

Statement by Dr. AUN Pornmoniroth,
Governor of IFAD for Cambodia
During
FORTY-FIRST SESSION OF GOVERNING COUNCIL

Mr. Chairman,
President, Mr. Gilbert F. Hounbo
Fellow Governors and Head of Delegations of Member States

I am very pleased to participate in the 41st Session of the Governing Council of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and wish to extend warm greetings from the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Royal Government of Cambodia to the President and all my fellow Governors and Head of Delegations of the Member States.

Cambodia applauds the focus of this Governing Council on the theme “**From fragility to long-term resilience: Investing in sustainable rural economies**” which is most relevant in the changing global environment in which IFAD and member states works. We look forward to robust discussions and debates on the theme and the contributions by scholars and fellow Governors.

Let me first record the deep appreciation of the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Cambodian people to the IFAD for its steadfast and valuable partnership and the generous grant assistance over the last two decades which have contributed greatly to Cambodia’s achievements in rural poverty reduction and small holder agricultural development.

Cambodia would like to congratulate the President and his team for the successful conclusion of the consultation on the 11th Replenishment of the IFAD’s resources and the agreements reached on increasing IFAD’s financing, results and impacts over the period of 2019-2021. I am pleased to inform you that on 12 February 2018 during the 5th session of the IFAD 11th Consultation, I announced that Cambodia has agreed to pledge an increase in its contribution to IFAD 11 from USD 315,000 to USD 450,000.

I am happy to note that one of the 10 key messages from the IFAD 11th Consultation is for IFAD to tailor its operations to meet specific conditions, demands and priorities of partner countries. As you all are aware that Cambodia has progressed to a lower middle-income status in 2015 and aiming to move towards becoming an upper middle income by 2030. Cambodia has therefore adjusted its priorities and development strategies for smallholder agricultural development commensurate with this stage of development.

Cambodia has made remarkable progress in achieving food security and while this will be further enhanced, going forward Cambodia will pursue a more strategic and programmatic approach to smallholder agricultural development that focus more on sustainability and resilience of rural livelihoods. Cambodia will therefore pursue a more balanced approach to capital investments under which investments in soft capital will be accompanied by the necessary investments in physical infrastructure to link production to markets.

This will need to be a shift from the current central focus on food security under IFAD assistance to a greater emphasis on agricultural commercialization in the small holder agriculture sub sector which will target the more advanced small holder farmers. The emphasis on commercialization will also focus on greater engagement, through Public Private Partnership, with the private sector engaged in providing market services which is vital for guaranteeing the sustainability of livelihoods of the rural small holder farmers. The objective will be not to replace the private sector but provide an enabling environment for the private sector to grow and become profitable. I look forward to the accommodation of this strategic shift in the IFAD operations in Cambodia in our next Country Strategic Opportunities Programme document and keeping in alignment with Cambodia's upcoming National Strategic Development Plan for period 2019-2023.

I would like to conclude by thanking President and his Management Team and Staffs for the excellent arrangements for this Session of the Governing Council.

Thank you.