

As delivered

**Statement of Mr. Iurie USURELU,
Acting Minister of Agriculture and Food Industry of the Republic of Moldova
40th FAO Conference, Rome, Italy
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Your Excellency Vice-Chair,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I'm honored to participate, in the 40th FAO Conference and be part of the discussions on critical and important issues on global agenda as *Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security*. Climate change has been recognized as an unprecedented threat to the food security of hundreds of millions of people who depend on small-scale agriculture for their livelihoods.

Although the Republic of Moldova is a small country, agriculture has a crucial importance in terms of economic significance, employment, rural livelihoods, food security, rural development and exports. Agriculture has traditionally been a major component of the economy. Agriculture and agro-processing sector account for around 16 percent of GDP. Also agri-food exports account for a significant part of total exports (around 40 percent of total export). Furthermore, agricultural sector provides 30 percent of employment for active labor force. More than 70 percent of the total land is used in crop production and animal breeding. These figures highlight the inherent vulnerability of the national economy to climate-related events that has an impact on the agriculture sector. This level of vulnerability is further compounded at a livelihoods scale, as 90.8 percent of the rural population earns less than 5 USD per day and is highly vulnerable to any changes in agricultural income.

Moldova is exposed to a variety of extreme climate events that have affected all aspects of life, especially agriculture that is the most important and sensitive sector. These extreme events include droughts, rainstorms, hail, frosts and floods. The most devastating event in terms of agriculture losses for Moldova is drought. Losses recorded during the most severe droughts in the last decade (in 2007 and 2015) account for hundreds of millions. The most affected were, in terms of income and economic well-being, smallholders with limited financial resources for which main source of their livelihood is agriculture.

The Republic of Moldova as other countries acknowledge the importance of these challenges. Adaptation to climate change in agriculture, food security, vulnerability to water scarcity have become an increasing concern on the agenda of the Government of the Republic of Moldova. The Parliament of the Republic of Moldova has recently ratified the Paris Agreement on climate change and is

involved in active ongoing process of adapting of 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development to the context of the Republic of Moldova with support of UN Moldova.

The Government of Moldova highly appreciates the significant role of FAO both on the regional and global level and rely further on FAO outstanding expertise in order to address on long term the above-mentioned challenges.

FAO is already providing considerable support to the Government of the Republic of Moldova under their current Country Programming Framework (2016-2019), which was adopted. The third priority area of current CPF refers to *improving capacity for sustainable management of natural resources and disaster risk management*.

Thus I consider that FAO priorities in the region should consist in:

- implementation of 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change commitments relating to food and agriculture; strengthening our state institutions capacity in view of their implementation;
- design and implementation of integrated policies that address agriculture, food and climate change; mainstream climate-smart agriculture approach into the national policy framework;
- building resilience for adaptation to climate change through sustainable forest management, in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors;
- disaster risk management.

Thank you!