

Delivered in Arabic - checked against English interpretation

**Statement delivered by
His Excellency Ibrahim Shahahdeh
Minister for Agriculture and Environment of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
on the occasion of the
41st Session of the FAO Conference, Rome, Italy (22-29 June 2019)
24 June 2019**

In the name of God, most gracious, most merciful,

Your Excellency, FAO Director General,
Your Excellency, Chairperson of the Conference,
Your Excellencies,
Your Eminencies,
Heads of Delegations and Members of Participating Delegations,

May God's praise and blessings be upon you.

Allow me at first to extend my deepest gratitude to His Excellency, Mr Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO for the excited efforts as he has led this organization in an exceptional fashion in the past eight years in the field of agricultural development achieving food security, preventing poverty and malnutrition as well as combatting famine in order to achieve the SDGs 2030.

FAO's efforts were obvious and clear in all of the Member countries including the developing countries and most importantly, my country, Jordan. We wish success to the newly elected Director-General Mr Qu Dongyu and his mandate in order to service the agricultural sector.

Ladies and Gentlemen, agriculture all over the world, and specifically in Jordan, is a main pillar for socioeconomic and environmental development. The different countries in the world are basing their own agricultural strategies on that and allocating additional resources to support the agricultural sector in spite of the limited nature of resources. In this regard, the Jordanian Government is granting greater attention to the development of agriculture on all levels especially when it comes to food security, the health of citizens, environmental safety as well as rural development. Whereas this sector constitutes a major economic basis for comprehensive rural development through the optimal exploitation of natural resources creating new job opportunities, achieving industrial growth, increasing exports and self-reliance, preventing internal migration, safeguarding resources and meeting the requirements of sustainable development.

As such, the Government of Jordan is aware that agriculture is one of the main pillars of comprehensive development in all of its environmental, social and economic dimensions as such. In order to honour Jordan's international engagement in achieving the requirements of the SDG Plan 2030, we have adopted a number of national sustainability development and agricultural development strategies. By concentrating on rural development and promoting our capacity to produce food, products and enhancing food security, as well as the sustainable use of natural, agricultural resources without undermining the environment while preserving our ecological systems and providing the health protection for natural animal and plant resources, providing greater economic opportunities for agricultural producers and greater marketing processes, while promoting value chains and achieving greater efficiency using irrigation water.

Jordan is deemed as one of the worst countries in the world in water resources, and suffers greatly from the impact of climate change and drought. The natural resources of Jordan are being put at risk and as a

result we are facing greater risks at the level of the agricultural sector in general and this is mainly impacting small agriculture, as such, promoting their resilience has become greatly urgent.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Jordanian Government has worked on a number of multiple programs in the field of agriculture and developing rural societies and communities to limit internal migration, in order to allow small farmers, the poor, namely woman led families, and family agriculture that was given greater importance. These projects and programs include small revenue generating projects that would allow families to meet some of their needs in terms of food and security according to their own level of production, concentrating on the role of woman, and offering woman soft loans to provide for the family and have a dignified life. To provide soft loans for small families in order to enhance their production and their livelihoods for their own families and for the communities to hold specialized exhibitions in the different areas in the Kingdom, including mainly, household woman producers that would provide for their own families to develop an administrative institutional frameworks within the Ministry of Agriculture that work on rural development and promoting the role of women in order to provide greater job opportunities for rural populations and women in particular.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in light of the situation in neighbouring countries, namely the same crisis that has entered its fear, and the ongoing negative implications on the Sustainable Development Agenda, with the presence of Syrian refugees whose numbers have reached about 1.3million refugees including about 671,000 refugees who are registered. Knowing that more than 19 percent of them live within camps and in originally vulnerable rural areas which has constituted a greater pressure on natural resources, on job opportunities and achieving nutritional and food security for rural families.

The Jordanian Government last February has enacted to the Syrian Crisis response plans for 2019 with a total cost of USD 2.4 billion and it was developed based on a participatory approach with a number of representatives from the different line Ministries and a number of UN agencies, donor countries and NGOs. And this plight is only partially noticed by the international community and this is why we need to see greater efforts to support the national Syrian Crisis Response Plan in order to be able to overcome the implications of this crisis in accordance with the objectives of FAO in order to achieve food security and promoting the levels of nutrition and better livelihoods.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you would only have to imagine that the number, or the population of your own countries have increased by 30 percent and what kind of implication this would have on the limited economic resources of your countries, your infrastructure and the different financial costs that could be incurred as a result of that.

In this regard, we have to promote the role of FAO, in order to minimize the impact of climate change and risks affecting food and agriculture and I call onto all donor countries to support small farmers around the world as they face great challenges threatening their own existence as farmers, producers of agriculture and to contribute in filling in the gaps in agriculture and agri-food production and providing them with the latest supporting technologies.

In this regard, as the Head of the General Assembly of the Arab Organization for Agriculture Organization that represents 22 Ministers of agriculture in the region that has its own specificities and faces its own challenges and unlimited opportunities if we are able to complement our opportunities knowing that this organization believes that there should be a high level of coordination and working on enhancing our common action and setting our own agricultural priorities.

To conclude, I would like to extend my thank you to all UN agencies and donor countries that have supported Jordan in facing all of the economic challenges.

Thank you for your attention.