

Statement by the representative for the Republic of Nicaragua

On behalf of the people and Government of the Republic of Nicaragua, our Commander-in-Chief, Daniel Ortega Saavedra, and our Vice-President, Rosario Murillo, I wish to convey our fraternal and respectful greetings to Your Excellencies the Governors of IFAD, Representatives of Members States and Heads of delegation gathered here today, along with our gratitude for the invitation to participate in this forty-third session of the Governing Council of the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development sets out the goal of **ending hunger and malnutrition and a global commitment to “leave no one behind” in the drive to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**. In order to do that, it is essential for States to continue to promote policies, strategies and investments aimed at achieving agricultural development for all, along with inclusive and just trade policies.

The Government of Nicaragua considers that the scope of action that will enable us to “end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture” must include the implementation of development policies designed to restore the rights of historically underprivileged peoples by ensuring that they have funding and the support of respectful international cooperation practices and alliances.

Changes need to be made swiftly in order to transform our rural areas and to ensure that families have access to food, basic services, recreation, employment, higher incomes and investment, along with more and better economic opportunities in the market and access for small and medium-sized producers to means of capitalizing their productive capacities.

The Government of Reconciliation and National Unity headed by our Commander-in-Chief, Daniel Ortega, has crafted a model for the achievement of **food and nutrition sovereignty and security** that recognizes the Nicaraguan population’s access to food as a fundamental human right and will ensure that they will have an uninterrupted and sufficient supply of safe food.

This is a human-centred economic development model that is coupled with the implementation of initiatives to support agricultural production and promote investment in sustainable rural development, and it has resulted in ground-breaking advances in the food sector that are reflected in concrete, internationally recognized results.

We are building a more just nation in which there is less inequality in terms of per capita consumption, as is demonstrated by the reduction in the Gini coefficient from 0.38 in 2014 to 0.33 in 2016. We have gained worldwide recognition for the leading role played by the women of Nicaragua and are ranked first in our region and fifth in the world for gender equality.

The Government of Nicaragua, with the support of international cooperation efforts, has succeeded in running **more than 40 social programmes that have helped Nicaraguan men and women to enjoy an improved quality of life** in a culture of peace, respect and security that has made it possible to strengthen friendly relations and ties with international cooperation agencies. **Today Nicaragua has one of the best public security ratings in our region.**

As we pursue this sustained growth effort, **the Government of Nicaragua wishes to recognize the support provided by IFAD over the last 40 years of development cooperation**, which has improved the quality of life of the men, women, young people, children, native people and Afro-descendants of the rural sector in Nicaragua.

These bonds of cooperation, which date back to 1980, are based on a fraternal relationship that has reinforced the implementation of the productive development policies advanced by the Sandinista Government – policies that have played a significant role in **reducing rural poverty and increasing the incomes of over 190,000 rural households**.

Continuing to redouble its efforts to combat hunger, poverty, inequality and social exclusion is a priority for the Government of Nicaragua as a firm believer in the possibility of building a better world that is devoted to peace, social stability and security for all.

In line with the global challenge of producing food in ways that have the least possible impact on Mother Earth, the countries of Latin America, especially those that are developing nations such as Nicaragua, **need to make more robust and more strategic investments**, while at the same time **building greater technical, productive and resource-management capacity** for coping with the impact of climate change and variability on our societies and ecosystems.

Nicaragua considers that providing **support for small and medium-sized producers who are vulnerable to climate change can ensure the sustainability of the production and consumption levels of hundreds of thousands of families worldwide** who are the principal source of the food supply and play a fundamental role in the conservation and management of our natural resources.

This is why the Government of President Daniel Ortega endorses all options that will promote a transition to a genuine rural development process, help to combat poverty and open up opportunities that entail respect for cultural diversity and Mother Earth.

And just as in the World Food Conference of 1974, where concern about hunger in the world led to the establishment of IFAD, today, 46 years later, all the Governors of this Council are gathered here to reaffirm our commitment and our conviction that investment in agricultural development projects will bring us closer to realizing the dream of a world that is free of hunger and poverty in which we can all thrive and live with dignity.

Thank you.