

Building A Dynamic FAO for A Better World

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Distinguished Chairperson

Honorable Ministers and Delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon!

It is a special weekend for me, for you and for FAO.

I've realized that many of you have taken long journey to come to Rome, to make history and record new history.

In April, I presented my manifesto to the Council meeting with our vision: "Building a Dynamic FAO for a Better World" by uniting forces of Member Countries.

Our Strategy should focus on attaining "Zero Hunger" and improving nutrition and livelihood of people by better production, better nutrition, better environment and a better life.

I proposed five actions: focusing on Zero Hunger and targeted poverty eradication; tropical agriculture; dryland farming; promoting digital farming; and improving agricultural production and value chains.

Such vision, strategy and actions have been widely shared. Now we are on the same page.

Nowadays, global food security and nutrition-based health management are becoming daily topics.

Agriculture is heavily affected by natural disaster, market volatility, trans-boundary diseases and pests, and climate change. Going out of villages and looking for jobs in the cities are becoming a rational choice for young farmers. The theme of 2019 FAO Conference on "Migration, Agriculture and Rural Development" is highly relevant.

Globalization and digitalization have deeply altered the mindset and lifestyles of young farmers, and production chain, supply chain and value chain of farming.

In such critical point of the century, if elected, I will head FAO to take initiatives to improve and rejuvenate itself for better performance and better governance, applying all tools in the toolbox.

FAO needs to become a reliable and beneficial international facilitator and promotor with core competence.

First, FAO needs further understanding of sustainable development.

It is important that FAO promote sustainable agriculture and focus on the 7 SDGs directly connected to its functions, namely: SDG Goal 1, Goal 2, Goal 5, Goal 6, Goal 12, Goal 14, Goal 15. While giving priority to SDG 1 and SDG 2, FAO also needs to leverage its specialized advantages to support the 21 SDG indicators under its custodianship and the 6 indicators for which it's a contributing agency.

The 2030 Agenda requires us to establish inclusive, efficient and responsible food and agriculture systems to integrate production, processing, consumption and trade, to ensure the supply of adequate, healthy and nutritious food, and realize harmony with environment and close connection with rural development.

When I was a young boy, my grandma took me to pick mushrooms in the neighboring hills. She told me that we should leave the old mushrooms to spread spores and the young and small ones to grow. This is the only way to ensure that we would have constant picking of mushrooms within season. That was my original idea on sustainability.

Second, FAO should strengthen innovative spirit.

Facing new situations and new challenges, FAO should apply modern science and technologies, and adopt innovative approaches: Innovation of mindset, innovation of approaches, innovation of cooperation models, and innovation of application by digitalization. "Digital FAO" is urgently needed to be established.

Innovation of technologies. FAO should strengthen the application of new materials, new equipment, new technologies, and farming machineries for medium and small farmers in the developing regions, etc.

Innovation of institutional structure, FAO needs to set up a special office for small island states, least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries and other vulnerable areas.

Innovation first and second..., farmers should benefit the most.

In the January, I met Mr. Rodgers Kirwa, a young farmer from Kenya at the GFFA in Berlin. He is working with his fellow farmers in Africa to develop agriculture with ICT and asked me to arrange his visit to Alibaba

in China for e-commerce. I promised and helped him go. He is satisfied.

Third, FAO should forge work culture of inclusiveness, truth seeking, solidarity and collaboration.

FAO should oppose bureaucracy, power abuse and offer protection for whistle blowers.

FAO should strengthen interactions with Member Countries and other stakeholders to forge political willingness and commitment to food security.

Honorable Ministers and Delegates,

I know that you all hold high expectation for FAO to improve its performance and internal management. If elected, I will carry out effective reform to tackle the most urgent problems and challenges.

First, I will enhance professionalism throughout the FAO system.

I will establish a consultation commission with global representation.

I will invite chief scientists to cover development strategy and policy, digital farming and digital rural development, food safety and nutrition, trans-boundary diseases control and environment, climate change and biodiversity conservation, small island development and fisheries, and market information and trade.

I will promote coordination of FAO with CGIAR, national agricultural research systems (NARS) and relevant universities of Member Countries, R&D departments of multinational corporations, civil society and think tanks, etc., to strengthen professional consultation on global food and agriculture.

I will upgrade professional expertise of all FAO staff, especially with T-shaped skill set for those at mid-and-senior levels.

I will also lead FAO to work with Member Countries for strengthening technical cooperation, capacity building and joint training, and transform policies, norm setting (Codex, IPPC, etc.) and technologies into practical outputs driving the development.

