

Statement delivered by

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Thank you Chair. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, let me begin by congratulating Dr. Qu Dongyu for his re-election as Director-General of FAO and I wish him a very successful second tenure. India has endured a longstanding and valuable partnership with FAO since 1948 and has played a significant role since inception as a chair and Member of various statutory bodies and committees.

On India's initiative, United Nations General Assembly declared 2023 as International Year of Millets. FAO is the lead agency for its celebration with all stakeholders. Millet are climate resilient, can be grown in arid areas, require very little water and have high nutrition value. They provide an affordable and sustainable solution to nutrition, food security, and water conservation. Ladies and gentlemen, India is determined to attain sustainable development goal too.

We have the vision of empowering farmers, especially women and rural youth through large scale lab to land initiatives by developing new technologies and methodologies and helping them in its adoption. India has been promoting organic farming and natural farming with an emphasis on sustainable productivity, food security, and soil health. We have launched programs to create new irrigation infrastructure, conserved soil fat fertility including balanced use of fertilizers and provide farm-to-market connectivity, ICT linkages, etc.

The Government of India has focused on innovation, digital support system, climate-smart technologies, development of high and bio fortified varieties, agricultural research, and IT initiatives. Let me focus on a few of our IT initiatives during recent times in agriculture.

India has one of the largest crop insurance scheme with about 85 million subscribers to the scheme. It is not an easy task to take care of all the claims and settlement. So our portal provides the backbone.

The portal is called DigiClaim, which is used for transparent calculation and claim settlement of crop insurance by insurance companies. YES Tech, which stands for Yield Estimation System based on technology. Is another initiative that provides for remote sensing-based yield estimation of crops? We have initiated digital crop survey as a pilot project to get a clear picture of the farms, farmers, and the crops being shown to better plan and manage their production. For a digital agriculture ecosystem that facilitates better planting strategy and policy making a federated architecture called AgriStack is being developed.

Through AgriStack farmers would have access to a wider choice of inputs, greater access to markets quicker and easier access to finance and better and more localized and customized advisory pertinent to their crop and their land. We are also working towards the development of a decision support system, which is a national framework that would help to standardize the use of geospatial data in agriculture.

A Pan India electronic trading portal called Electronic National Agriculture Market, ENAM, facilitates Pan India Trade in agricultural commodities, provides better price discovery through transparent auction process and ensures timely online payment. 17.5 million Farmers and nearly a quarter million traders are already registered on the ENAM portal. Ladies and gentlemen, these have been some of our recent IT initiatives. Today's youth has been participating in India's agricultural growth story. Accelerator fund

provides the young entrepreneurs in setting up agri startups. These efforts have culminated in record food grains and horticulture production and productivity in India making us a net provider to the world.

It is heartening to state that our approach towards food security and nutrition related challenges has been guided by the spirit of our G20 presidency theme of One Earth, One Family, and One Future. We firmly believe that with the unwavering commitment of the FAO and in collaboration with all Member countries, India can immensely enhance agricultural productivity and eradicate hunger and malnutrition. It will significantly contribute to creating a safer and healthier global community.

Chairman, Sirs, India is ready to share these and other developments in the agriculture sector with nations in the geographical south to help make their agriculture practices innovative, evidence-based, resilient and climate smart. We invite FAO to interact closely with us in dissemination of the knowledge and technology which India has developed through FAO's, South-South collaboration projects. Ladies and gentlemen, together we strive towards a world that ensures the wellbeing and prosperity of all its inhabitants. Thank you very much for your kind attention.