

**Statement of Ms Krystyna Gurbiel, Undersecretary of State and Head of  
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Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank you for the invitation to the session.

- During this year's session we discuss the problem of adequate and balanced nutrition in different regions of the world. This problem, in a sense, has "always" been there, but over the years its scale and character were significantly changed.
- Today there are huge disparities. While in some countries millions of people die because of insufficient food supply, or they have access to few products only, in other parts of the world, or even in the same country, food is wasted, and a large part of the population is obese or overweight.
- **It is a great challenge but not only for the agri-food policy. An answer to these problems does not come down to finding *some single universal solution*.** A model, which will allow for using the potential of the agricultural sector, at the same time, reducing the negative environmental or social effects. Since agriculture operates under a globalised network of economic and political links and it is an area of impact of different, often contrary phenomenon and processes.
- **We have to tackle the problem of adequate nutrition by using the experience of different policies.** We can improve individual processes like a spider's web. **Let me point to two examples.**

*[Example 1]*

- People tend to forget how Europe looked like some time ago without food. This means that the Common Agricultural Policy fulfils its basic function. But this had its costs and was subject to external criticism that, however, lead to many positive changes in this policy.
- Today an important achievement of the CAP is an attempt at reconciliation of the objectives of productivity with social and environmental objectives. The adoption of the European agricultural model is to benefit not only farmers and consumers, but also the future generations.

- **But we still have to tackle many challenges** both within the scope of impact on external partners, as well as on the environment. We have to improve the shape of the food chain in order to strengthen the role of small producers. When increasing productivity of agriculture it is necessary to use the local potential. This requires a new approach to innovation and rapid transmission of research results to agricultural practice. Another challenge is reducing the losses in food production or the change of consumption patterns.

*[Example 2]*

- The second example concerns the country that I represent. In the 1990s Poland underwent a radical political transformation. At that times, the agricultural sector became the “buffer” of political, economic and social changes. After twenty years it is clearly visible that the extreme solutions do not work – neither the strongly protectionist model, nor the so-called development model which gives rise to environmental threats and has a number of negative social effects. **Each reform has to respect the basic needs of an individual**, for instance the right to free management of one’s own land.
- The Polish experience from the times of the transformation point also to the fact that **“the invisible hand of the market” will not take care of public goods, such as e.g. the environment or expenditure on health policy**, since it is not in its nature.
- We can also try to change the attitude of individuals by raising their awareness or through education, but these are long-lasting processes.
- On the other hand, legal solutions and targeted programmes (e.g. labels informing on the ingredients of the food product or waste separation) help to overcome the barrier of people’s habits that are sometimes unimportant from the perspective of an individual or the private sector (e.g. a corporation), but they gain in significance on a macro scale/ in the public area.
- To sum up, let us not forget about the good practices of policy-making. We should remember that instruments or programmes under the agricultural system need to have clear and measurable objectives; so that their functioning does not disrupt competition or harm external partners. Each solution should be subject to a thorough impact assessment. However, not only in a given sector, but also as regards its interdependencies with the entire economy and considering its impact on individuals co-creating this economy. Thank you.