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**Statement delivered on behalf of**  
**The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau**  
**Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food of Canada**  
**by**  
**Her Excellency Alexandra Bugailiskis**  
**Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Canada to FAO**  
**on the occasion of the**  
**42nd Session of the FAO Conference (14-18 June 2021)**  
**15 June 2021**

*Honourable Ministers,*

*Director-General Qu,*

*Dear Delegates,*

Notre thème cette année, la stratégie et l'action, est très pertinent, alors que nous célébrons les 75 ans de la FAO. Et pourtant, on regarde vers l'avenir afin de transformer nos systèmes alimentaires suite à l'une des années les plus difficiles depuis cette réunion qui a fondé la FAO en 1945 à Québec.

Canada fully supports the FAO Strategic Framework to support Agenda 2030 through the four betters of sustainable, inclusive and resilient agri-food systems – better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life. In support of SDG2, Zero Hunger, our Agri-food and Agriculture Department is leading Canada's national dialogue in advance of the UN Food Systems Summit.

We know that world hunger has worsened during the pandemic and today our challenge is to reverse the negative trend that started in 2016 and to transform our agri-food systems with all countries and all people in mind. We must not only meet the food needs of the growing population but also reduce the impacts in all sectors of agriculture, including fisheries and forestry, while strengthening the resilience to climate change and other shocks. We need to take a systems approach from production to consumption, from research to reducing food waste and loss. This is our common 21st Century challenge. To meet this challenge we all need to strengthen the three pillars of sustainability: environment, social and economy.

Firstly, our food systems must be environmentally sustainable. We know that agriculture is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and we are proud that in Canada farmers have succeeded in reducing their environmental footprint while strengthening biodiversity and increasing productivity, and they have done this through innovation, innovation in plant and livestock genetics, innovation in precision farming tools and innovation in farm practices, such as crop and pasture rotations, cover crops and reduced tillage.

Canada is making significant investments to help farmers build on this work through science and research, into new pest-resistant crops, clean technology, such as biodigestors and living laboratories, bringing farmers and researchers together in the field to develop sustainable practices that work on the farm, and we are stepping up internationally. This past weekend, Prime Minister Trudeau announced at the G7 a doubling of Canada's climate finance from USD 2.6 billion in 2015 to USD 5.3 billion over the next five years.

This funding will increase support for developing countries to build domestic capacity to take climate action to build resiliency and reduce pollution, including by finding nature-based solutions to climate change and protecting biodiversity. Farmers, we know, are the first to feel the effects of climate change.

At the same time, as the FAO clearly states in its strategic framework, we must ensure that these new tools are inclusive and equitable. In Canada we recognize the importance of giving voice and leadership at the table to women, to youth and to indigenous people and that is why a diverse and multidisciplinary group of experts has been established to advise the Ministry on new and emerging issues and it is a central part of Canada's very first food policy.

We have also established a Canadian agricultural youth council to advise on the future of the agriculture and agri-food sector from their perspective. And the third pillar is economic sustainability, to thrive agriculture producers and workers across the food system, need access to tools, innovation and markets.

Canada supports FAO's call for a science-based, rules-based business environment that ensures food gets to where it is needed and that agriculture producers have access to the tools and technologies that are necessary for them. We also need to reduce the digital gender divide and enable rural women and other groups to access digital technologies to strengthen communities and diversify incomes. We need to put women and girls at the centre of our activities and actions.

So, as I close, let me highlight that this year brings us, with the UN Food Systems Summit, a bold new strategic framework for the FAO but a great opportunity for us all to move from strategy to action and to deliver on Sustainable Development Goals. Let us take that advantage.

Merci beaucoup.