

*[Transcription from English language. Original in Russian]*

**Mr Gennadiy M. Gatilov**  
**Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation**

Chairman, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The theme of this Conference is highly relevant as we take stock of progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and toward developing the Sustainable Development Goals for the Post-2015 period.

The fact that 72 countries have already achieved the MDG 1 target of halving the proportion of people who suffer from hunger in the world shows that the FAO has made great strides towards achieving its noble and ambitious task of eradicating poverty on this planet. Social protection is a very powerful lever for ensuring the sustainable development of the agri-food industry and for eradicating rural poverty. This was said, amongst other things, by the tireless hunger fighter, the then President of Brazil (Luiz Inácio Lula, and the President of Argentina, Cristina Kirchner). They said that from this very room.

The Russian Federation shares the FAO's mission and this year will make voluntary contributions in support of the social dimension of the FAO's work in countries that need it. We will also support its multi-faceted activities on conservation of soil health and fertility in the framework of the International Year on Soils 2015.

Dear Colleagues, this year is a defining one for our planet in many respects. In October, we will mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations, which is a universal international organization set up to rid mankind from the horrors of war, to ensure a just world order, and prosperity for all.

The last few decades have vindicated our choice to setup and strengthen this international and universal Organization and its family of specialized agencies. Within this constellation of international organizations, the FAO which is the same age as the United Nations and which will also celebrate its 70th anniversary this year, successfully implements a unique mandate in one of the most significant spheres of human labor, namely agriculture and the production of food, food which is crucial for human beings to live a full and healthy life.

I would like to take this opportunity to, on behalf of my own country and on behalf of the BRICS Group, the work of which is currently coordinated by Russia, to congratulate on his reelection to the helm of our Organization, his Excellency José Graziano da Silva, another eminent Brazilian.

We are convinced that on the basis of the unanimous support from the Member States of the international community that Mr. Graziano will be able to implement his far reaching goals, tapping the full potential of the FAO as an Organization of knowledge with its feet firmly on the ground.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.