

*[Original language Slovene - Checked against transcription of English interpretation]*

**Speech by His Excellency Dejan Židan  
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Food  
of the Republic of Slovenia  
at the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO Conference, Rome, 5 July 2017**

**The State of Food and Agriculture: Climate change, agriculture and food security**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Distinguished colleagues,

I sincerely applaud the topic of today's discussion on such a current topic: climate change and its impact on agriculture and food security. I thank the FAO for – and Director-General Graziano Da Silva.

Every ninth people of this planet is suffering from hunger and the trend is not promising. Ladies and gentlemen today we are talking about climate change which only is making these trends worse. Let me give you an example from Slovenia last year. We have suffered from frost in April for the first time in the past forty years. We have been left with no fruits and we have suffered heavy losses in grapes, one of the main produce in Slovenia.

We were hoping the event would happen once every hundred years and will not be repeated, but this year it happened once again. So for forty or fifty years, nothing was happening and this year we have lost 80% of fruit, over 60% of grape, and this also shows that in Europe as well, climate is changing very rapidly to the detriment of agricultural production.

Climate change shows us that we need to show even more solidarity than before. We need to be less egoistic and we will only succeed if we try and find technological solutions together. If we look for new knowledge, if we make further steps in educating people and increasing solidarity, when farmers will be able to help each other when they are in need, when countries help each other when they are in need, and when regions help each other when they are in need.

Unfortunately, we have not reached that point yet, but hopefully we will be able to do so unless we want to realize in two, four, six, eight, ten years from now that there are even more hungry people on this planet than before.

That is why I would like to thank you once again for all of the support you have given us ever since 2014 for our project of the World Bee Day. Why is that important? Because food production has increased over the past years two-fold, but the production of crops that are dependent on pollinators has increased four-fold, and the

only way to tackle famine in the world is to recognize the important roles of the pollinators who are also in danger.

Therefore, ladies and gentlemen, it is with utmost pleasure that I am looking forward today for the support given by your Organization to the World Bee Day, and I am looking forward to meeting you once again, probably in December this year at the General Assembly of the United Nations where I hope the International World Bee Day will be pronounced, announced. I would also like to invite you to come to Slovenia next May 2018 when while celebrating the World Bee Day, we will also reflect on our duty to tackle famine in the world and here the role of FAO is extremely important.

I would like to thank you for your attention and wish you a good day.

Thank you.