

Statement delivered by
Her Excellency Jaana Husu-Kallio
Permanent Secretary for Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Finland
on the occasion of the
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Thank you very much Madam Chairperson, for giving me the floor. It is indeed a great honour for me to speak on behalf of Finland and our Minister for Agriculture and Forestry, Mr. Leppä, who unfortunately could not be present today.

*Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

First of all, I would like to thank you, Dr Qu, for the efforts you have made during the first two years as the Director-General of FAO. It is a great task, particularly during the pandemic era, to make FAO more effective, efficient and transparent, and to use its full potential to address FAO's crucial mission for mankind.

Global agriculture and food systems face tremendous challenges, and COVID-19 has shown how fragile the whole system is. Sustainable food systems are a prerequisite for reaching the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, Finland notes with satisfaction that the New Strategic Framework of FAO is better aligned with the SDGs, and we trust that all the SDGs under FAO's mandate will be treated equally and also interlinked with the Four Betters [Better Production, Better Nutrition, Better Environment and indeed Better Life].

Climate change, loss of biodiversity and unsustainable use of natural resources are major challenges that we need to fight against, also by changing our ways of producing and consuming food.

Finland has always stressed the important role of natural resources for food and nutrition security. It is crucial that we break down silos, and we see that the nexus or interlinkages between food-water-forest and energy should be more widely considered in our common actions. We were very glad to learn that "The Global Food Security Index 2020" ranked Finland as the most food secure country in the world. For the first time the category "Natural Resources and Resilience" was incorporated into the main index, which I find very well justified, considering our key challenges.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is also important to break down silos when talking about health. The current pandemic is a serious reminder that the health of human beings, animals, plants and the environment are inseparably interlinked. The excellent tripartite cooperation on One Health approach between FAO, OIE and WHO needs to be strengthened, as well as extended to the United Nations Environmental Programme.

I am happy to add that Finland, as the champion of the International Year of Plant Health 2020, has significantly contributed to producing one of its key legacy accomplishments: the scientific review study "*Climate-change impacts on plant pests*". The study, just published on the 1st of June, gives a number of recommendations to mitigate the changed plant health conditions and adapt to them, including by stepping up coordinated research on the matter and developing international policies to address the risks.

In this context, I would again like to underline the importance of the normative work of FAO, and we appreciate that the funding of IPPC and Codex Alimentarius scientific work will remain at the increased level.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finally, I would like to stress the unique role and contribution of FAO in the preparation of the United Nations Food Systems Summit. In the global community and among the United Nations family, FAO holds a crucial position in helping the world to understand the fundamentals of food and agriculture, and to find innovative ways to solve our common challenges. I trust indeed, that this work will continue with a new determination and commitment also after the Summit.

Thank you very much Madam Chairperson