

**Statement delivered by
His Excellency Salahuddin Ayub
Minister for Agriculture and Agro-based Industry of Malaysia
on the occasion of
41st Session of the FAO Conference (22-29 June 2019)
24 June 2019**

Peace be upon you (*in Arabic*)

And a very good afternoon.

Mr Chairperson,
His Excellency Director-General of FAO,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am privileged to speak on behalf of my Government in this 41st Session of FAO Conference. I wish to congratulate the new Director-General, Dr Qu Dongyu, for his appointment and look forward to working very closely with FAO towards a world free from hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. I would also like to thank Dr José Graziano da Silva for his service and contribution to the Organization.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Malaysia relates itself to the findings of The State of Food and Agriculture Report 2018 that migration is closely linked with agriculture, rural development and the overall development of societies. Since our independence in 1957, the country had undergone rapid economic and infrastructural development, making Malaysia as one of the most progressive countries in the region.

Malaysia views migration as part of the process of structural transformation of economies. Rural migration has accompanied the process where labour is transferred from agriculture sector to manufacturing and services sector, contributing to rising of incomes and economic, social and human development.

To balance the impacts of migration on agriculture and rural development, the Government of Malaysia continues to make agriculture sector relevant by playing an important role in addressing rural employment, increasing rural incomes, and ensuring national food security.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Malaysia had launched the way forward for 2019-2020 to realign our priorities into three (3) dimensions, namely, food security and safety; rural economy development; as well as private sector investment and international trade.

Initiatives have been outlined involving the application of new technologies, efficient management of natural resources and use of that produce high-yielding seeds and breeds, which are resistant to pest and diseases, and less susceptible to climate change. With this, we can make agriculture more sustainable and profitable.

Meanwhile, Malaysia's Rural Development Plan 2018–2023 also identified agriculture as one of the programmes to generate a more competitive rural economy, by creating rural entrepreneurs who are oriented by technology and innovation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Malaysia recognizes the importance of policy coherence between agriculture and rural development to improve urban-rural linkages to maximize the benefits to rural communities. As such, various Ministries have come together in a Programme called “My Village, My Future” to encourage rural people, including youth and indigenous communities, to remain in the village and become agents for rural development by participating in economic activities. The Programme optimizes the use of available resources (for example, abandoned land) and turn them into new opportunities.

Innovation and technology continue to be the key determinants in ensuring sustainable rural development in our countries. Towards this end, I would urge FAO, through its capacity building programmes, to nurture and develop innovative-based programmes and policies in member states.

This could be forged through strategic partnerships of key stakeholders such as the local governments, financial institutions and the private sector. In this regard, Malaysia could also share its expertise with FAO and other member countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Malaysia congratulates FAO for its work, which provides useful guidance to member countries to formulate the necessary strategies towards maximizing the benefits of migration. Malaysia will continue its support to FAO and urge all member countries for a continued collaboration in this area, so that no one is left behind.

To end, let us all come together with our steadfast commitment, efforts and full support to assist FAO towards achieving Zero Hunger and malnutrition. Together we can all make the difference towards achieving Agenda 2030 and ensuring that no one is left behind. With Charity to all.

Thank you very much.