

**Statement delivered by  
Her Excellency Nigina Anvari  
Deputy Minister for Agriculture of the Republic of Tajikistan  
on the occasion of the  
42nd Session of the FAO Conference (14-18 June 2021)  
16 June 2021**

*Distinguished Colleagues,*

*Distinguished Director-General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, Mr Qu Dongyu,*

*Distinguished Participants in the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

On behalf of the Agriculture Ministry of the Republic of Tajikistan, may I greet all the participants in the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference and express deep gratitude to the organizers of this meeting for providing us with a virtual opportunity to discuss the state of food and agriculture.

I would like to highlight that the theme, which we will be considering at this meeting is very topical in the post-COVID period since the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how vulnerable supply chains are to crises. In the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has spread around the whole globe, the protection of nutrition and agriculture is becoming a pressing issue for each country, and the exchange of experience and coordination of work in the field of policy are the most important building blocks in order to achieve this goal.

I am convinced that in the context of the 42nd Session, we will not only exchange information and successful experience, but also comprehensively discuss the possibilities for transforming food systems for sustainable development.

I would like to take this opportunity to briefly talk about the measures taken by the Tajikistan Government and development partners in order to alleviate the impact of COVID-19 on the socioeconomic spheres, including the agricultural sector. The pandemic has compounded the rates of food shortages outside the farming season, notwithstanding the growth in agricultural production in the summer and autumn.

The slump in household incomes and the loss of jobs, as well as the drop in money transfer exchanges and the closure of firms, have all led to a reduction in food consumption. At the same time, the prices for a number of socially significant foodstuffs have led sharply as panic consumers have bought up and hoarded staple foodstuffs. The pandemic has led to a reduction in the quality of nutrition of poor and vulnerable parts of the population, whose access to safe, diverse and healthy nutrition has been jeopardized.

Our Government has developed two action plans: the first to guarantee the readiness of the country in the health sector and the second to prevent and reduce the vulnerability of the national economy to potential risks from COVID-19. In order to alleviate the adverse economic consequences, our Government has

taken the necessary measures of a monetary and fiscal easing nature, concentrating on additional important priorities, such as agriculture and food security. The final goals have been consistent with the common recommendations of the international community. They have been aimed at avoiding breakages in the domestic food supply chains, protecting the purchasing power of poor households, guaranteeing their access to food while also guaranteeing access to resources for the forthcoming seeding season.

At present the Government is gearing all its efforts to guaranteeing stable and continuous production of agriculture and is working on updating the agricultural development strategies geared to improving the production and marketing chains, introducing modern technologies and modern productive infrastructure for storing and processing food.

*Distinguished Participants,*

In highlighting the importance of the force majeure circumstances that have arisen as a result of the COVID pandemic, Tajikistan, as a landlocked country experiencing difficulties in transporting staple goods, calls for the creation of an effective cooperation mechanism for agricultural food system transformation in order to guarantee food security.

We propose a cooperation in developing and building regional electronic production platforms with information and marketing functions, guaranteeing the functioning of national production and marketing chains related to food production.

Secondly, developing cooperation to organize green transport corridors and routes for providing and delivering food, first and foremost fresh agricultural produce.

Thirdly, to provide mutual assistance among countries for producers of food in integration in regional electronic food platforms and trade networks.

Fourthly, continuing cooperation on organizing procedures for mutual recognition of food quality and safety certificates, especially in cross border trade.

Fifthly, organizing joint work to develop work on food security and other measures.

*Distinguished participants in the Conference,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*Distinguished Director-General,*

We are confident that together, hand in hand we will work out effective instruments for cooperation to transform agri-food systems in order to create favourable conditions for improving people's nutrition around the whole world, thereby contributing to the growth in agricultural production, all of which are part and parcel of the UN sustainable development goals.

Thank you for your attention.