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Statement delivered by
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Minister for Environment, Water and Agriculture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
on the occasion of the
42nd Session of the FAO Conference (14-18 June 2021)
15 June 2021

In the name of God, the all Merciful, the Compassionate, thank you very much for organizing this Conference.

Your Excellency,

Chair of the Conference,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Excellency, the Director-General of the Conference,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I salute you and may the blessing of God be upon you.

On this occasion, first of all, I would like, on behalf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to express my gratitude to the Director-General of the FAO Organization. Thank you for the efforts exerted by the Organization and by yourself in organizing this Conference. We wish the 42nd session of the FAO Conference success.

We hope that this Conference will achieve its objectives. We, furthermore, hope that the discussions during this Conference will achieve better sustainable development and better food security across the globe.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia believes that it is part of its responsibility to grant the utmost importance to sustainable development and food security and sustainable agriculture.

We believe, therefore, that it is quite important to focus on the environmental issues and on sustainability. We have been working with a number of international and regional organizations in that regard. Many strategies and programmes were adopted within the government in order to uphold sustainable development and sustainable agriculture, therefore achieving food security at the national level, regional level and international level.

We have been working also on the preservation of our natural resources. For example, we have had a national strategy for food security. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia launched the biggest programme in that regard with a cost of about USD 3 billion. This programme allows small producers to thrive and it allows as well for small livestock producers to thrive as well. Likewise for fisherfolk. These together will be able to use their resources. They will, therefore, bring better livelihoods to the rural areas. Food security will,

therefore, be achieved even in the far remote rural areas. We have been collaborating with FAO for technical support and for consultation technical support in order to achieve our objectives.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has adopted one strategy for agriculture and another one for food security. We believe that food security is extremely important. We have many challenges that we need to face across the globe now and the COVID-19 pandemic has shown how fragile we were to shocks and to problems and challenges. We therefore decided to work on improving productivity and on ensuring better resources, better agriculture inputs and we decided also to work on our sub-strategies for agriculture. For example, we worked on better use of resources. Of course, we are not protected from any natural disasters but we can do our best in order to achieve a better sustainability in terms of agriculture.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Fighting against hunger means better investments in agriculture. It also implies better productivity. We need, therefore, a paradigm change. We need to achieve sustainable agriculture but we need as well to eradicate hunger, thus achieving better livelihoods for our people, especially in rural areas where agriculture is of paramount importance. This means that we need to use our resources in a better way. We need to develop agriculture. We need as well to limit the impact of climate change.

We need to increase our use of our resources in a more sustainable way. We need as well to work on food loss and food waste. Remember how much is lost in terms of percentage right after harvest. We need, therefore, to work on food loss and food waste right at the level of the farm. We notice as well that there is quite a bit of food loss during transportation and there is a lot of food loss and food waste all along the supply chain.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would like to reassert one more time its support to the Organization, now and in the future. We stand by you to fight against food loss and food waste. We stand with you to fight against food insecurity. We would like to thank you one more time for organizing this conference and we thank the organizers for their work. We hope for those meetings to be successful.

Thank you very much for your attention.

I salute you one more time and may the blessing of God be upon you.