

**Statement by H.E Mohsen Esperi Governor of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the occasion of the 44<sup>th</sup> Session of the IFAD's Governing Council**

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Governors,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At this very outset, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere congratulations to Mr. Gilbert F. Hounbo for his election for a second term as the President of IFAD. I wish him all the success in guiding IFAD as an institution with the specific mandate of reducing rural poverty and hunger in the challenging world. This mandate is becoming even more important during the current Covid 19 pandemic which has severely affected the job and food security worldwide.

Distinguished Governors,

Our world is experiencing a difficult but also decisive period not only for the current population but also for the future generations. While major challenges such as climate change, water scarcity, and land degradation are exacerbating the trend of rural poverty particularly in developing and low income countries is a matter of global concern, promotion of multilateral cooperation in frameworks such as IFAD becomes more and more important and urgent.

In this regard, I would like to draw the attention of this august body to the negative effects of Unilateral Coercive Measures illegally imposed on certain nations including mine. Such measures not only have affected the government ability to fight against the pandemic, but also denies the basic right for development and hit hard the rural people more than others. Islamic Republic of Iran as a founding member of IFAD calls for united action against UCMs asking for promotion of multilateralism and international cooperation to guaranty food security for all.

Evidently, the agricultural sector plays a crucial role in the economy of developing countries and provides the main source of food, income and employment to their rural populations. Consequently, imposing any restrictions to access the necessary needs in agricultural process, illegal effort to block the people's right for achieving

food security, poverty alleviation and overall sustainable development should be considered as a crime against humanity.

Mr. Chairman,

The Islamic republic of Iran despite facing the most hostile restrictions made by the United States has taken great strides to reform the structure of agriculture and rural sectors in order to promote sustainable food production. The results which are reflected in different indicators of sector growth, food security and self-sufficiency proves the endeavor and resilience demonstrated by our people.

In this regard, although the situation has limited our engagement with the fund, I would like to express the readiness of my country to further its cooperation with IFAD in every possible aspect. Islamic republic of Iran would be also ready to share its successful experiences in the agriculture and rural development sector during these hard years.

Thank you very much.