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Statement delivered by
His Excellency Paulo Teixeira
Minister for Agrarian Development and Family Farming of Brazil
on the occasion of the 43rd Session of the FAO Conference (1-7 July 2023)
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Madame Chair,

Excellencies, Ministers of Agriculture and Rural Development,

Mr. Director-General and Permanent Representatives,

It is a great joy to be here today. As this is the first FAO Conference held during President Lula's third term, it is especially symbolic that the Ministry of Rural Development and Family Farming has been entrusted with the task of leading the Brazilian delegation in the main international arena for the fight against hunger.

Overcoming food insecurity in Brazil and the world is not just about quantity. It is, above all, a question of quality and price of food. It is about generating income in the countryside. We want and must ensure that everyone has access to healthy and sustainably produced food.

Almost 20 years ago, here at FAO, we agreed on the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food. In Brazil, this right is enshrined in our National Constitution, which guarantees everyone an adequate and nutritious diet, capable of providing a healthy and dignified life. This guiding principle underlines the entire strategy of rebuilding public policies in President Lula's new government.

Alongside the fight against hunger, we have been instructed to implement actions to combat climate change in all areas. It is our government's commitment in Brazil to reverse the deforestation process, creating incentives for sustainable production, productive restoration and the agroecological transition.

Today, the most vulnerable populations live in the most vulnerable areas in terms of biodiversity. We are trying to move forward on bioeconomy, working in agriculture and our forests. We want to make sure there are possibilities to help the most affected by the effects of climate change.

In the Amazon, our government is committed to finding income solutions for 30 million inhabitants, including 1.5 million indigenous people and more than 5 million people of African descent. It is against this backdrop that President Lula will convene the Amazon Summit in August. In addition, following this guideline, we are proposing the elaboration of a Pan-Amazon Strategy for Food Supply and Food Security to enhance the value of products of the local bioeconomy. FAO is a key partner in this process, with its experience in building the Regional Network of Public Systems for Food Supply in the Americas.

Madame Chair,

We are exactly halfway through the United Nations Decade of Family Farming, celebrated by FAO between 2019 and 2028. In Brazil, 77% of rural establishments are family farms. For the next five years of the Decade, we will insist on a direct and permanent dialogue in order to strengthen family farming and food security in Brazil.

For the Brazilian government, valuing family farming is central to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the goals of the Paris Agreement and the Global Biodiversity Framework. The very structure of family farming, with its production methods based on short chains and crop diversity, is a synthesis of the indivisibility of the three pillars of sustainable development, in its social, environmental and economic aspects.

It is with this permanent dialogue that we can fight against hunger and climate change and that is why we designed the new rural credit program for family farming with better financing conditions aimed at sustainability, social and biodiversity, organic and agroecological products. Rural technical assistance is also being directed towards biome recovery solutions. In total, more than 70 billion reais were allocated to small Brazilian producers.

Mr. Director-General,

On the theme of this year's Conference, as head of the Ministry of Agrarian Development, I have been following closely the issue of infrastructure. With these challenges before us, this is going to require coordination and adaptation.

Not only FAO is involved, but also the other United Nations agencies based in Rome – IFAD and WFP – should play a more relevant role in water management.

Now we have a programme in its third phase in Brazil, the IFAD's work in the “Dom Hélder Câmara” Project. It involves US\$ 45 million in investments to try to help the farmers in the northeastern semi-arid region.

Thank you very much.