

Statement by Dr. AUN Pornmoniroth
Deputy Prime Minister,
Minister of Economy and Finance
and

Governor of IFAD for Cambodia
FORTHY-SECOND SESSION OF GOVERNING COUNCIL

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

I am very pleased to participate in the 42nd Session of the Governing Council of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and bring warm greetings from the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia to the President and all my fellow Governors and Head of Delegations of the Member States.

On behalf of the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Cambodian people, let me first express our profound gratitude to His Holiness Pope Francis for gracing this Session of the Governing Council with his presence. My fellow Governors will agree that this has indeed been a privilege for all of us.

Mr. President, Cambodia had attached great importance to the theme **“From fragility to long-term resilience: Investing in sustainable rural economies”** during the last Session of the Governing Council. We had very constructive discussions and debate by scholars and fellow Governors which had also produced a number of ideas and recommendations. We hope that the Management has taken those on board to improve the effectiveness of IFAD’s result-based program of assistance to Member States. The theme of the 42nd Session, **“Rural Innovation and Entrepreneurship”**, is very relevant in the emerging global environment with the rapid pace at which the transformation to the 4th Industrial Revolution is taking place. There is an urgent need to examine the impact of new technology and how this could enhance and make farming more efficient and increase the livelihoods of the farmers. In this context, Cambodia is looking forward to robust discussions to examine how IFAD can take advantage and incorporate new technology into its operations.

I would like to record a deep appreciation of the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Cambodian people to the IFAD for its steadfast and valuable partnership which has contributed greatly to Cambodia’s achievement in rural poverty reduction and smallholder agricultural development. In March 2018, Cambodia and IFAD had constructive dialogue on

the results of the 1st Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation, carried out by the Independent Office of Evaluation, and concluded the Agreement at Completion Point (ACP) which we hope will guide future partnership between IFAD and Cambodia. I am pleased that Cambodia and IFAD have successfully concluded the COSOP 2013-2021.

Cambodia has made remarkable progress in achieving food security and while this will be further enhanced, going forward as pointed out in the ACP, the Royal Government of Cambodia has decided to make a strategic shift towards greater focus on commercialization and provision of enabling market infrastructure. In this respect, I believe the use of innovative and digital technology can play a pivotal role in commercialization and bringing potential additional benefits to the Cambodian rural farmers, thereby enhancing their livelihoods. Taking this opportunity, I am pleased to inform that IFAD and the Royal Government of Cambodia have been recently promoting investments in market linkage infrastructure, skills development and the use of digital technologies under the IFAD 11 framework. These are our priorities, which will help the Cambodian rural economy prepare for a rapidly modernizing and changing context. I would also like to express my appreciation for the IFAD country team for their proactive, consultative joint management of the portfolio. I believe the recent IFAD decentralization reform and recent sustained consultations have contributed to this enhanced effectiveness. This form of sustained continuous planning and discussions will result in greater country ownership and eventual impact.

Cambodia would like to congratulate the President and his team for the impressive operational performance in 2018 with the program of loan and grants reaching about \$1.15 billion for 27 new projects. I also note that the total pledge for the IFAD 11 has reached \$798.2 million representing 83% of the total pledges as of 31 December 2018. I also commend the Management for carrying out reforms notably in re-engineering the country based-model; recalibrating business processes; delegating responsibility to front line managers; and creating a results-based architecture and look forward to consolidating this further in 2019.

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

Thank you