

**FAO CONFERENCE, 39TH SESSION, ROME 6-13 June 2015.
GENERAL STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD OF NORWAY, Sylvi Listhaug**

Excellences, Chairperson, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

2015 is the target year for the Millennium Development Goals, our guiding development agenda for the last fifteen years. Over the weekend, we celebrated the achievements in the fight against hunger. The MDGs will be replaced by a new set of Sustainable Development Goals, to be endorsed at the UN Summit in September.

We already know that the development framework post 2015 will be a more comprehensive one, encompassing all dimensions of sustainable development. The theme for this year's general debate is thus a timely one. Strengthening rural resilience will be crucial to break the vicious cycle of rural hunger and poverty and provide the means for economic and social development at the same time.

Chairperson,

We acknowledge the need for a comprehensive take on global development in the coming years. On this occasion, I wish to particularly underline an issue of growing global concern - the importance of antimicrobial resistance in food, agriculture and the environment. Infectious diseases become more difficult or impossible to treat. There are more severe negative consequences related to human health, food safety, animal health and welfare, production losses and hence negative consequences for livelihoods and food security. The effectiveness of antibiotics must be preserved for the treatment of human and animal diseases. It is thus our sincere opinion that antimicrobials should not be used as growth promoters. I also wish to underline another important issue: the fact that some countries' veterinarians may sell antibiotics with a profit. It is vital that the prescription and use of antibiotics should be based solely upon professional therapeutical reasons. Veterinarians prescribing antibiotics should not be influenced by economic incentives.

Combatting AMR requires a global approach. It requires a One Health approach in which all relevant sectors cooperate, especially health, agriculture and aquaculture. FAO must step up its efforts in cooperation with other relevant organisations. We also wish to underpin the

importance of the standard setting work of the joint FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius and the OIE.

Furthermore, I wish to emphasize that trade is an important element in global food security. It is important to have well-functioning markets and international trade systems. Standards and norms are an equally important prerequisite for international trade in food and food stuffs. FAO and other normative bodies play an important role in this regard.

Chairperson,

Allow me also to highlight the important work FAO is carrying out in implementing sustainable management of natural resources globally, particularly forests, genetic resources and fish stocks. Sustainable forest management is a strategy that has proved to be effective in combating climate change and to contribute to economic and social development. The global forest resources assessment (FRA) provides us with a basis for decision-making and is of great importance. Norway is a strong supporter of the good work FAO is doing in order to improve the FRA and encourages FAO to continue strengthening the cooperation with other global and regional actors to enhance the coherence of reporting activities on forests.

Before closing, I wish to emphasize the importance of gender equality in our efforts to build resilient rural communities. FAO has placed gender centrally in their efforts for agriculture and rural development. As they state it themselves, "Gender equality makes good economic and political sense." We expect FAO to follow up on that and make sure that gender equality is embedded in its work for agriculture and food security.

In this endeavour, we call on the FAO to make fully use of its knowledge and take its position in the global architecture for food security and development. Norway wishes to underline our commitment to the work of FAO. We have high expectations to the organization's ability to effectively translate its normative work into country-level impact.