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**Statement by
General Chatchai Sarikulya
Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives,
Thailand at the 40th FAO Conference, Rome, Italy
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Mr. Chairman, Ministers, Distinguished guests.

I am honoured to have an opportunity to share with you Thailand's perspective and experiences among FAO member countries, national representatives and distinguished guests.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to FAO and other nations for your long-standing collaboration to improve agriculture sector and to resolve numerous matters which has enabled us to overcome various difficulties.

That being said, recent global climate pattern has now become drastically unpredictable and likely to intensify, unleashing direct impact to water quantity, moisture content and atmosphere: three indispensable components which are essential for agriculture and food security.

Thailand is fully aware of the severe effects of climate change, and of the shared responsibility of every country. We are committed to the Paris Climate Agreement and stand ready to work with all countries of the world to limit global warming and to become a low carbon society.

The current Thai government places great importance and firm commitment to resolve such issues in a sustainable manner by envisaging a 20 years long-term vision to mobilize Thailand towards three important pillars: security, prosperity and sustainability with a focus on building national security by utilizing appropriate usage of natural resource without damaging our environment in order to ensure long term sustainability.

Please allow me to reflect on Thailand beloved King, His Majesty the Late King Rama 9 who spent his 70 years working tirelessly and visited his subjects everywhere. The King then developed plans to improve their livelihood and eventually came up with the Royal Development Projects, which are accounted for more than 4,000 projects nationwide. Most of them are related to water resource and agriculture. The King is as a role model for agricultural reform.

I would like to mention His Majesty the King's royal address which emphasized the needs to teach men to fish rather than giving them fish. The King had relied on knowledge, education, and methodology. Thailand has implemented agricultural development policy in accordance with His Majesty the Late King's royal address since then.

For some background, Thailand is located in a tropical zone and, there are huge diversity in crop plantation, fisheries and livestock. We have about 24 million hectares of farmland, with water resource accessibility standing at 20 percent.

Within this area, 10% of these areas is estimated to be unsuitable for crops, according to the Agri-map Application which is an application used to match an area to types of crops. If farmlands are found unsuitable to grow certain crops, farmers then can then just readjust their farming plan accordingly.

In terms of Agricultural Development, the government has broadly classified the policy into three components:

1. Establishing Agricultural Learning Center nationwide to empower farmers' capacity-building in agriculture production using Agri-Map. Successful farmers are urged to pass on their knowledge to others as well.
2. Implementation process.

In the case of unsuitable farmland, where infertile soil and insufficient water are detected, if cultivation persists it would require heavy usage of chemical which could result in environmental damage. If farmers switch to suitable farmland it would benefit overall water conservation and increase their income.

In the case of suitable farmland, farmers are encouraged to form into cooperatives, which they can benefit from technological-sharing, participative administration and marketing planning, also known as Large Scale Farmland whose responsibilities and resources are fairly optimized resulting in increased productivity. Farmers can then select quality products that appeal to consumers and, thus it is more profitable.

Furthermore, the government also encourages farmers to pursue environmentally friendly, chemical-free organic farming. The government is planning to expand organic farmland areas to 250 000 hectare within the next 5 years.

3. Our irrigation system extending from mainstream water resources to farmland allows farmers to obtain adequate water for their plantation to boost efficiency in water resource management and would help to reduce the risk of flooding and each year.

I can proudly say that based on the His Majesty the late King Rama 9's royal initiatives and under the greatest merit of the present King, Thailand has improved our agriculture sector and enhanced food security against the threat of climate change with environmentally friendly policy approach in addition to the FAO's Goals, which is also in line with Thailand's 20 years National Strategic plan that will mobilize our implementation effort into tangible result.

Thank You.