

Delivered in Arabic - checked against English interpretation

**Statement delivered by
His Excellency Ezz AIDin Abosteit
Minister for Agriculture and Land Reclamation
on the occasion of the
41st Session of the FAO Conference, Rome, Italy (22-29 June 2019)
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Excellencies,
Ministers,
Heads of Delegations,
Representatives of International Organizations and Agencies,
Observers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to express our deepest gratitude and greatest respects to FAO for the sound organization of this Conference, as well as for the role that the Organization plays in dealing with matters that fall within its mandate: food security, the fight against poverty and the promotion of the agriculture sector at the global level.

I would also like to express our greatest gratitude to His Excellency, Mr José Graziano da Silva for the unflagging efforts he has made throughout his two mandates at the head of FAO, to move forward in promoting the perform of the organization, and for everything the organization does in the domain of food and agriculture. We hope that this role will be continued to be promoted as it is very important in the fight against all forms of malnutrition in supporting the role sector and agricultural production, especially bearing in mind the changes that are underway and their impact on agricultural production, where commodity prices have risen. In addition to this we face climate change which has an adverse impact on agricultural production overall.

Egypt's delegation on behalf of Egypt's Government and the Egyptian Presidency of the African Union would like to congratulate Mr Qu Dongyu for the honour bestowed on him after a high-level competition and transparent elections along with the candidates from France and Georgia. We believe that the Organization, under the leadership of Dr Qu Dongyu, will pursue its mandate, will improve its performance as promised by the Director-General. This, in order to support member states by bringing in his experience, technical expertise and by facilitating the South/South, North/South, and Triangular Cooperation in order to tackle all the challenges and anything which might hinder development in our countries. As we aspire to fulfil these Sustainable Development Goals and improve the living standards of farmers and, as we seek to strengthen and disseminate successful experiences while implementing programs and projects which better serve our people and seek to meet the needs of our people and achieve food security.

Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This Conference sees us facing many challenges. Global challenges. Especially in Africa and the near East in the domains of agriculture, irrigation, commodity production, climate change, desertification, water scarcity, the expansion of arid lands, cross boundary animal diseases, in addition to migration which has become one of the key challenges, which prevents the agriculture sector from increasing its production in most developing countries, where economies essentially rest on the agriculture sector.

We trust that international efforts will continue to grow so as to crystalize the global food goals and ensure that our countries will no longer be hungry by 2030. And also, so that we might ensure that the hungry are fed and so that we might go from 821 million, according to the 2018 report, to no hungry people. In seeking to manage these challenges, Egypt aims to achieve sustainable development through the adoption of a radical reform process, which will enable us to lay the foundations for our economy so as to improve our social sector and especially lives of the most vulnerable people in the rural sector.

We have therefore adopted a strategy which has allowed us to revitalize the agriculture sector between now and 2030, which is based on innovation, knowledge transfer and the establishment of a new rural milieu, which is favourable to investment. We have also sort to streamline the agriculture sector and create job opportunities in the sector based on programs which foster value chains as well as added value, especially through small scale agriculture projects and medium scale agriculture projects. These will be one of the essential pillars to end the rural exodus. This has a negative impact on agriculture and food production, as we all know.

This also applies pressure on public services of course. In addition to these ambitious measures we are working to create more job opportunities for women and young people, and to supply food to our populations by strengthening international cooperation, technology transfer and by encouraging investment, as well as cross boundary and interstate exchanges, as well as cooperation with FAO and IFAD, who we expect to play a key role in the coming years to strengthen cooperation and in seeking to move towards sustainable development. Food security, the strengthening of rural and agricultural development are common goals.

In this context we would like to welcome all countries who wish to cooperate with us. All international agencies and organizations to seek to achieve food security and improve the quality of the food we consume, especially since Egypt is among the countries worst affected by the changes we expect to see at a climate level. This requires international efforts to be intensified so that we can end these adverse effects.

Chairman,

In conclusion, we have taken note of the budget for 2020/2021 and would like to highlight in this regard that we would expect the Conference to look over the programme of work and the different budgetary chapters, so that it might seek to engender innovative processes and steer clear of 'business as usual', so that we can enhance the chapter to do with the technical cooperation program, so that this can in turn enable us to achieve concrete sustainable development and enable countries in our region to tackle their challenges and so that FAO can promote its very constructive role.

We hope by the end of the Conference to see fruitful results that benefit our countries and our strategic objectives, moving towards sustainable agriculture development and greater agriculture development.

Thank you.