Second, I will promote quick response capacity from FAO HQ.

If elected, I will designate task-force staff in the DG Office to oversee emergency response, and coordinate resources, time-bound requirements for the urgent needs of Member Countries.

Third, I will improve FAO's human resources management.

I will manage FAO's positions by following the 4P parameters (position, personality, performance and payment), and make sure those existing staff

who have worked hard and well will be promoted. Global recruitment shall be prioritized to under-representation of countries and regions with geographic and position rotations.

I will reform KPI and other instruments used to foster a more driven and active staff team with greater loyalty to the Organization.

Young people represent the future of FAO and global agriculture. I will work closely with Member Countries to focus on the issues of young farmers. I will offer an H-Channel system to cultivate and promote young people and assist them to accumulate various experiences. The Youth Commission will be established under DDG leadership to support the career development of young employees.

Women have become the pillar in agricultural sector, making huge contribution to agricultural development and rural revitalization in political, economic, cultural, and family dimensions. I will foster gender balance and equality in the FAO system. The Women Commission will be formed under DDG leadership to listen to female employees' concerns, protect their rights and interests. I will strive to increase the proportion of female staff among mid-and-senior level to 50%. I shall have zero tolerance to sexual harassment.

I will take care of all employees' reasonable welfare, to ensure a motivated, happy and self-proud staff team.

Fourth, I will strengthen accountability and transparency in FAO.

FAO, mandated by Member Countries, should report to Member Countries. If elected, as the No.1 servant, I will lead the Organization to operate according to our mandates in a rule-based and professional way.

I will introduce third party to assess major decisions and programs.

I will strengthen regular interactions with Member Countries. I will hold free talks in Rome before every summer vocation and Christmas holiday.

I am firm-minded and approachable with a strong sense of responsibility. I'm also an open-minded person who respects science, democratic management style. I will make FAO as a big family that is united, efficient, energetic and harmonious.

Fifth, I will foster synergy with partners.

As FAO is a specialized agency of the UN system, I will first align FAO with the reform and management policies of UN, and facilitate closer collaboration with other UN agencies and international organizations based in New York, Geneva and Nairobi, and in particular, enhance coordination with WFP and IFAD, so that the RBAs shall become Real Brotherhood

Allies.

I will boost synergy between FAO, UNDP as well as other international development agencies for joint contribution to SDGs.

I will strengthen coordination with private sectors (Dow, Bayer, Alibaba, etc.) and civil society (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, etc.) to leverage their unique roles and expertise.

I will also reinforce synergy among the headquarters, regional, sub-regional and country offices of FAO, making FAO an agency close to Member Countries, close to the field and to farmers.

Sixth, I will effectively scale up resource mobilization.

Without resources, any blueprints or action plans will only stay on paper. Human beings cannot survive without Vitamins. Nor can any organization do without Vitamin M, M for money. For FAO, making the cake bigger is more urgent than sharing the cake.

I will designate a DDG responsible for resource mobilization and set up a strong team to design major programs, actions and new approaches, forging new platforms for financing cooperation with private sectors and NGOs. More importantly, I will explore innovative use of funding, and expand partnerships with World Bank, other banks and financial institutions to leverage more investment by using donations and catalyst seed funds.

Reports on FAO's new strategies, initiatives and concepts to Member Countries to seek your understanding and voluntary contribution are timely provided.

All resources will be used efficiently and in compliance with rules, in order to win trust and credibility of donors and attract more voluntary contributions.

Meanwhile, to facilitate the SDGs, I will enhance the preparation of a high-level meeting as high as possible to marshal strong supports of Member Countries and other stakeholders, consolidate political willingness and cement political commitment.

I promise that, if elected, I will work tirelessly with you to increase FAO's resource mobilization by 10% annually!

With enabling policies, innovative approaches, stronger investment and capacity building of Member Countries, we will help farmers happier, rural areas more attractive and our world more beautiful.

Honorable Ministers and Delegates,

FAO is at a critical turning point and calls for an outstanding, bold, nimble, fully engaged Director-General who combines strong scientific and professional background, rich experience in policy making and implementation with extensive networks, good knowledge of situations and concerns of developing and developed nations and mid-income countries in agricultural and rural development, various experiences on different positions of leadership, and the persistence to lead FAO to tackle challenges.

There is no doubt that the Sun will rise from the East tomorrow, and you will select the best to make new history.

I am ready to serve you all with your strong support! Vote for me! I will devote myself for the entire world to build a dynamic FAO for a better world!

Thank you very much! Shukran! Xiexie! Merci! Spaseeba! And Mucho Gracias!