

U.S. Intervention  
Deputy Secretary  
United States Department of Agriculture  
Krysta Harden  
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Mr. Chairman, Director-General Graziano da Silva, distinguished colleagues and guests, thank you for the opportunity to address you today. It is an honor and a pleasure to join my colleagues from all over the world at this 39<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. I would also like to extend my personal and my country's congratulations to Dr. Graziano da Silva on his re-election.

The United States remains firmly committed to combatting global poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition, improving agricultural productivity, expanding opportunities for rural economic growth, and bettering the lives of families around the world. Director General, I would like to reassure you that the United States fully supports the FAO mission and we stand ready to work

with you to promote the many priorities that we share with FAO. These include, but are not limited to, the work of Codex and the International Plant Protection Convention, combating animal and plant diseases, climate-smart agriculture, empowering women in agriculture, sustainable use of ocean resources, and eradicating world hunger. Likewise, we believe the FAO is uniquely placed to play an important role in implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda related to hunger, nutrition, oceans, and the environment, among others.

As Deputy Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, I'm part of a team of people tasked with ensuring the health and security of American farms and forests, rural communities, and food systems.

In my role, I've had the opportunity to travel across the United States and around the world. I've met farmers and ranchers as diverse as the countries represented here today. And as the daughter and granddaughter of farmers

myself, I can tell you that no matter where you come from, farmers at their core are much more alike than they are different.

You must be at all times one part nurturer, one part trend forecaster, one part scientist and one part businessperson. You must build strong operations that can withstand risk from all sides, so that even when Mother Nature brings her worst, you can survive. You are responsible for growing food that not only feeds and nourishes growing world population, but also caters to increasingly sophisticated tastes.

As we heard earlier, the 2015 State of Food and Agriculture report, touches on some of the challenges that farmers in the United States and around the world face. Whether you're growing enough to sustain your own family or to feed hundreds of families, being a farmer in this world isn't easy, but it's a critically important job.

Rural people and places have a power unlike many others. They meet one of our most fundamental needs—nutrition—and do so in the most efficient, sustainable way. We know that agriculture is helping to drive the economic growth needed to eventually eliminate food insecurity and poverty around the world. But we must do more to support and build up our farmers as they innovate to meet growing demands for food in the face of increasingly constrained resources, global climate change and a growing world population.

That’s something the United States takes very seriously. Since the early days of his administration, President Obama has emphasized his commitment to robust U.S. leadership on food security issues.

From the G8 commitment to sustainable global food security in 2009 came our Feed the Future program and a U.S. government-wide investment of more than \$3.7 billion. In 2012, President Obama rallied a group of global leaders at the G8 Summit at Camp David to launch the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition, which is focused on increasing public-private partnerships to

leverage new investments in agricultural systems. That commitment has now leveraged an investment of \$10 billion from more than 200 companies—the majority from African firms and farmer-owned businesses. And last year, the United States was one of the founding members of the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture, a knowledge platform for taking stock of ongoing agricultural practices and adaptation techniques, and for sharing information with our partners around the globe.

Global food security is not an insular discussion. It impacts all nations. All nations have a role to play in supporting agricultural growth and driving the innovation we need to survive and thrive.

Innovation will help us sustainably intensify production to grow the food we need – but trade is the engine we rely on to distribute the food for those in need.

Trade and efficient markets are critical to global food security, and they also expand markets for American producers. For example, between fiscal years 2010 and 2014, U.S. agricultural exports to developing countries grew 44.3 percent for developing countries, significantly outpacing the 33.4 percent for developed countries. Exports to Southeast Asia grew 56.5 percent.

I'd like to take a moment to recognize the three international standard setting bodies – OIE, IPPC, PPC, and Codex– for their contribution to sustainable trade systems. Through their voluntary international standards, these bodies help to protect the health of consumers worldwide and support fair practices in international trade. They help to ensure that healthy food moves from the fields where it is grown to where it is needed most.

The United States remains committed to a global, rules-based trading system. Our global trade environment must be based on established rules that not only reduce barriers and costs, but also increase the reliability of trading systems. We continue to support a more efficient global market that allows trade to

flourish for the benefit of not only of hundreds of millions of hungry people around the world, but also to the sustainable economic growth of developing nations and the long-term economic prosperity of the United States.

To be sure, the work ahead of us is challenging. Because of this, we need one another now more than ever. And resources around the world are tight.

We will need to be even more strategic and thorough in our planning processes – looking at what resources we have and how we might bring them to bear.

This is a pivotal time in FAO's history, one that presents FAO stakeholders with a unique opportunity to truly make a difference. I, as head of the United States delegation, urge each of you to join with the United States in recommitting ourselves to the important work done by FAO to reduce hunger and raise incomes around the world.

Thank you.