

Statement by the representative for Burkina Faso

It is with great pleasure that I speak to you today on behalf of His Excellency Roch Marc Christian Kabore, President of Burkina Faso and Chairperson of the Group of Five for the Sahel, to express our heartfelt congratulations to the President of IFAD, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, for his commitment and his unceasing efforts to assist our institution to become better able than ever to meet the needs of Member States and of the most vulnerable population groups within them, particularly poor households, women and young people in rural areas.

On behalf of the Government and people of Burkina Faso, I also wish to express our gratitude to IFAD for its steadfast support for our anti-poverty programmes.

The persistence of extreme poverty and the exacerbation of socio-economic disparities by security issues, natural disasters brought about by climate change and the strong pressure that humankind is exerting on our natural capital all underline the importance of the present session's theme *Investing in sustainable food systems to end hunger by 2030*, which dovetails with the preparatory process for the World Food Systems Summit that is to be held by the United Nations in 2021.

It is therefore time for us not only to reaffirm our commitment to ending hunger by 2030, but also, and most importantly, to share the strategies that are most effective in producing tangible results and to think about how IFAD can play an even more relevant and effective role in that regard.

We would like to take this opportunity to applaud the joint launch by FAO and IFAD in April 2019 of the United Nations Decade for Family Farming and its Global Action Plan, which is based on the very precise and operational voluntary guidelines adopted by the Committee on World Food Security in October 2019.

We would also like to acknowledge the 2019 launch by IFAD and a number of its partners, including the European Union, Luxembourg and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, to name only a few, of the Agribusiness Capital (ABC) Fund to support structural projects.

Taking up the challenge of ending hunger by 2030 entails the implementation of targeted action in rural areas in order to support the emergence of dynamic and resilient rural economies.

For countries in fragile situations such as Burkina Faso, the emphasis should be, among other areas, on: (i) restoring the productive potential of degraded farmland; (ii) the development of agroecology and good farming practices; (iii) the promotion of climate-smart agriculture; and (iv) the development of small-scale irrigation works based on an innovative, resilient and high-performance agricultural model for the management and protection of groundwater resources in vulnerable areas.

As a basis for its contribution to the effort to attain Sustainable Development Goal 2 and end hunger, the Government of Burkina Faso has framed its national food security and nutrition policy around its vision of ensuring that the entire population has equitable access at all times to a balanced, sufficient and healthy diet in order to help to reduce poverty, consolidate social peace and attain sustainable development.

This vision is underpinned by our National Economic and Social Development Plan for 2016-2020, which places productivity gains, increased agricultural output, the promotion of agricultural entrepreneurship on the part of our youth and women's empowerment at the heart of our strategy for the development of agricultural value chains as a means of ensuring the availability and accessibility of a sustainable and nutritional food supply over the long term.

The Government's political will to realize this vision has also led to the incorporation of the right to food in our new Constitution, which is now in the process of being adopted.

Burkina Faso had known many years of peace and stability but, since 2015, armed attacks have threatened the nation's security and hindered the Government's efforts and those of its partners, especially in the regions that have been hit the hardest by deadly conflicts of unprecedented violence.

As of January 2020, there were a total of 613,792 displaced persons, most of them women and children. Our national machinery for ensuring food and nutrition security has been reinforced and supported by our main bilateral and multilateral partners by means of the mobilization of more than 81,000 tons of food aid, which nonetheless still falls short of our needs.

Yet despite these difficulties, the authorities and people of Burkina Faso are more determined than ever to win the battle for food security and sustainable development. Over the past four years, with the implementation of the National Economic and Social Development Plan, our country has seen an average economic growth rate of 6.25 per cent.

Our social and economic development efforts are founded, on the one hand, upon a programme of investments in the basic infrastructure required for industrialization and, on the other, upon the rural population's resilience in the face of climate-related, security, humanitarian and food security challenges.

The persistent security concerns in the Sahel have prompted His Excellency Roch March Christian Kabore, President of Burkina Faso and Chairperson of the Group of Five for the Sahel, to seek assistance for the G5 from IFAD.

The resources mobilized within the framework of the awaited support should make it possible to undertake a regional initiative to reinforce the resilience of the inhabitants of border areas and to assist the displaced population.

In closing, I would like to express the gratitude of the people of Burkina Faso to our many friends and partners who have placed their trust in us despite the security situation and who are working alongside us to further our nation's development.

We have every confidence in the Management of IFAD and its vision – a vision whose realization will undoubtedly help to bring about the changes in existing food systems that are needed in order to achieve the SDGs and to end hunger by 2030.

Thank you.