

Statement delivered by
Mr Bassam Essam Rady Abdelhamid Rady
Permanent Representative Ambassador of Egypt to FAO
on the occasion of the 43rd Session of the FAO Conference (1-7 July 2023)
5 July

Thank you Vice-Chairperson.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,
ladies and gentlemen.

I would like to extend my congratulations to His Excellency Director-General, Qu Dongyu, FAO Director-General for his new appointment.

I would also like to seize this opportunity to thank the Director-General of the Organization for their exerted efforts in order to enhance internal management of FAO and in launching new initiatives and promoting collaboration with Member States, the private sector, the academic circles, and the civil society, thus contributing to achieving FAOs objectives, specifically on eradicating poverty, malnutrition in rural areas.

Ladies and gentlemen. We are all facing presently a number of regional, international and climate related challenges as well as pandemics, crisis, including most recently COVID-19 and the Ukraine crisis, that led to a negative impact on food security and led to a great deal of distortions in global markets, undermining supply, leading to unprecedented increase in commodity and food prices. In spite of what we have achieved in the field of agricultural development in our countries, there remains a lot that can be done in order to achieve a minimum level of self-sufficiency which reference to main food stuff and allowing us to build resilience against all shocks that affect our collective food security.

In spite of the myriad of challenges that we are all facing and that relate to the cultural sector, and that are also connected to water scarcity, climate change, land degradation, the certification and the increased number of populations, and increased production costs. As governments we are all requested to collaborate further together in the agriculture and Food Security field in order to achieve FAOs proposals to reach sustainable Food Security and to reach our regional objectives, building greater resilience with reference to the sector of Food Security.

On this occasion I would like to reiterate our support to FAOs Strategic Framework for the period 2022-2031, that calls for the transformation of agrifood systems making them more comprehensive, more efficient and resilient in order to provide for better production means better nutrition and livelihoods achieving sustainable development through the use of the latest technologies and the proper inputs specifically with reference to enhanced grains that are more tolerant to salinity, to fertilizers and to extend the use of agricultural automations, SMART agriculture, and we also support the FAOs strategy on climate change 2022-2031.

Ladies and gentlemen, our present theme on the water resource management and the *four betters* is consistent with Egypt's objectives related to food security because we believe in the nexus between Food Security and Water Security. And we look with the greatest importance to the issue of water in terms of ensuring the best management and the most sustainable Management of Water Resources (WRM). This is why in 2021 we launched a National Strategy on Water Management that extends until 2050. In part of this national plan on water resources we have allocated a total budget of USD 50 billion.

As a matter of fact, this plan is consistent with our National Sustainability Development Strategy until 2030. It seeks to enhance the quality of water by creating secondary and tertiary wastewater treatment and enhancing or developing the new water resources and adapting to climate change, as well as localizing the latest water desalination technology, promoting the level of governance in water management, and

supporting this with the necessary legal framework in order to ensure the best possible good governance in Water Management.

As a matter of fact, Egypt is embarking on a number of national projects that will lead to the rationalized use of water and this happens to the implementation of a National Project in order to rehabilitate water canals as well as the National Project to move from flooding irrigation to modern means of irrigation as this would have a direct impact on the rationalized use of water in addition to implementing multiple large projects that would allow the re-use of agricultural waste water.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Egyptian Government has adopted a number of initiatives that would help us achieve Food Security and curb the relevant challenges related to water security and climate change. In this regard I would like to note that His Excellency, President of the Republic, Fattah Al-Sisi, has launched a new initiative entitled Decent Life. That is deemed as the project of the century with a funding of more than EGP 400 billion, leading to the total transformation of rural livelihoods, enhancing the living conditions of about 60 million Egyptian citizens, and more than 20 Egyptian Governors, which basically makes up half of the Egyptian population.

As a matter of fact, the initiative includes the launch of a number of initiatives in the agricultural, educational, health and cultural sectors, in addition to other production promotion projects in Egyptian rural areas. I would also like to note that the Egyptian Chairmanship of COP27, jointly with a number of international partners, has allowed us to focus on the role of water through a number of events.

As a matter of fact we have dedicated a whole thematic day on water topics and we have also launched the new water initiative called AWARE, and we have also dedicated a special segment in the Conference that was held in Sharm El Sheikh for water related matters, and as a result of these efforts, water was the main topic of discussion during COP27, it was for the first time that water has been mentioned during the main discussions of the Conference as a main source related to climate change, in addition to making reference to water related matters in the final statement of the Conference.

In conclusion, please allow me to wish you great success on the occasion of this Conference. I would also like to extend my gratitude and thanks to the FAO. I would also like to inform you that Egypt looks forward to collaborating continuously and actively with FAO, especially under the wise leadership of His Excellency QU Dongyu, and once again I would like to congratulate him for his new appointment.

I would also like to reiterate our continuous and full support to FAO, a prompt organization working at the service of humanity, and exerting great efforts in order to achieve sustainable agricultural and rural development as well as food security regional, national and international efforts. Egypt is also ready to dedicate all of its agricultural resources and expertise at the service of FAOs projects and programmes especially in south countries.

Thank you very much for your attention.