

April 08, 2022

Hundred and Sixty- ninth (169th) Session of the FAO Council

Thank you!

Dear Chairperson,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Eritrea, is honoured to present a statement on the 169th Session of the FAO Council; and appreciates FAO Secretariat and Director General Dr. Qu Dongyu for the interactive involvement.

At present agricultural food systems of the world are under tremendous stress from loss of biodiversity, climate change, pandemic crises, conflict and wars. Hence to meet the challenges of growing enough food for everyone while protecting the planet is becoming very difficult from time to time.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In times of conflict, crisis such as COVID-19 pandemic, FAO and other UN organizations need to coordinate themselves and take consistently fast action in solving the problems. Because conflict, pandemic and other crises have tremendous negative impact on achieving the agenda of food security and nutrition. At present conflict has already aggravated the already considerable food security challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, FAO needs to coordinate and work with all relevant international organizations and other stake holders in an urgent manner to push for better production, better nutrition and better environment.

However, most of the time it is not practical e.g., at this point of time vaccines anti COVID-19 is progressing fast in the developed countries; but due to allocation problems and unfair trade it is so far behind in developing countries, and definitely this could impact on food security and nutrition. Therefore, access to markets and specially reducing barriers to trade to boost global and intraregional trade is essential. Hence, FAO need to tackle the complex

challenges in cooperation with other relevant UN Organizations and lead the efforts to bring together and accelerate peace on top of innovation and technology for sustainable food system and create world without hunger

Ladies and gentlemen,

At present hundreds of millions of people are suffering from hunger, and billions are malnourished, with no access to healthy diets. At the same time, there are many countries that are highly dependent on imported foodstuffs such as wheat, maize, barley, rapeseed, fertilizers, gas, oil and etc. And many of these countries, particularly the developing countries, prior to the Ukrainian and Russian conflict, have been grappling with the negative effects of high international food and fertilizer prices, which have serious effect on the food security of millions around the world.

In Africa, noting the multiple and overlapping shocks and threats induced by the COVID-19 pandemic, conflicts, climate extremes, political instabilities and economic downturns, made the whole population under stress. To that extent, the importance of Russian Federation and Ukraine for global agricultural is very high. They are among the most important producers of agricultural commodities in the world, both countries are net exporters of agricultural products, and they both play leading supply roles in global markets of foodstuffs and fertilisers. E.g., East Africa imports more than 90% wheat from Russian and Ukraine, which at present is difficult and impossible to import as required.

Therefore, to achieve the long term Sustainable Development Goals, with a view to eradicating poverty and live no one behind, FAO with other UN partner organizations need to find peaceful, constructive solutions to the current situations of conflict in the field of food security, and need to review and make recommendation in all conflict's implications for the strategic frame work 2022-2031, and to develop immediate plans to address the global food security impacts of existing conflicts and recovery assistance.

Thank you!

State of Eritrea

Rome based UN Agency