

**169<sup>th</sup> Session of FAO Council – 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

Mr. Chair,

First of all, I would like to underline that I fully align myself with the statement made by the EU Presidency on behalf of the EU and its 27 Member States.

Next I would like to emphasize how important it was to organize this special session of the FAO Council in this precarious situation, when the world is threatened by one of the most serious crises in terms of food security and thus security and stability itself.

I would like to thank the countries that initiated the convening of the special Session of the FAO Council, the Director General and the ICC for organizing it.

We know that this meeting has a reason: the illegal, unprovoked and unjustified aggression of Ukraine by the Russian Federation. Where there is war, there is hunger, and where there is hunger, there is no stability and we fall into a vicious cycle. There is no excuse for war and aggression.

As the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, the current president of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, said, “this unprecedented attack by the armed forces of the Russian Federation on Ukraine destroys the foundations of the existing security architecture and is a clear violation of international law, including the United Nations Charter”.

It should be remembered that the humanitarian and food crisis will not end with the end of hostilities. As a result of the war in Ukraine, all its infrastructure, roads,

warehouses and agricultural equipment are destroyed, the fields are mined, not to mention the lack of people to work on farms, because they either fled or died in the war. All of this will have a huge impact on Ukrainian agriculture, animal husbandry, planting, and then harvesting. Ukraine, once a leading exporter of food products, will now need humanitarian aid itself.

This war is fought in a country that has been the breadbasket of the world and which is a significant player in the world trade in agri-food products. Before the war Ukraine was the fourth largest grain exporter in the world. It is estimated that 49% of winter wheat and 38% of rye to be harvested in July-August 2022 are located in occupied or war-affected areas.

Ukraine was also the largest exporter of sunflower oil, accounting for approximately 30% of world exports. The area sown with sunflowers in Ukraine in 2022 may be 35% less than in 2021.

The main recipients of grain from Ukraine were the countries of North Africa, Asia and the Middle East such as Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, as well as Lebanon, Yemen, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Those countries will also be affected by the war in Ukraine.

As a result of this war, the prices of grain, fertilizers, coal, fuel, gas and electricity are soaring, leading to higher production costs and therefore higher food prices. In this respect, the conflict threatens international economic and social stability at the macro level.

It should be said that the number of people suffering from hunger will increase in 2022: it could affect 8 to 13 million people worldwide.

Let me remind you that over 2.5 million people from Ukraine came to Poland. They are mostly women with children. The state is taking steps to support them, with the strong involvement of local authorities and the common people. At the same time, Poland is committed to providing humanitarian food aid to the remaining inhabitants of Ukraine. The support is also directed, where possible, to Ukrainian farmers, recognizing its importance for food security.

In view of the enormous danger in which Europe finds itself, I would like also to draw your attention to fake news and propaganda. The dissemination of information that comes from unreliable sources can bring a lot of damage, both to people harmed by the war, and to the efficiency in delivering help by the services.

In conclusion, we expect FAO to develop immediate plans and to address the food security implications of the war in Ukraine, including emergency response, reconstruction assistance and building resilience in food systems.

We would like FAO to include the issue of the implications of the war in Ukraine on food security in the world to the agenda of the next session of the FAO Council in June 2022.

Thank you Mr Chair