Policy Coordination on Global Food Security - Current Situation in Food Security and Nutrition.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues, distinguished guests I would like to greet you and extend my gratitude to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for inviting me to today's meeting. It is privilege for me to attend the 50th session of the Committee on World Food Security.

The main topic of today's meeting is food security, which is an acute challenge for the entire international community. Of course, there are factors aggravating current situation, among them unfortunate events developing in Ukraine, as well as the negative effects of climate change on agriculture. However, it should be noted that developing and low-income countries are more vulnerable to this situation. Food systems have been negatively affected by inflation and increased prices, which is, of course, the subject to our special attention. In such circumstances, proper coordination and joint actions are very important. Today's meeting is also a good platform to discuss possible ways for cooperation and opportunities to overcome challenges. It is important to make joint effort to facilitate the supply of grain from Ukraine to the world market, and in this respect we see positive signs thanks to support provided by our international partners. As for Georgia, I would like to note that our country is also facing similar challenge. This is especially true for wheat imports. Due to our geographical location, Georgia is almost completely dependent on imports of wheat and bread flour from the Russian Federation. This situation requires special attention, and we think that Georgia should diversify its import markets and increase the productivity of wheat locally. For this purpose, we plan to take particular steps; we are working on the concept of the state support program and at the same time cooperating with international partners to get support with high-quality seed material, modern equipment and technologies. In this situation, joint and concerted actions of the countries to overcome the challenges related to food security are crucial.

Georgia was actively involved in national dialogues on food systems initiated by FAO, relevant report was prepared and submitted to the United Nations. In addition to the above, I would like to thank the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for its support to Georgia, especially in agricultural sector. As a result of FAO's support, we are building capacity of government organizations responsible for food safety, veterinary and plant protection in the country, although, in addition to the above, FAO is helping private sector in terms of both technical assistance and the implementation of the grant component. This support is even more valuable for Georgia on its way towards European integration. As you know, we applied for the status of a candidate country for EU membership, and the European Commission confirmed Georgia's European perspective. We will continue to implement relevant reforms so that Georgia, with the support of partner and friendly countries, can achieve full membership of the European Union as soon as possible, which is the choice and desire of the Georgian population.

In parallel with this process, Georgia continues to develop the agricultural sector. All state projects/programs, implemented in the field of agriculture aim to create as many high-quality Georgian products as possible and to increase the dynamics of production of Georgian products in the country. In

addition, we are working to sell the products on both local and international markets. The state provides cheap financial resources to farmers and entrepreneurs, agricultural equipment, new technologies are also available to them; the state is diversifying markets. We support farmers and agro-entrepreneurs in all components of the agricultural value chain. Since 2013, as a result of the state's intervention, the total amount of investment amounts to 4.67 billion GEL, of which the state co-financing amounts to 980 million GEL. Over the last 10 years, the geography of exporting countries in the terms of trade in agro-food products has increased from 75 to 99, and this indicator is increasing every year, the USA and EU member states have steadily established themselves among the exporting countries. In 2012-2021, the export value of agro-food products increased by 124% (by 631 million USD) and amounted to 1.1 billion USD.

I would like to confirm once again that Georgia expresses its readiness to cooperate actively with the partners in the process of overcoming the challenges in terms of food security.

Thank you for your attention